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MIRK ABBEY.

CHAPTER I.—IN MY LADY'S CHAMBER.

It is an hour short of midnight, and the depth of winter. The morrow is Christmas Day. Mirk Abbey bears snow everywhere; inches thick upon its huge broad coping-stones; much even on its sloping roof, save on the side where the north wind makes fitful rushes, and, wolf-like, tears and worries the white fleeces. Mirk woods sway mournfully their naked arms, and grind and moan without; the ivy taps unceasingly against the pane, as though entreating shelter. The whole earth lies cold and dead beneath its snow-shroud, and yet the snow falls and falls, flake by flake, soft and noiseless in its white malice, like a woman's hate upon her rival.

It hides the stars, it dims the moon, it dulls the murmur of the river to which the Park slopes down, and whose voice the frost has striven in vain to hush these three weeks. Only the Christmas-bells are heard, now faint, now full—that sound more laden with divine regret than any other that falls on human ear. Like one who, spurring from the battle-field, proclaims 'The fight is ours, but our great chief is slain!' there is sorrow in that message of good tidings; and not only for pious Christian folk; in every bosom it stirs some sleeping memory, and minds it of the days that are no more. No wonder, then, that such music should touch my Lady's heart—the widowed mistress of Mirk Abbey. Those Christmas-bells, which are also wedding-bells, remind her doubtless of the hour when Sir Robert lifted her lace-veil aside, and kissed her brow before all the people in the little church by the sea, and called her for the first time his Wife. He will never do so more. He has been dead for years. But what of that? Our dead are with us still. Our acts, our dealings with the world, form but a portion of our lives; our thoughts still dwell with those dear ones who have gone home before us, and in our dreams they still are our companions. My Lady is not alone in her private chamber, although no

human being is there besides herself. Her eyes are fixed upon the fire, and in its flame she sees a once-loved face invisible to others, whose smile has power to move her even to tears. How foolish are those who ascribe romance to Youth alone—to Youth, that has scarcely learned to love, far less to lose! My Lady is five-and-forty at the least, although still comely; and yet there are memories at work within that broad white brow, which, for interest and pathos, outweigh the fancies of a score of girls. Even so far as we—the world—are acquainted with her past, it is a strange one, and may well give her that thoughtful air.

Lady Lisgard, of Mirk Abbey, has looked at life from a far other station than that which she now occupies. When a man of fortune does not materially increase his property by marriage, we call the lady of his choice, although she may have a few thousand pounds of her own, 'a girl without a sixpence.' But Sir Robert Lisgard did literally make a match of this impecunious sort. Moreover, he married a very 'unsuitable young person;' by which expression you will understand that he was blamed, not for choosing a bride very much junior to himself, but for not selecting her from the proper circles. When accidentally interrogated by blundering folks respecting her ancestry, the baronet used good-humouredly to remark, that his wife was the daughter of Neptune and Thetis. When asked for her maiden name, he would reply drily: 'She was a Miss Anna Dyomene;' for the simple fact was, that she had been thrown up almost at his feet by the sea—the sole survivor of a crowded emigrant-ship that went to pieces before his eyes while he was staying one stormy autumn at a sea-side village in the South. Lashed to a spar, she came ashore one terrible night in a costume similar to that worn by Miss Menken in *Mazeppa*; and on the occasion in question, she made at least an equal sensation. There was a subscription got up among some visitors of fashion

to supply her with a wardrobe; and they do say that Sir Robert Lisgard's name is still to be seen set down with the rest for five pounds in the list that is kept among the archives of the village post-office.

But it was not until three years afterwards that he bought her a *trousseau*; for the baronet, intending to make her his wife not only in name—a companion for life, and not a plaything, which is prized so long as it is new, and no longer—caused Lucy Gavestone, during the greater part of that interval, to be educated for her future position. If it was madness in him, as many averred, to marry so far beneath him, there was much method in his madness. Not ashamed of her as a bride, he was resolved not to be ashamed of her as the mistress of his house, or as the mother of his children, if it should please Heaven to grant him issue. It was in France, folks said, that her Ladyship acquired those manners which subsequently so excited the envy of the midland county in which she lived. She bore the burden of the honours unto which she was not born as gracefully as the white rose in her blue-black hair. But to perform her loving duties as a mother, in the way even her enemies admitted that she did perform them, could scarcely have been learned in France. Only love and natural good sense could have taught her those. Never once had Sir Robert Lisgard cause to regret the gift which the sea had given him. He used, however, smilingly to remark, in his late years—and his words were not without their pathos then—that he wished that he could have married his Lucy earlier, and while he was yet a young man; but in that case she would have been fitter for the font than the altar, inasmuch as there was a quarter of a century between their respective ages. He always averred that five-and-twenty years of his manhood had been thrown away.

But good wife and matron as Lady Lisgard had been, she was no less excellent a widow and mother. If Sir Robert could have risen from that grave in Mirk churchyard, where he had preferred to lie, rather than in the family vault, so that she might come to visit him in his lonely sleep, and daily lay a flower or two, culled with her own hands, upon him—not perhaps unconscious of that loving service—he would have found all things at the Abbey as he would have wished them to be during life: that is, so far as she could keep them so. Sir Richard, their eldest son, was within a few months of his majority, and, of course, had become in a great degree his own master; not that he misused his years so as to place himself in opposition to his mother, for he was a gentleman above everything; but he was of a disposition more haughty and stern than her kindly nature could well cope with, and she nervously shrank from any contest with it, although, on a question of principle—which, however, had not occurred—she might have braved even him.

Walter Lisgard, the younger son, was as genial and good-humoured as his father before him, and although (in common with every one who knew her) I loved and respected my Lady, it must be confessed that he was too openly his mother's favourite, as he was the favourite of all at Mirk, in the Abbey or out of it.

Lastly, there was Letty Lisgard—but she shall speak for her sweet self. While her mother sits and thinks before her fire, there is a knock at the chamber-door, and on the instant the picture

in her brain dissolves, which was affecting her so deeply, and she has no eyes save for her only daughter. A girl of seventeen enters the room, not gaily, as would have become her age, but with a certain gentle gravity that becomes her at least as well, since it is impossible to imagine that she could look more lovely. Fair as a lily, but not pale, for her usually delicate colour is heightened by some mental emotion, which causes, too, the little diamond cross upon her bosom to rise and fall, and the hazel eyes to melt and glitter beneath their dark lashes; lithe and tall as a sapling wooed too roughly by the north wind, she glided in, with her fair head slightly bowed, and casting herself upon her knees beside my Lady, exclaimed: 'Ah, do not weep, dear mother—do not weep!' at the same time herself bursting into a passion of tears. 'I knew what you would be thinking of,' continued she, 'upon this sad night, and therefore I came to comfort you a little, if I could. If not a merry Christmas, let me at least wish you a happy one, my own dear mother. I am sure that if dear papa can see us now, he wishes you the same.'

'Yes, dearest Letty, that is true. How thoughtful and kind it was of you to leave your friend-breaking off, no doubt, some pleasant chat over school-days'—

'Nay, mother,' interrupted the girl; 'what is Rose to me in comparison with you? Was it likely that I should forget this anniversary of our common loss!'

Lady Lisgard did not answer in words, but shedding by the wealth of golden brown hair that had fallen over her daughter's forehead, she kissed that pure brow tenderly. Upon her own cheeks, a crimson flush, called thither by the young girl's words, was lingering yet. Reader, happy are you if you have never known a loving voice say: 'What are you thinking of, dearest?' expecting to receive the answer: 'Of you,' when you have no such reply to give—when your mind has been wandering far from that trustful being, and perhaps even whither it should not have wandered. Such a flush may then have visited your cheeks, as now touched those of Lady Lisgard, although it is certain that memory never played her so false as to remind her of aught whereof she need have been ashamed. The fact was, she had not been thinking of Sir Robert at all, albeit it was upon that very day, five years back, that she had received from his failing hand its last loving pressure, and in that very room. Human nature cannot be trained like those wondrous mechanical inventions of the monks, that indicated the fasts and festivals of the church so accurately—to suffer or rejoice at particular times and seasons; we are often sad when the jest is upon our lips, and bear a light heart beneath the sackcloth. Lady Lisgard's thoughts had, Heaven knew, been far from merry ones; but because she had not been mourning with chronological propriety, her woman's heart unjustly smote her with a sense of want of fealty to the memory of him for whom she still wore—and intended to wear to her dying day—the visible tokens of regret.

It is the fashion to jeer at widows; but, to a reverent mind, there are few things more touching than that frequent sight in honest England—a widowed mother, whose only joy seems to be in what remains to her of her dead lover, husband, counsellor—his children; and the only

grief that has power to wring whose heart, past sense of common pain through the dread anguish that it has once undergone, arises from their misfortunes and misdoings. Ah, selfish boy, beware how you still further burden that sorrow-laden soul!—ah, thoughtless girl, exchange not that faithful breast too, hastily for one that may spurn your head in the hour of need!

My Lady—for that was what we always called her about Mirk—was neither more nor less fortunate with her children than most mothers. They all three loved her; but they did not all love one another. Between Sir Richard and Walter was only a year of time, but upon it had arisen a thousand quarrels. The former thought that the privilege of an elder brother was a divine right, extending over every circumstance of fraternal life; the latter conceived it to be an immoral institution, borrowed in an evil hour from the Jews, and one to be strictly kept within its peculiar limits—themselves more than sufficiently comprehensive—the inheritance of the family title, and the succession to the landed estates.

'Where are Richard and Walter, Letty?' asked Lady Lisgard, breaking a long silence. 'They, too, have been always mindful, like yourself, of this sad day.'

'They are mindful still, dear mother. I hear Walter's foot in the corridor even now.'

A swift elastic footfall it was, such as is very suggestive of the impulsive nature of him who uses it; for a phlegmatic man may move swiftly on rare occasions—such as bayonets behind him, or a mad bull—but there will be no more elasticity in his gait, even then, than in that of a walking-doll; whereas every step of Captain Walter Lisgard had a double action, a rise and fall in it, independent of the progressive motion altogether.

He was of a slim, yet not delicate build; his every movement (and, as I have said, there was plenty of it) had a native grace like that of a child; childlike and trustful, too, were those blue eyes; soft in their expression as his sister's, while he stooped down to kiss his mother's cheek, scarce more smooth than his own. Upon his lip, however, was a fairy moustache, which being, fortunately, coal-black like his somewhat close-cropped hair, made itself apparent to all beholders, and rescued his comeliness from downright effeminacy. But no woman ever owned a softer voice, or could freight it with deeper feeling than Walter Lisgard.

'God bless you, dearest mother, and give you all the good you deserve!' murmured he tenderly.

'And God bless *you*, my darling!' answered Lady Lisgard, holding him at the full distance of her white and round arms, clasped with two costly jewels, which had a worth, however, in her eyes far beyond their price, being Sir Robert's wedding-gift. 'Ah me! how you remind me of your father's picture, Watty, taken on the day when he came of age. I trust you will grow up to be like him in other respects, dear boy.'

'I hope so, mother; although,' added he, with a sudden petulance, 'there will be a vast difference between us in some things, you know. He was an only son, whereas I am not even an eldest one; and when I come of age, there will be no picture taken, nor any fuss made, such as is to happen in June, I hear, upon Richard's majority.'

'Walter, Walter!' exclaimed Lady Lisgard reprovingly, 'this is not like yourself, for it's envious—and—and—covetous!'—

'At all events, it is very foolish, mother interrupted the young man drily; 'for what can be cured must be endured.'

'And very, very cruel to me,' added Lady Lisgard.

'Then I am sincerely sorry I spoke,' returned Walter hastily, the moodiness upon his features chased away at once by loving regret. 'Only, when a fellow leaves his regiment to spend Christmas eve at home—as I am sure I was delighted to do so far as you and Letty were concerned—he does not want to find there another commanding officer uncommissioned and self-appointed' . . .

'Walter, Walter! this is very sad,' broke in Lady Lisgard piteously: 'you know what Richard's manner, and how much less kind it is than his true meaning. Can you not make some allowance for your own brother?'

'That's exactly what I said to *him*, mother,' answered Walter, laughing bitterly. 'Here have I just got my troop, with no more to keep myself off than when I was a cornet, and had no back debt to speak of; and yet, so far from helping me a little, as Richard might easily do, by making some allowance for his own brother, he complains of that which you are so good as to let me have out of your own income. Why, that's not *his* business, it were twice as much—although, I am sure, dear mother, you are liberality itself. Has he not got enough of his own—and of what should be mine—and Letty's here, by rights—without grudging me your benevolences? Is he not Sir Richard Lisgard of Mirk Abbey?'—

'I will not listen to this, Walter,' cried his mother sternly. 'This is mere mean jealousy of your elder brother.'

'Oh, dear no, mother; indeed, it is not that,' answered the young man coldly. 'I envy him nothing. I hold him superior to me in no respect whatever; and that is exactly why I will not submit to his dictation. Here he comes stalking along the gallery, as though conscious that every foot of oak belongs to him, and every picture of the wall.'

It was undoubtedly a firm determined step enough—unusually so, for one so young as Sir Richard. The face of the new-comer, too, was stern almost to harshness; and as he entered the room, and beheld Walter standing by his mother's side, his features seemed to stiffen into stone. A fine face, too; more aristocratic if not so winning as his younger brother's, and not without considerable sagacity: if his manner was not graceful, it had a high chivalric air about it which befitted his haughty person very well. When he taught himself submission (a rare lesson with him), as now while he raised his mother's fingers to his lips, and kissed them with dutiful devotion, it would have been hard to find a man with a more noble presence than Richard Lisgard.

'A merry Christmas and a happy New Year to you, mother.' The words, though conventional, had an earnest kindness, which came from the heart. Lady Lisgard kissed him fondly.

'Thank you, dear Richard,' said she; 'but, alas! no Christmas can be a merry one, no year a happy one, when I see my children disagree.'

'Ah, Master Walter has been here before me. I see,' quoth Sir Richard bitterly, 'stealing, like Jacob, his mother's blessing from her first-born—and giving his own account of matters. But please now to listen to *my* version.'

'Not to-night, Richard,' exclaimed Lady Lisgard with deep emotion. 'Let not to-night, sacred to the memory of your common father, be a witness to your mutual accusations. In this room, almost at this very hour, but a few years back, he died, bequeathing you with his last breath to my tenderest care. Here it was that you kissed his white lips, weary with prayers for your future welfare; here it was that you promised, in return, to be good and dutiful sons. I know—I think, at least—that you both love your mother. No, I will kiss neither of you while thus unreconciled. That was not all that he required of you; he would have bidden you, could he have looked forward to this evil time, to love one another also; and O Richard! O Walter! hark to those bells, that seem to strive to beat their message into the most stubborn ears. Do you not hear what they say?—Letty, dear, do you tell them, then, for there are no lips better suited to deliver it.'

The young girl lifted up her head from her mother's lap, to gaze into her eyes; then, with exquisite pathos and softness, repeated, like a silver peal of bells: 'Peace and good-will, peace and good-will, peace and good-will to all mankind.'

Sir Richard looked at his brother fixedly, but no longer in wrath. 'It is my part to make the first advance,' said he, 'although I was not the first to quarrel;' and he frankly stretched forth his hand.

The other paused a second; then reading on his mother's anxious lips: 'For my sake, Walter,' he grasped his brother's fingers. There was grace in the very delay, as in the motion tenderness and genial ease, but scarcely the warmth of reconciliation. It was more like the action of a woman who wishes to please; and if you had seen the small hand apart from its owner, as it lay with its one glittering ring half hid in the other's huge white palm, you would have said it was a woman's hand.

CHAPTER II.—THE WAITS.

Once more my Lady is alone, except for her companion-thoughts, which are, however, no longer of a distressing nature. The reconciliation of her boys has gladdened her to the core; she thinks, she trusts at least, that the truce will be a lasting peace. As for Letty, she is all that a mother's heart could wish her to be. If much is lost to my Lady, surely much remains. With the Poor, one misery is removed only to bring another into greater prominence; but with the Rich, this is not so. Only let the disease be cured, or the quarrel be made up, which is at present vexing them, and all, for a time at least, is sunshine. Even not to be cold, not to be hungry, is something; and not to have to take thought of the morrow is a great deal. From her warm and curtained chamber, Lady Lisgard looks forth into the night. The snow falls as fast as ever, now straight, now aslant, now whirled in circular eddies by the bitter north. Through its thick and shifting veil, she can scarcely see the old church-tower of Mirk, though it stands close by within the very garden-grounds of the Abbey; nor the windmill which crowns Mirkland Hill, and on moonlit nights stands up so clear against the sky, a beacon to all the country round. It was weather which those who are armed against it call 'Seasonable;' and some of the tender sex, who have a fire lit in their rooms before they rise, and go out in seal-skin, and travel with foot-warmers,

even go so far as to call 'Delightful.' At all events, it is such as is pleasant to watch from within for a few moments, and then to return to one's fire-side with enhanced satisfaction.

There are merry-makings in the kitchen to-night, as befits the season, and my Lady's maid has been enjoined not to hurry herself. Her mistress is beginning to unrobe, without her assistance, but very leisurely. She unclasps one warm and sparkling jewel from her arm, and gazes thoughtfully, but far from sadly, upon the picture that is hid within it. It is the miniature of a handsome man past middle age, attired in a blue coat and gold buttons; what persons of my Lady's age would call a decidedly old-fashioned portrait; but it is the likeness of Sir Robert as her bridegroom. 'What a good, kind husband he was,' thinks she. 'How he loved me, and loaded me with favours; how much he overlooked, how much he forgot—of which others know nothing—for my sake. How terrible would it be to feel that one had not done one's poor duty in return for so much love. Thank Heaven, I feel free from any such charge. If I had not love—that is, first love—to give him in exchange, I gave him all I had. I gave him genuine affection, esteem—worship. Everybody knows that; and what is better, my own heart knows it. It never beat with truer fealty towards him than it beats to-night. God knows. I live for his children only. What a fine noble boy is Richard grown; surely, to look upon him, and to say to one's self: "This is my son," should be happiness enough for any mother. True, he is proud; but has he not something to be proud of? He, Sir Richard, and one of those Lisgards who have ruled at Mirk for twelve generations. (Here a quiet smile stole over my Lady's features.) They said with reason at those *tableaux* at the Vanes, that with that helmet on he was the image of young Sir Maurice, who died at Edgehill with the colours twisted round him. I wonder if it was his poor mother who had her dead boy painted so. 'Tis certain that she thought: "Ah, were he but alive, there would be no such thing as sorrow more for me." Yet here I have him. Ah (here she grew as pale as death), why did I ever let my Walter be a soldier? What weakness to give way—to the very peril of him for whom I was so weak! He would have gone to the wars themselves but for good Dr Haldane, through whom (thanks to the Duke) he was not gazetted to the corps he had applied for. Why did he not choose the bar, like his elder brother? How he would have moved men's hearts to mercy with that winning tongue! Or why did he not become God's messenger—I am sure he has an angel's face—and carry the news those bells are telling of to shipwrecked souls? Oftentimes, when, as a child, he knelt beside me to say his prayers, his very looks have seemed to make the action more sacred. Goodness seemed better worth when he was praying for it, and heaven no home for saints unless he shared it! God grant he may grow up a good man!

Then Letty, too—what mother's wealth must I possess since that sweet girl is not the chief of it, the central jewel of my crown? When matched with others of her age—with this Rose Aynton, for example—how bright and fair she shews! Not but that Rose is a good girl, doubtless; accomplished, too, beyond her years, and far beyond her opportunities—she sparkles like a crystal cut in

ten thousand facets; but my own Letty is the flawless diamond, bright and pure as light itself. What blessings are these three! May Heaven keep them always as I deem them now. I wish my Walter were a little less impulsive; but the darling boy is young. As for dear Richard, I have no fears for him. The proud lad will find some noble helpmate, meet to— Great Heaven! what is that?

A burst of melody without fell suddenly upon the midnight air, and at the same moment the chamber-door opened to the touch of Mistress Forest, her Ladyship's confidential maid. 'I beg your pardon, my Lady, if I startled you; but I knocked twice, and could not make you hear.'

'It was not you, Mary, that startled me,' returned Lady Lisgard; 'it was the sudden music. The Christmas Waits, as I suppose?'

'Yes, my Lady. They came up from the village a little while ago, and have been staying in the servants' hall for the clock to strike twelve.'

'I trust they have all had supper?'

'You may be sure of that, my Lady. Mrs Welsh is as openhanded (with your Ladyship's property) as any cook in the county; nor is George Steve a likely man to sit thirsty while he sees others drink. One would think that a public-housekeeper should have drinking enough at home; but—pardon, my Lady—I am making complaints which, however just, I know you dislike to hear, and besides, I am interrupting the carol.'

Earthly friends will change and falter,

Earthly hearts will vary;

He is born that cannot alter,

Of the Virgin Mary.

Born to-day—

Raise the lay;

Born to-day—

Twine the bay.

Jesus Christ is born to suffer,

Born for you—born for you;

Holly, strew:

Jesus Christ was born to conquer,

Born to save—born to save;

Laurel, wave:

Jesus Christ was born to govern,

Born a king—born a king;

Bay-wreaths, bring:

Jesus Christ was born of Mary.

Born for all. Well befall Hearth and Hall.

Here the manly but not unmelodious voices exchanged their verse for prose, if Christmas good-wishes can be said to be mere prose. 'A merry Christmas and a happy New Year to your Ladyship, and many on 'em!'

Lady Lisgard moved to the window with a smile, and drawing the curtain aside, threw up the sash. On the white lawn beneath, stood five dark figures, bearing various instruments of music, and one a huge horn lantern, the light of which glinted upon the laurels. It was impossible to recognise the features of the rest, as they stood, cap in hand, notwithstanding the still driving snow, awaiting her Ladyship's reply; but she addressed them each by name nevertheless.

'Mr Steve, I thank you kindly. Henry Ash, I am glad to find you in good voice again. John Lewis and Peter Stone—if I am not mistaken. Neighbours and friends all, I thank you very much. But it is a cold night for caroling, and I hope you have been taken care of within. A merry Christmas to you and a happy New Year.' There was a

tremor in my Lady's voice, although she spoke with such particularity, which shewed how deeply she was moved.

'God bless your Ladyship,' returned the voices, disorderly as to unison, but each one of itself distinct and clear as file-firing.—'God bless Sir Richard, and send him a fair bride.—God bless Master Walter's handsome face.—God bless Miss Letty.'

Lady Lisgard closed the window, but as she did so, dropped the heavy curtain between herself and the lighted chamber, so that she could still look out, but without being seen. The curtain, too, cut her off from the observation of her maid within. 'Who is the fifth man that bears the lantern, Mary?' asked her Ladyship in a tone of carelessness very unsuited to the expression of her face, which all in a moment had grown pinched and terror-stricken, as though it hungered for some reply that it yet dreaded to hear.

'Nobody as you know, my Lady—nor indeed as I know, for the matter of that. He's a stranger in these parts, who's putting up at the *Lisgard Arms*. He only came for a few days last week, walking across the country for all the world like a pedler—a way he says he learned in foreign parts; but Steve with his odd ways has taken his fancy, so that he stays on. A very well-spoken sort of person he is too, although the sea, it seems, has been his calling, which is a rough trade. However, he has made it answer—according at least to Mr Steve. Any way, he flings his money about free enough, and indeed is what I call rather too fond of treating folks. He is good company himself, they say, and a favourite with everybody he comes across, which is a very dangerous thing—that is,' added Mistress Forest, correcting herself, 'unless one is a gentleman, like handsome Master Walter.'

'You don't—remember—this—this person's name, Mary, do you?' asked Lady Lisgard.

'No, strange to say, I don't, my Lady; although but a moment ago it was on the tip of my tongue. It is something like Hathaway.'

A trace of colour once more returns to my Lady's cheek, and her breath, which, by reason perhaps of the confined space in which she stands, has seemed to be stifled during the narration of her maid, now comes and goes with a little less of effort.

'That is his voice, I reckon, my Lady—yes, I thought so—and the new carol which he has been teaching the choir.'

O'er the hill and o'er the vale

Come three kings together,

Caring nought for snow and hail,

Cold, and wind, and weather;

Now on Persia's sandy plains,

Now where Tigris swells with rains,

They their camels tether.

Now through Syrian lands they go,

Now through Moab, faint and slow,

Now o'er Edom's heather.

'Ah, now I've got it, my lady,' cried Mistress Forest triumphantly. 'It isn't Hathaway. He the man they were talking of in the servants-hall as has just bought the windmill of old Daniel and that was how I confused them. The stranger's name is Derrick—a Mr Derrick.'

My Lady's dimpled hand flew to her heart, and would have pressed against it had she had an strength to do so. Her limbs, however, were nervous, and shook as if she had the ague. But for the

window-seat, she must have dropped; and as it was, leaned, huddled up against it, a shapeless form, decked in gray satin and pearls indeed, but as unlike my Lady as those poor wretches whom we strangle for a show are unlike themselves, who seem to lose, the instant that the fatal bolt is drawn, all fellowship with the human, and become mere bundles of clothes. The drop had fallen, and without warning, from under Lady Lisgard's feet, but unhappily the victim was conscious, and not dead.

MARTIAL LAW.

MARTIAL LAW in England is of very great antiquity, and, until quite modern times, derived its authority from the sovereign, part of whose prerogative it was to frame special rules, distinct from the general law of the land, for the governance and regulation of the royal forces.

Under the Saxon kings, military affairs were taken in hand by the dukes of districts, who were elected by the people, and appear to have exercised their authority without reference to the royal power; but at the Norman Conquest, when the feudal system was introduced, the sovereign, as commander-in-chief, was the source of military authority, which he might exercise as he deemed fit over all his subjects, or, if more convenient, only towards those who were attending him in his wars, or were in open rebellion against him.

The power which the sovereign himself could wield, he could also delegate, and, as a matter of fact, he did depute his two great lieutenants to administer martial law for him. These two officers were the Lord High Constable and the Earl Marshal. They sat together, and one apart from the other did not constitute a valid tribunal. What guided them in giving judgment on the cases brought before them is not known. It is certain they were not bound by any statute of the realm, but they probably were guided by the usage or customary law of armies—something applicable to military persons, akin to that *lex non scripta*, or common law, which was and is equally binding as the statute law upon all subjects whatever.

Though, as regarded feudal soldiers actively employed, the jurisdiction of the Constable and Marshal could have been exercised only during the six weeks for which military tenants were bound to serve at one time, yet in a warlike age, when every institution, political or social, was strongly imbued with a military spirit, disputes not referable to the law of the land must constantly have arisen, which came appropriately under the cognizance of the Court of Chivalry. Besides, there were to be disciplined and restrained those mercenary troops, which so early as the reign of Henry II. began to be employed instead of the feudal warriors, who commuted their personal service in the field for a money-payment of so much a shield. Of the martial law applicable to these soldiers, the Constable and the Marshal were the exponents, for it seems to have been the custom, preparatory to an actual war, for the kings of this realm, with the advice of the Constable and Marshal, to make a book of rules and orders for the guidance of the army; and this book of rules and orders, together with the penalties provided for breakers of discipline, was the declaration of martial law for that particular expedition. One of these books, made in the ninth

been compiled by the advice of the Duke of Lancaster and other noblemen, is still extant.

The functions of the Constable and Marshal were ministerial and judicial. It behoved them to see to the ordering and equipment of the army, and, in a judicial capacity, to hear and determine charges of murder committed in parts beyond sea, to settle the rights of prisoners of war, and to try soldiers for offences committed against the laws and rules of the army.

The Court of Chivalry was a permanent one, and administering, as it did, with so little of ascertained law, and with so much of discretionary power, it is not surprising that it should have overstepped its limits, and, as the vehement complaints against it asserted, have arrogated the functions of the regular civil tribunals. Accordingly, we find that in the eighth year of Richard II., it became necessary to curb the power of the court. The statute 8 Rich. II. c. 5, recites: 'Also because divers pleas concerning the common law, and which by the common law ought to be examined and discussed, are now newly drawn before the Constable and Marshal of England, to the great damage and disquiet of the people;' and then enacts, that from henceforth common-law offences shall be tried by the common law.

But this declaration was too general to cure the evil. Possibly through ambition, probably through ignorance, the Court of Chivalry continued to hear causes which should have been heard by the civil courts; so the 13 Rich. II. stat. 1, c. 2, was passed, to define more particularly the province of this court. The preamble recites the necessity for the act: 'Also, because that the Commons have grievously complained that the court of the Constable and Marshal hath encroached to itself, and daily doth encroach, contracts, covenants, trespasses, debts and detinues, and many other actions pleadable at the common law, in great prejudice of the king and of his courts, and to the great grievance and oppression of the people;' the enacting clause then goes on to declare, that 'to the court it pertaineth to have cognizance of contracts touching deeds of arms, and of war out of the realm; and also of things that touch arms or war within the realm which cannot be determined nor discussed by the common law.'

These were the first limits fixed upon the acknowledged prerogative of the king to create and administer martial law, of which it was not pretended to fix the bounds in its application to purely military persons; and it is to be observed that the prerogative of the king, so far as that extended to places beyond sea, was left unabridged and undefined, apparently on purpose. Within the realm, the Marshal's Court was to deal only with such 'things that touched arms or war' as were not determinable by the common-law courts; but without the realm, the royal prerogative was to continue as before, creating and administering martial law according to its discretion, or it might be its indiscretion; and this prerogative was recognised at a much later date, when the earlier Mutiny Acts, abridging the authority of the crown at home, declared that neither 'the acts, nor anything contained in them, should extend to abridge' this branch of the prerogative in parts beyond sea.

After these restrictions had been imposed on the Court of Chivalry, its power drooped and declined. The king or his commanders administered martial

mention has been made, or according to the usage of war and the justice of particular cases; and it was in virtue of such law that the Duke of Exeter caused Bardolph to be hanged for stealing what his friend Pistol described as a 'pyx of little price.' The former occupation of the court was almost gone; it busied itself with questions as to the right of persons to coats of armour, bearings, crests, and pennants, and decided disputes about precedence, place, and dignity. 'Poor Edward Bohun,' the Duke of Buckingham who perished 'under device and practice,' in the reign of Henry VIII., was the last High Constable of England. After his death, the office was not continued, and though the Earl Marshal—whose office is hereditary in the family of the Dukes of Norfolk—did at times hold his court after the abolition of the Constable's office, his doing so was looked upon as an illegal thing, and a ground of complaint, which was stopped by statute under Charles I.

Now, although the above-named limits were put upon the martial prerogative of the crown, and although the twenty-ninth chapter of the Great Charter, as ratified by Henry III., said: 'No freeman shall be taken or imprisoned, or be disseised of his freehold or liberties, or free customs, or be outlawed or exiled, or any otherwise destroyed; nor will we pass upon him, nor condemn him, but by lawful judgment of his peers, or by the law of the land'—it is quite obvious that in order to restrain the licence of soldiers from hurting other people, and to keep them under such discipline as alone would make them useful, it was necessary that, as regarded them at least, special laws should be laid down, and the general statutes be suspended. There was always a small permanent military force to garrison places like the Tower of London, Dover, Portsmouth, Berwick, Calais, and some others of importance; and for this force a military law had to be made. A military law was also needed for the discipline of troops serving on the Scotch and Welsh Marches, a law which was alluded to in the letter written by order of Henry VIII. to Sir Ralph Ewer, when Alderman Reed of London was sent to that general to be employed as a private soldier against the Scots, because he had refused to contribute to the 'benevolence' which Henry exacted from the city. The letter states the circumstances under which Reed was sent down, and enjoins upon Sir Ralph the necessity of using him 'in all things according to the sharpe discipline militar of the northern wars.' It was also necessary to bring under 'discipline militar' those persons who, for the preservation of the internal peace of the kingdom, were compelled by Henry II.'s Assize of Arms, and afterwards by the Statute of Winchester under Edward I., to keep arms according to their estate and degree, and who were called out for active service under the king's commissions of array, which commissions were addressed to particular persons in the counties, and directed them to muster and array in military order the inhabitants of the district, either for the purpose of quelling some domestic rebellion, or resisting invasion from abroad.

For the permanent garrisons, the king's prerogative made a law, as it did for armies serving abroad and for subjects beyond sea; but for the levies made under commissions of array, the extent to which they were to be deprived of the benefits of the common and statute law was defined by the commission of array itself; the form of which

was settled by parliament in the fifth year of Henry IV., 'so as to prevent the insertion therein of any new penal clauses.'

Notwithstanding, however, all these restraints upon martial law, it was not declared by any statute that under no circumstances should it be lawful for the king, without consent of parliament, to proclaim and enforce martial law within the home limits of his kingdom. Custom, and the spirit of such statutes as have been named, would seem to shew that, though the prerogative might exist, it was not expected to be exercised. Special provision was made for quelling domestic disturbances, and in times of serious rebellion, it was so evidently for the common weal that an arbitrary power should be possessed by the head of the state, that no one would be found to object to it; the freedom of the country from foreign invasion, excepting perhaps from Scotland, which was provided for, however, by the 'sharp discipline militar of the northern wars,' had not given occasion for the exercise of the royal prerogative, which went into desuetude in this particular, until the time came when it was needlessly revived, and then the people put an end to it by statute.

Mary executed some of the rebels who followed Sir Thomas Wyatt by martial law, though Wyatt himself was tried for his treason before a jury; and Elizabeth, excusably enough considering the Spanish Armada was under-weigh for England, issued a proclamation, declaring that such as brought into the kingdom or dispersed papal bulls, or traitorous libels against the queen, should with all severity be proceeded against by Her Majesty's lieutenants or their deputies by martial law, and suffer such pains and penalties as they should inflict. Seven years afterwards, she directed Sir Thomas Wilford, because of some tumults that had taken place in and round London, and 'for that the insolency of many desperate offenders is such that they care not for any ordinary punishment by imprisonment,' to suppress speedily 'some such notable rebellious persons by execution to death, according to the justice of martial law.'

James I., though he ordered a man to be hanged on his own responsibility, on the occasion of his coming for the first time into his new kingdom, does not appear to have been unbearably offensive in the exercise of his prerogative as martial law-giver; but Charles I., who staked his crown upon the question whether he, or the parliament and he, were invested by the constitution with the power of the sword, rendered the imposition of martial law upon his growingly sensitive subjects so intolerable, that it was not any longer to be borne.

The seventh chapter of the Petition of Right recites the protecting statutes, including Magna Charta, and says that nevertheless commissions had issued under His Majesty's Great Seal, directing certain persons 'to proceed within the land according to the justice of martial law.' The eighth chapter asserts that certain people had in consequence been put to death, who, 'if by the laws and statutes of the land they had deserved death, by the same laws and statutes also they might, and by no other ought to have been judged and executed;' and the tenth chapter prays 'that the aforesaid commissions for proceeding by martial law may be revoked and annulled; and that hereafter no commissions of like nature may issue forth to any person or persons whatsoever to be executed as aforesaid.'

Thus the prerogative, in its branch of martial-law giving, was taken away, and the Great Rebellion breaking out upon the question, 'In whom is the power of the sword?' nothing was done till after the revolution of 1688 in the way of providing a national army, and laying down rules for its government. By the 13 Car. II. c. 6, the king's sole right to command the militia was declared, but nothing was done to legalise martial law, which, within the realm, had been done away with by the Petition of Right.

Charles II. kept five thousand regular troops, who were paid out of his private purse; and James II. kept thirty thousand, though there was no warrant for a standing army in England, and the spirit of the constitution was against it. Feudal tenures not having been abolished till the twelfth year of Charles II., the feudal tenants were the only constitutional army at the king's disposal. Charles I. summoned them in 1640, the last time that they were called out.

The sixth clause of the Bill of Rights declares 'that the raising or keeping a standing army within the kingdom in time of peace, unless it be with consent of parliament, is against law;' and this, coupled with the declaration against martial law in the Petition of Right, effectually restrains the crown from doing military violence within the realm.

A standing army was, however, found to be an institution necessary 'for the safety of the United Kingdom, the defence of Her Majesty's crown, and the preservation of the balance of power in Europe,' as the Mutiny Act for the current year declares; and on the occasion of some *émeute* among the troops, caused by emissaries of James II., William III. applied to parliament for authority to punish the men by martial law. The first Mutiny Act was accordingly passed in the first year of William and Mary, authorising the sovereign to levy troops, and to govern them according to martial law, as contained in the act, and to be declared by Articles of War, which the king was authorised to make.

The Mutiny Act, which has been renewed ever since, remains in force for a year only. Without its authority, a standing army is illegal, because of the Petition of Right and the Bill of Rights, which are merely suspended in this particular temporarily, by the Mutiny Act. It is therefore of necessity that parliament should meet at least once a year, to authorise the levy of an army, the exercise of martial law, and to provide the means of paying the troops. The militia, as now constituted, was first authorised by act of parliament in 1757. Its duties are analogous to those performed by the levies formerly made under commissions of array; and it is governed by martial law, in accordance with provisions laid down in the various militia acts.

It is not, perhaps, a question of much importance whether the prerogative of the crown, which was specially saved by the earlier mutiny acts, to give and enforce martial law in places beyond sea, is still effectual. It has not been abrogated by any statutes, and it would seem to survive and be recognised in some of the clauses of the Mutiny Act. Within the United Kingdom, however, and for the government of troops sanctioned by parliament, no matter where serving, martial law exists only by virtue of the Mutiny Act and the Articles of War; and the effect of a proclamation of martial

law, which, in the United Kingdom at least, is illegal without the consent of parliament, is to place all persons in the same position as if they were included in the Mutiny Act.

By the Mutiny Act, power is given to the crown to establish martial law, and to convene courts-martial within the realm and its foreign possessions, for the purpose of punishing offenders against the act and the Articles of War authorised by it. Annual warrants are accordingly sent to the officers commanding at home and abroad, authorising them to convene courts-martial, and to depute their power to any officer under their command, for the trial of offences; provided that the officer so authorised be not under the degree of a field-officer, except in detached situations beyond sea, where a field-officer may not be in command, and then a captain may be authorised.

A general court-martial must consist of not less than thirteen commissioned officers. It can sentence any officer or soldier to suffer death, penal servitude, imprisonment, forfeiture of pay, or pension, or any other punishment which shall accord with the usage of the service; but a sentence of death must be concurred in by at least two-thirds of the officers present.

A district or garrison court-martial must consist of not less than seven commissioned officers. It cannot try a commissioned officer, but it has the same power over a soldier as a general court-martial, except that it cannot condemn to death or penal servitude.

A regimental or detachment court-martial must consist, if possible, of five commissioned officers, but three are enough. It can sentence a soldier to corporal punishment, or to imprisonment, and to forfeiture of pay.

Where it may be found impracticable, in places beyond sea, to assemble a general court-martial, and offences of which such a court has cognizance have been committed, the officer commanding may convene a Detachment General Court-martial, to consist of not less than three commissioned officers, for the trial of the offenders; and the court will have like powers to those given by the act to general courts-martial. The general in command must approve and confirm the sentence.

Crimes punishable with death are enumerated in the act; and power is given to commute the sentence of death to one of penal servitude or imprisonment. Power is also given to inflict corporal punishment, with or without imprisonment, to commute the same for imprisonment, and to brand deserters. No one convicted or acquitted by the civil power is to be tried by court-martial for the same offence. Soldiers are not liable to be taken out of the service, except for felony, misdemeanour, or debts above thirty pounds.

The Articles of War declare certain military duties, and provide punishment for various crimes, as perjury, mutiny, desertion, absence without leave, offences in the field, camp, garrison, or quarters, drunkenness, disgraceful conduct, and some others. They lay down certain regulations for the guidance of courts-martial, and provide for the admixture on such courts of officers belonging to different branches of the service.

The president of the court is the senior combatant officer: he must not be the confirming officer. Officers of an inferior rank are not to try one of a higher rank: the trying officers are to be

equals or superiors of the prisoner. No court-martial can be held by the military on board a man-of-war, the land forces being then under naval discipline, as prescribed by orders issued from the Admiralty.

The navy is not governed by the annual Mutiny Act, but by permanent statutes, of which 22 Geo. II. c. 33 is the chief. This act declares the Articles of the Navy, which are comprehensive and very stringent. They specify the cases in which death may be awarded, and end by saying that 'all other crimes, not capital, committed by any person or persons in the fleet, which are not mentioned in this act, or for which no punishment is hereby directed to be inflicted, shall be punished according to the laws and customs in such cases used at sea.'

The navy, besides being the natural defence of England from foreigners, and therefore ever to be kept up, could not become dangerous to the liberties of the country; but experience proved that this was not so with an army, and therefore it was that our ancestors, in their wisdom, 'out of the nettle danger plucked the flower safety,' by simply providing that without their consent, annually to be asked, a standing army could have no legal existence in England.

To proclaim martial law generally in the United Kingdom, the sanction of parliament is required; and though it is a question whether in the colonies the crown may not of its ancient prerogative proclaim martial law at discretion, in practice the safer way, and the way commonly adopted when such proclamations are made, is to get from the local legislature an Act of Indemnity, authorising retrospectively the establishment of martial law.

L. B. C.

THOSE composers of waltzes have a great deal to answer for. One can stand any amount of quadrille, which only serves to drown soft insinuations, and make flirtation difficult; the moribund but tenacious polka raises the spirits, and tarantularises the legs, but penetrates not to the heart; the stirring galop sends the dance-maniac into a paroxysm of insane emulation of the solar system, tops, impaled cockchafers, and everything else which is rotatory, and acts as a powerful sudorific upon the skin; but Love cannot go the pace with it. It is the melancholy, dreamy, romantic, and yet intoxicating waltz which plays the mischief with the susceptible bachelor. It is as tantalising, in a Terpsichorean sense, as any other dance-music, if not more so; but besides this harmless physical effect upon the nerves, it exercises a subtle aesthetic influence over the soul, which is alone sufficient to establish its German origin. I speak not of the original *trois-temps*, or of those barrel-organ arrangements which are founded upon popular comic airs, but of the legitimate *deux-temps* waltz; the Olga, the Prima Donna, the Faust, the Guards, the dangerous characteristic of all which is an under-current of some long drawn-out note, perceptible through every turn and twist of the air.

Knowing nothing of the theory of music, I cannot explain my meaning properly, but fellow-sufferers will understand me. The violin and violoncello have this particular advantage over other instruments, that when the player gets hold of the chord which vibrates all up one's backbone, he can dwell upon it for any amount of time, keeping up the vibration until the whole body and soul of the

listener is saturated with the music, and drawing tears from eyes which are not easily suffused. The organ, it is true, also affects you by the prolongation of its notes, but the organ is a solemn affair, and I am thinking of dance-music. The piano, on the other hand, pleases you by its brilliancy, by a constant succession of pleasant sounds, gushing out like jets from a fountain. But a waltz played on the piano, without either a violin or cornet-a-piston accompaniment, is a waltz with its fangs drawn; for the piano cannot sustain those long-drawn notes which turn your heart into water, and make you feel inclined to pour out the solution at your partner's feet.

Ah me, the years that have fled! And yet how vividly I can recall the sixth dance of the first ball of the season of 18—! When Weippart's band played the opening bars of the *Valse d'Amour*, I had no need to look at my card; the name of Cousin Ellen was engraved too deeply on my heart for that. I found her sitting behind the door, in the ice-room, talking to Carroll the barrister. She jumped up with alacrity. 'Here you are at last!' she cried, taking my arm; 'now I shall enjoy my first dance to-night.'

'Why,' said I, 'you have had three, for you came in time for the second, and have not sat out once.'

'Oh, that polka with Captain Moore was a perfect penance—he cannot keep step at all; and as for walking through the last quadrille with Mr Carroll, I do not call that dancing. But I never enjoy waltzing with any one so much as with you, Bob; it is the one thing you can do to perfection. Every one has his or her speciality, you know, and dancing is yours.'

'Ah,' said I, as the *fumes* of the music enveloped me, 'do you remember when we were children, and used to dance at Christmas-parties?'

'Yes, and what a bore you used to think it!'

'True, I was blind and idiotic enough for that; I never liked dancing till I was about seventeen. But I always liked you, Ellen.' Here I gave her hand a gentle squeeze, and it is my firm impression that— But no, not on the rack would I divulge it. Let me suffer, and be strong. 'Do you remember that you promised to be my little wife?'

'Did I? How foolish children are!'

'How delightful it would be' (I denounce the composer of the *Valse d'Amour* as the person who forced me to say all this) 'if such a childish day-dream were to prove some day a waking reality!'

Ellen was out of breath, and uttered no reply with her tongue, but the gipsy made a most nefarious use of her eyes. Ah, if young ladies knew the effect they produce by glancing softly up at their partners in a languishing waltz, and then looking down immediately on the ground, they would not do it: or perhaps they would do it all the more; there is no trusting them. The waltz came to an end, but its effects did not cease all at once, and Bob was by no means himself again in consequence.

'I must make the most of this ball, for we are not to remain in London long, and I shall not have many this summer,' said Ellen as we promenade.

'What!' I exclaimed in a tone of disappointment, for the words were like lumps of ice dropped down the back.

'Papa has taken a house on the banks of the

Thames, at Longreach. It is delightful; there is a lawn sloping down to the river, and a boat-house. You used to row when you were up at the university, did you not?

'A little.'

'That is delightful. You must come and stay whenever you can, and take an oar. Papa has gone wild on aquatics.'

I went down to Longreach, when the Martins were settled in their new house, on a Saturday to Monday visit, and found everything unexpectedly delightful. Uncle William, who was accustomed to dwell upon the insignificance of my patrimony, and the improbability of my ever making an income out of my ink-pot, whenever I met him, never alluded to those chilling topics; Aunt Maria substituted her pleasant cordial face for the ordinary cold-shoulder with which she treated me; Dick, the hope of the family, was less mischievous, now that he had left Eton, and commenced cramming for the army; and as for the girls, their behaviour was cousinly and comfortable as always.

Eden had one snake, and that wore the likeness of Carroll, who came to dinner on the Sunday in a very free-and-easy sort of way; that is, upon a general, not a special invitation.

After due reflection upon the state of things, I formed the following conclusions: That the Martin family saw that my early friendship for Cousin Nelly had become transmogrified into love; that my uncle and aunt had at length perceived my many merits, and were no longer inclined to discountenance my attentions to their daughter; that the sentiments of Ellen herself coincided with those of her parents upon this interesting subject; but that Carroll was a rival, and must be watched. I made a master-move. Carroll was nailed by business to London, and had but slight excuse for constant visits to the Martins, while my movements were free, and my presence welcome. So I found that the heat of my chambers disagreed with me, and I took bachelor lodgings in Longreach.

'Have you come into the country for a spell, Bob?' said my uncle, when he first learned the fact. 'That is right; your new novel will be all the fresher for it. You must join the L. B. C. I will put you up to-night, and Thwarts shall second you. Thwarts is our Hon. Sec.'

'Proud and happy I am sure,' I lied. 'What is the L. B. C., though?'

'Why, the Longreach Boating Club, to be sure.'

'Well, I will pay my subscription, of course; but I do not know enough about rowing to be a very active member.'

'O come!' said my uncle; 'that will not do. I know better than that.'

That evening, I was unanimously elected into the L. B. C., and introduced to the members at a cold supper, which my uncle gave at his own house; for his meals had got all queer and straggling since he had appeared in the character of a jolly middle-aged waterman; and lunch was a kind of dinner, taken at irregular hours, and tea seemed to be going on all the afternoon and evening; while the only real and comfortable repast was taken when it was dark, and no more boating could be done till the morrow.

'You will be a great accession to our club,' said Mr Thwarts to me: 'you used to pull at Cambridge, I believe.'

'Not much,' I replied. 'Of course I subscribed to the college-boat, but I never rowed in it. My

boating has been entirely confined to pottering about with a cigar in my mouth. I never got hot over it in my life.'

'O Bob!' cried Nelly, 'when you won that handsome cup!' The handsome cup was a pewter pot with a glass bottom, and the college arms engraved upon it, underneath which were inscribed the names of four victorious oarsmen and their cockawain, and I was handed down to posterity as a successful No. 3.

The pot was a swindle: we only got two boats to enter for the college scratch fours that year, and as the day fixed for the race was a wet one, we *lost* who should be supposed to have won.

Alas! I had yielded to the promptings of vanity, and displayed the mendacious trophy to my aunt and cousins when they came to lunch at my chambers one day, in the course of a shopping carnival; and as I had suppressed the details of the race, they had gone away firmly impressed with the idea that I was fit to row for the championship of the Thames. I now told the real story, which was received with shouts of incredulous laughter.

'The invention of similar anecdotes is his professional pursuit,' said my uncle in explanation.

'But this is a fact, I assure you,' I cried.

'Oh, of course,' said my uncle. 'But the next time you tell it, Bob, take my advice, and season it with a little *fiction*, to make it sound more probable.'

'I am sorry to press you to row, if you do not like it,' said Thwarts; 'but we have accepted a challenge from the Dedwater Rowing Club, and can only get seven oars together. Mr Martin must row, if you will not.'

'Yes,' cried my uncle; 'and I can hardly pull my weight; besides which, the training would kill me; so, if you persist in your refusal, Bob, you will be guilty of avunculicide.'

'Dear papa!' said Ellen pathetically. 'Oh! cousin Bob! What could a poor fellow do but yield? I yielded. When I called on the following morning, I found that Ellen was out shopping with her mother, so I took two of the younger girls out on the water; for I enjoyed aquatic exercise when taken in a rational manner—I lolling on the cushions in the stern of the boat, and they rowing me about.'

'Who is this Mr Thwarts?' I asked, thinking to extract information from Jenny, an observant puss of fifteen.

'Mr Thwarts is a very great man,' said Jenny; 'he owns everything and everybody nearly about here, and is ever so rich. And he is a magistrate, and could be a member of parliament if he wished, only he prefers boating; and he likes Nelly, and papa and mamma are glad of it.'

'And does Nelly like him?'

'I don't think she does, much,' said Jenny, resting on her oar, and looking mysterious—'at least, not in the way you mean. But you must not tell I said so!'

I vowed secrecy, and meditated. Carroll, then, was not the man I had to fear, but Thwarts, and I made up my mind to Thwart him. Only I could not do it; on the contrary, he thwarted me—that is, he made me row No. 5 in an eight-oar against my will. I had always pitied galley-slaves with a theoretical pity, but now I sympathised with them from my soul.

Never shall I forget my first 'spin' up the river. It was all very well at first, while we paddled

easily along with a slow and lingering stroke, though even then the cockswain's remarks were unpleasant, while he addressed me as 'No. 5,' as if I had really been a prisoner at Brest.

'Time, No. 5!' 'More forward, No. 5!' 'Don't pull so much with your arms, No. 5!'

As if any one but Miss Biffin could pull with the legs! But after a while Thwarts began to quicken his stroke, and the effects were most unpleasant; I broke out in a violent perspiration, I got out of breath, my hands felt as though they had received the punishment of the cane, and the remembrance was vividly enforced upon me that that scholastic instrument of torture is sometimes otherwise applied; for those nice-looking white rugs which are tied on the seats of boats are delusions and snares, especially when they wriggle round in such a manner that the knots come uppermost.

At the expiration of five minutes, which seemed like fifty, I cried out 'Stop!'

'Easy all!' said the cockswain.

'What is the matter?' asked Thwarts.

'The matter is, that I am composed of flesh and blood, not iron and brass,' I gasped; 'that I am a man, and not a steam-engine of forty horse-power.'

'Ah, you are out of condition,' said Thwarts. 'A week's training will bring you up to the mark. However, we will take it easy to-day. Paddle on all!'

So I paddled on in silence, but I formed an inward resolution, which I broached to Nelly that very evening.

'Well,' said she, as I put a gentle on the line with which she was angling at the bottom of the garden, 'how does the boat go?'

'Bother the boat!' cried I. 'Look there!' And I exhibited my hands, which were covered with large white bladders.

'Oh, that is nothing,' said she. 'I despise a man who has no blisters.'

'Indeed? Then I shall be sorry to incur your scorn, but I mean to fit myself for it as soon as possible. I will not row any more.'

'O Bob, when papa has set his heart on our beating the Dedwaters, and we cannot make up the eight without you; how unkind!'

'You are very warm about this boat-race,' said I sarcastically.

'I am,' she replied; 'I shall be so disappointed if you do not row.'

'Yes, because you wish to please this Thwarts. But I have no reason for currying favour with the fellow. Hang Thwarts!'

'With all my heart; after the match.'

'You little humbug!' cried I. 'I know all about it!'

'What! are you too against me?' she said, pointing. 'I thought I had one friend in dear old Bob!'

'What! you do not wish to have him then?'

She shook her head.

'Honour bright!'

She nodded.

'Why do you wish me to make a water-martyr of myself, then?'

'Because I want to beat that horrid D. R. C. Besides, I have a reason. Do not ask me what; I will tell you some day.'

After much solitary self-communing, I now came to the conclusion that my former speculations as to the state of affairs were all wrong; that

uncle and aunt Martin had settled the match between Ellen and Thwarts in their own minds, and were cordial to me because I was no longer, in their estimation, dangerous as a lover, though as a familiar cousin I might act as a spur to the hesitating lover's intent; that Ellen, though not liking to run counter to her parents' wishes, much preferred myself, and that she urged me to remain in the Longreach eight to keep me near her.

I longed to put an end to my doubts and anxieties by a formal offer of marriage, and had often tried to do so. But I had been making love to her in a jocular manner ever since I was twelve and she ten years of age, and she persisted in taking everything I said in fun. Still, I thought my chances looked so well, that I obeyed her wishes, and remained one of the crew of the L. B. C.

'Have you begun training yet?' asked Thwarts, when we met at the boat-house next day.

'No,' said I. 'Is it really necessary?'

'Of course it is. No man can last over a mile-course unless he is in training. And after all, what is it? A healthy life of moderation, temperance, and exercise in the open air for six weeks, which will be of the greatest possible advantage to your constitution, besides clearing your brain after the hard work you must have been giving it lately. By the by, what a capital story your last novel is.'

In an evil hour, and totally ignorant of what was before me, I allowed myself to be cajoled, and promised to enter upon a course of training the very next day. My uncle was delighted; Ellen smiled approbation and gratitude; and my seven fellow-sufferers declared that I was a thorough good-fellow; and as at that time I was still foolish enough to care for the praise or blame of my fellow-creatures, I rejoiced in their applause, and went to an early couch, soothed by the consciousness of virtue.

I always sleep in summer with my bedroom window open, a practice which was peculiarly pleasant in my Longreach lodgings, because of the honeysuckle and jessamine which grew luxuriantly over the verandah immediately beneath, allowing fragrant sprays to straggle through the casement. There was a nightingale, too, who made a practice of serenading me from an opposite tree, and whose song on this particular night was particularly soothing and brilliant, though it must have been after I had dropped off to sleep that he adapted human words to his melody, and treated me to—

Oh! had you ever a cousin, Tom?

Did that cousin happen to sing?

Of sisters you've got a round dozen, Tom,

But a cousin's a different thing.

Doubtless I dreamed that, for my sleep was profusely illustrated, and dissolving views chased each other across my retina with the rapidity of the 'Scenes from the Holy Land' upon the white sheet at the Polytechnic; and all my visions that night were of a pleasing nature, especially the last, which represented an eight-oar skimming over a smooth sea, with a bride crowned with orange blossoms, and a bridegroom attired in white ducks and a straw hat, reposing luxuriously in the stern. I was that comfortable bridegroom, and Cousin Nelly was—

'Hulloa! not up yet!' roared a voice of thunder, which brought me from a horizontal to a sitting

posture with an electric start; and on looking in the direction from which the sounds proceeded, I saw with horror a man's head and shoulders protruded through the window.'

'Go away!' I cried. 'I will call the police! I will shoot you! I have a revolver under the pillow.'

'Have you, though? That cannot be permitted till after the race, for you might meet with an accident.'

'Thwarts!' I cried, recognising him. 'How did you ever get there?'

'Climbed up the verandah, of course,' he replied. 'I could not wake you by shouting and throwing stones from below. But come, are you going to lie in bed all day? It is nearly seven o'clock.'

'What! in the evening?' I cried, springing out.

'No, no, of course not; seven A.M. to be sure.'

'Then in another three hours I will talk to you; but my constitution will not stand night-work,' said I.

'Nonsense,' replied Thwarts, introducing the whole of himself into my desecrated bower. 'You have promised to train like the rest of us, and our rule is to meet at the Angler's Joy at a quarter past seven; bathe, just a header, and out again; run from the Willows to the Rushes, which is a measured mile; cool down, and dress, and then breakfast together at the inn. Disperse till twelve, then take a short row, returning to dinner at two. Dine together, and separate till five, when we take a good spell up the river, returning to supper at eight, and turning in at ten sharp.'

'We take all our meals together at the Angler's Joy, then?' I remarked.

'Yes,' said Thwarts, 'or some of us would be tempted to eat unlawful food. But come, look sharp; you had better do your washing and shaving after your mile run, and then you will be comfortable for breakfast. A jump in the river will do for the present.'

Being in for it, I thought I would go through with it, and yielded myself up like a lamb. We found our six fellow-victims gathered at the Angler's Joy, and I rejoiced to see that they one and all looked surly; they were good-tempered fellows, as your brawny, strong-armed men for the most part provisionally are; but to be torn out of bed in the middle of the night, and told to jump into a river, is trying to the most amiable disposition.

That somewhat dreaded plunge, however, was in reality very pleasant, and made one feel as fresh and active as a lark; sensations which were too soon obliterated.

'You need not take so much trouble to dry yourself,' said Thwarts to me; 'you will not take cold if you go in and have a rub down directly after your run.' And he started off at a round trot, an example which, one after the other, we all followed. Some ran the whole mile; others, as it was the first day of regular training, only half that distance; while I had to stop at the end of about three hundred yards, blowing like a grampus. However, with many rests, and sitting down at frequent intervals, I managed to come in a very bad eighth, and then I retired to my lodgings, and made myself comfortable for the breakfast, for which I felt very great need.

'How stale the bread is!' cried I. 'I hate stale bread.'

'New bread is the worst thing possible for the wind.'

'There is no tea!'

'Tea! It is poison. You may have a pint of small-beer.'

'How dreadfully underdone these chops are!'

'Not a bit; the gravy is the nutritious part.'

However, extreme exhaustion enabled me to make an unpalatable meal, and then I drew forth my pipe.

'What is that?' cried Thwarts. 'My dear fellow, you must not smoke at this time of day. One pipe after supper is all we allow, and even that is bad for the wind.'

'But,' cried I in dismay, 'my allowance is half a pound of shag and a quarter of a box of cigars a week!'

'So is mine, quite that,' murmured No. 2.

'And mine!' said Bow.

'One pipe after breakfast could never hurt,' added No. 4.

I had very nearly excited a mutiny; but Thwarts talked his crew over, consoling them with the reflection that their abstinence was only to be for six weeks, at the expiration of which time they might smoke another penny off the income-tax, if they liked.

Having my pipe put out was not the worst part of the business. I must confess that I do like my dinner, and am accustomed to look forward to it with considerable cheerfulness, and now that I had a ravenous appetite, which I could not remember being blest with since the happy days of childhood, I was obliged to squander it upon disgusting raw beef-steaks and vulgar malt liquor, and any secret infringement of the rules laid down for our guidance, produced a sensation as if the heart was bursting when we 'put it on' during the evening's spin up the river.

Well, my 'wind' certainly improved, and my muscles grew more powerful; but my unfortunate hands became completely flayed, so that I had to row in gloves, and I was obliged to have my flannel trousers thickly padded, so that the joys of training did not grow upon me, as I had been assured they would after the first; on the contrary, I marked off the six weeks on my almanac, and scratched out every day as it passed with the eagerness of a school-boy watching the approach of the holidays. And oh! how I enjoyed the Sundays.

One thing fairly puzzled me, and that was the great interest which Carroll the barrister suddenly took in the L. B. C. eight in general, and my unworthy self in particular. I had known him, it was true, from boyhood, but of late years we had only seen each other occasionally, our paths of life being diverse. Why, then, did he come bustling up to Longreach and calling at my lodgings five days in the week? What made him so hostile to the inoffensive Dedwaters, that he out-uncled my uncle in his desire that we should humble their pride, or, as he inelegantly expressed himself, 'should take the shine out of them?' To what could his anxiety lest I should 'overdo it,' and the cunning ointments he provided for my abrasions, be ascribed? Did he conclude that we were both unsuccessful lovers, and had he a sympathy for me, the result of our common misfortune? Did he wish to prove, by taking an interest in the success of Thwarts's

young man, but had merely felt a friendship for Ellen, which was in nowise affected by her engagement to another?

I observed one evening, after he had run on the bank for upwards of three miles, coaching us, that he was very disinterested.

'Not exactly,' he replied. 'One of the Dedwater crew offered three to one on his boat at the club a fortnight ago, and as I liked the style in which you went the day before, when I happened to see you, I took him.'

'To any amount?'

'In hundreds.'

This, certainly, was some slight explanation of his interest, for a hundred pounds is a nasty sum to lose, and three hundred a nice sum to win, for a professional man.

At the end of three weeks' training, I had an eruption of boils, which were very painful, and exceedingly disagreeable. But when I sought for pity, I was told that it was all right, and they would do me all the good in nature. I also observed that Carroll was not welcome to my uncle and aunt, in spite of his aquatic enthusiasm. Ha! was he still to be feared? No, no; Ellen could never inflict all this misery upon a poor wretch, even if he were a cousin, without intending to recompense him. Still, I was uneasy in mind; as for my body, all ease had departed from that weeks before.

The day of the match drew near, but I did not dread it; on the contrary, had it been a duel or a battle, I should have hailed the event which put an end to the preparation. I have heard that soldiers who have been investing a town for some time are madly impatient for the assault, preferring the most forlorn-hope of not being blown up, skewered, or chopped down, to the certainty of work in the trenches; and I can easily understand it.

What puzzles me more is, that when the day actually arrived, and the hostile boat made its appearance, and the river was covered with gay barges, and the lawns on the bank with tents and ladies, I actually caught the infection which I had escaped during the whole six weeks' training, and became absurdly anxious to win. I could have punched the heads of those Dedwater fellows; I rejoiced to observe that one of them had a slight cold, and that another seemed weak about the loins. More; as the time approached, I grew so excited, that I staked money, ay, as much as I could earn in three months with this pen, on our boat! It was temporary insanity.

My uncle's preparations for celebrating the regatta were grand. Both the crews were to dine with him afterwards, and the festivities were to terminate in a ball, held in a large marquee erected on the lawn; and the trees of the garden were profusely hung with little coloured lamps, to give a fairy-like effect to the scene.

Of the race, I cannot tell you much. I can remember paddling up to the starting-place, and a man in a ten-oared waterman's boat saying: 'Are you ready? Go!' But immediately after that I lost consciousness of everything except that my frame was bursting, splitting, blowing up, and coming to pieces generally; that the idea of surviving was absurd, but that it did not much matter; and that I hoped for speedy dissolution, or some other termination of the race. Just as I was perfectly convinced that I had only two seconds

more to live, there was a tremendous shouting, and the cockswain (oh, how I loathed that little man!) yelled out: 'Now, then, come away! We're ahead! Six strokes more with a will, and we can't lose! Hurrah!' And I just roused myself for a final effort, which lasted, not for six strokes, but at least for twenty, and rolled backwards upon No. 4. But it did not matter; the L. B. C. had won.

I had earned any amount of praise, and as much reward as I could get, from Ellen; I had won my money; I could eat, drink, and smoke what and how much I chose. The training was over! In spite of exhaustion, that idea was delicious!

So was my uncle's dinner; heaps of good things, and nothing interdicted! Even Ellen's ingratitude could not spoil my appetite, and I put it to any one whether she was good.

'Well, Nelly,' I cried, on first seeing her after the race, 'we have won, you see.'

'So I suppose,' she replied listlessly.

'Are you not glad?'

'Glad? O yes, of course. Very nice, wasn't it?'

'I tell you what, Ellen,' said I, 'if you had only spoken in that tone before, you would have saved me the most unpleasant six weeks I ever spent in my life.'

'Poor old Bob!' she cried; 'I am really very glad; only I have a headache, and am so stupid.'

'I hope you will be all right to-night,' said I, as she went off.

'What do you mean, Bob?' said she, stopping short, and turning pale.

'Why, for the ball, of course.'

'O yes, to be sure,' she cried with a laugh, 'the ball! I told you I was stupid to-day.'

I repeat that I intensely enjoyed my dinner, but for the dancing afterwards I had no great mind: I was stiff, I was sore, and I had long arrears of tobacco to pull up. There was a delightful amount of freedom and ease about the party; those who liked, stopped in the tent and danced, those who preferred it wandered about the grounds; it was of little use to engage partners beforehand, and none at all to hunt for them if they were not in the marquee when the band struck up. I took advantage of this state of things, and withdrew to a quiet nook I knew of under a willow which overhung the river, settled myself comfortably, and filled my largest meerschaum.

With lights and music at some little distance behind me, a comfortable quantum of claret inside me, and the dark-flowing river before me, time passed rapidly, and I had sat smoking and idly dreaming of past trials and future hopes, the latter all connected with my pretty cousin, for upwards of an hour, when my attention was drawn to an object on the water, which, as my eyes had become accustomed to the darkness, I soon made out to be a wherry, stealthily approaching the spot where I sat. It might be only some uninvited neighbour, enjoying the freshness of the air and the music, but it was a late hour for indulging such a fancy, and my curiosity was excited. Nor was it diminished when the boat stole quietly under the willow, and was made fast to the bank; nor when a female figure, enveloped in a voluminous shawl, and carrying a large carpet-bag, came hurriedly along the path; nor when a man leaped from the boat, and took the carpet-bag aforesaid from her hand.

A keen pang of suspicion and jealousy shot

through my heart, as I rose and approached the pair, to their evident alarm.

'It is only Bob!' said the voice of Nelly presently. 'O Bob, how you frightened me!'

'Are you going for a row?' I asked with desperate calmness.

'Yes. Don't say anything about it; there is a good boy.'

'May I ask who with?' I could not help saying.

'With me, Carroll, to be sure!' said the voice of that hateful barrister. 'Why, you must have seen how the land lay, surely, old fellow. We are sorry to have to take this step; but Mr Martin is so determined that Ellen shall be thrown away upon that fellow Thwarts, that there is nothing else to be done. Let me take this opportunity of thanking you sincerely for falling into our plans, and going in for this race, to give me an opportunity of perpetually coming down here on the pretence of coaching you, and seeing how the boat was getting on. The three hundred pounds, too, will be most useful for preliminary expenses. But we must be off. Good-bye.'

'Good-bye, dear Bob,' said Nelly, holding out her hand.

I made a violent effort to put a good face on the matter; and after having been so egregiously duped all along, I had to put the final touch by helping them into the boat and shoving them off, and in doing this I nearly fell into the water, and had to grasp a handful of drooping twigs to recover my balance.

The boat vanished into the night, and when I turned from the spot with a heavy heart, I found a few weeds of willow in my hand.

'Pshaw!' cried I, throwing it away.

There was a terrible disturbance when the elopement was known, but the Martins forgave the couple in a few weeks; and when all turned out well, and Carroll's position at the bar became more and more established, my uncle was even jocular on the subject.

'Ah!' said he, at a certain christening dinner, 'those barristers are such imposing fellows; give them an inch, and they will take a Nell!'

It is all very well for him to joke; but I shall marry for money.

ONE OF THE FAMILY.

FROM a very early period, the welfare and daily life of the apprentice appear to have received serious consideration, not only in the local legislative assemblies, but also in the national one. So far back as the reign of Richard II., bills with reference to him were enacted. An act of the year 1388 ordained that he or she 'which use to labour' at the plough or cart till 'they be of the age of twelve,' should continue at that labour afterwards, and were not to be apprenticed to any 'mistry.' This bill, however, must have been generally evaded, for the preamble of an act of 7 Henry IV. stated that there was a great scarcity of agricultural labourers, by reason of people who were influenced by 'the pride of clothing or other evil customs,' apprenticing their children to trades; and went on to enact, that only those individuals who had not less than twenty shillings per annum in freehold land or rent should put their children out apprentices to handicrafts,

although any persons might put their children 'to take learning at any manner of school that pleaseth him.' This act, however, did not refer to the city of London, as a later act explained, every person in the city 'not of villain state or condition' being privileged to put his sons or daughters apprentice to the freemen. In the year 1483, it was enacted that aliens were not to take for apprentices any save those who were English-born, except their own sons or daughters—*sinon il soit son fits ou sa fille*. Again, in 1523, it was ordained that 'no man or stranger borne out of the kyngees obeysaunce, be he denisen or not denisen,' was to take any apprentices save those who were natives of England. Another bill of 1535 enacted that companies or guilds should take only two shillings and sixpence fee for the entry of an apprentice, and three shillings and fourpence when the apprentice had served his time.

The celebrated statute of Elizabeth 'touching dyvers orders for artyficers,' contained several provisions having reference to apprentices. Husbandmen 'using half a ploughlande at the least in tillage,' might take one apprentice of between twelve and eighteen years of age, to serve until he was twenty-one or twenty-four years old. Merchants in cities and corporate towns 'trafficking by trafique or trade into any p'tes beyond the sea,' were prohibited from taking apprentices whose fathers and mothers had not land or houses of the clear yearly value of forty shillings. Tradesmen in market-towns were permitted to have two apprentices, but they were not to be sons of labourers or husbandmen. The last restriction was enforced also in the case of weavers of woollen cloth, excepting those who dwell in towns; but twenty-one trades were left open to the children of the tillers of the soil. The same act prohibited persons from exercising any 'arte, misterie, or mannall occupacon,' unless they had served seven years' apprenticeship.

The master in several trades was to employ one journeyman to every three apprentices. Any person under the age of twenty-one years refusing to become an apprentice, was to be committed 'unto wardie, there to remayne untill he be contented, and will be bounden to serve as an apprentice should serve.' This act did not refer to the city of Norwich, which had special privileges. Another act of the same date authorised 'every householdier using and exercising the trade of the sea by fishing or otherwise,' to take apprentices only seven years old. Perhaps, however, of all the acts of parliament with reference to apprentices, one of the year 1609 is the most creditable to the sense of the parliament. Its preamble stated that there was 'alredye greates somes of money freely given, and more in tyme to come lyke to be given by dyvers well-disposed persons,' unto corporations, to bind apprentices of both sexes 'in trades and mannall occupacions very p'fittble in the comon-welth, and acceptable and pleasing unto Almighty God;' and the bill enacted that corporations were to apprentice poor children who were under fifteen years of age, the master being bound in sufficient sureties to return the money at the expiration of the term of apprenticeship. A bequest of this nature was made to the corporation of Preston, but about a year ago that body diverted it from its original purpose, giving it as a grammar-school scholarship. In the year 1703, it was ordained, in order to give 'due encouragement to

such of the youth of this kingdom as shall voluntarily betake themselves to the sea and practice of navigation, justices of the peace were empowered to apprentice poor lads and young vagrants to masters of ships, the churchwardens of the parish having to pay the master fifty shillings for the lad's outfit, and also to conduct him to the port from whence his ship was to sail.

During all this lapse of years, it must not be supposed that the local legislators in corporations, companies, and guilds were neglectful of the apprentice; on the contrary, they who saw more and knew more of him, legislated much in his behoof. Perhaps one of their wisest ordinances was that by which they compelled the father of an illegitimate child to pay to the corporate authorities a sum of money with which to defray the expenses of its apprenticeship. An old deed of this class, dated 1592, provides for the maintenance of the apprentice until he was twenty-four years of age, the master being held liable for his 'keep in time of sickness, if it shall please God to lay such visitation upon him,' and orders that his employers shall find him in food, and 'for labouring days and the Sabbath two shirts.' At the conclusion of twelve years' service, the servant was to receive a reward of twenty shillings, 'unless there is fault at the end of the time.' Some children were thus apprenticed to husbandry, or the 'arte of good housewifery after the best manner;' and there are references to two lads, one of whom was apprenticed to 'a gentleman,' and the other to a 'musicianer.' The companies and guilds, in legislating for the protection of their own interests, could not avoid enactments bearing upon apprenticeship. Many, however, of their laws with reference to the apprentice appear to have been the result of the absurd jealousy with which 'foreigners'—a comprehensive term, including even inhabitants of neighbouring towns—were regarded. So far back as 1413, the mayor and commonalty of Norwich prohibited foreigners from taking any more apprentices until they had purchased their freedom, 'except their own or their wife's children.' In one borough alone, no less than ten companies enacted that 'no Scotsman born' should be taken apprentice, 'or suffered to work within the town,' one company classing them with Dutchmen, who were equally debarred; and a company of weavers ordained, that if any member called another a Scot 'in malice,' he was to forfeit six and eightpence. This foolish feeling, however, appears to have died out, or to have faded before the intensity of the antipathy with which members of the Society of Friends were regarded, for a later guild ordinance enacted that the children of Quakers were not to be taken apprentice under pain of a penalty of one hundred pounds.

We have it on the authority of Chaucer that the apprentice was too fond of pleasure:

At every bridle would he sing and hoppe;
He loved bet the tavern than the shoppe;

but a Newcastle eye-witness, writing the by-laws of the Merchant Guild in 1554, gives a terrible account of the embryo merchants. Struck with astonishment, the old scribe writes: 'What dyseing, cardeing, and mumming! what typling, daunseing, and brasing of harlots! what garded cotes, jagged hose lined with silke, and cutt shoes! what use of gyttynes by nyght! what wearinge of berds! what daggers ys be, them worne crosse overthwarte their

backes, that theeis their dooings are moore cumlye and decent for vageing ruffians than seemlie for honest apprentices.' The guild appears to have been resolved to pass a comprehensive reform bill, for they forbade the apprentices to 'daunse, dyse, carde, or mum;' just as at Galway, twenty-six years previously, gambling was prohibited, 'speciallee by prentisyrs nor Irishmen.' They were also prohibited from using 'any gyttynes,' or to wear any 'cutt hose, cutt shoes, or paunced jekins, or any berds,' and enjoined to wear 'none other hoses than sloppes of coarse clothe whereof the yard do not exceed 12d.;' and, strange to say, their shoes and their coats were to be 'of the same materiall and housewyfes making.' They were also forbidden to wear any 'straite hose' in place of those 'playn, without cutts, pounsing, or gards.' The apprentices of mayors, sheriffs, and aldermen, however, were not required to dress according to this statute.

The guild appear to have been influenced by the old school copy-book aphorism, 'Evil communications corrupt good manners,' for, in 1554, it was ordained that natives of Tynedale and Tydesdale were not to be taken as apprentices, 'the parties there brought up being known, either by education or nature, not to be of honest conversation.' Even the exclusion of these youths did not improve the morals of the apprentices, and in November 1603, the authorities again forbade them to 'daunse, dice, carde, mum, or use any music, either by nyght or by daye, in the streetes.' The cloth of which their garments was to be fashioned was not to exceed ten shillings a yard, and their 'fustian' was to be under three shillings per yard. The London apprentices, in 1611, were forbidden any material save 'cloth, kersey, fustian, sackcloth, canvas, English leather, or English stuffe' of not more than two shillings and sixpence per yard; and their hats, with band and trimming, were not to cost above five shillings. At Newcastle, the lads were not to wear any velvet or lace, or any 'silke garters,' silk or velvet girdles, worsted stockings, silk shoe-strings, 'pumps, pantofles, or cake shoes,' hats lined with velvet, 'nor double cypruss hat-bands,' cloaks, daggers, or 'ruffled bands.' They were permitted, however, to wear 'falling bands plaine, without lace, sticlie, or any kind of sown worke;' but, on the other hand, they were expressly cautioned against wearing their hair long, '*nor lockes at the eares like ruffians*.' Some idea of the despotic power possessed by these associations may be arrived at, when it is considered that this Merchants' Guild selected a special prison to contain, and appointed its own jailer to look after those courageous youths who dared to disobey the mandates of the magnates.

That there were such brave ones is shewn by many old entries, one of which testifies to the fact, that in the year 1649, when it was enacted that the apprentice was to cut his hair from the 'crown of his head,' that he was to 'keep his forehead bare,' and that 'his lockes (if any) shall not reach below the lap of his eare;' that when he was ill, he was to wear a 'linnen cappe and no other, and that without laice;' that he was not to wear beaver hats 'nor castors;' no gold or silver work, but only black bands to black hats, and suitable bands to gray ones; no 'fancies' or ribbons; no cloth of value exceeding fourteen or fifteen shillings a yard; no 'stuffe of silke or cammel haire;' no trimming to his clothes, 'except buttons, and them only in places needful, and no

better than of silke;' no 'boot-hos-tops nor colloured shawes, or shawes of Spanish leather or with long nebs;' no 'silke garters at all;' no gloves other than very plain ones, or shoe-strings of any better material than cotton-ribbon; and no boots, 'only when they ride'—nine apprentices refused to conform. These unruly youths were given a month's time to consider what they were about, and at the expiration of that period only three of them remained firm. These three were brought into court, and made 'exemplary' by having their hair cut on the rural and unartistic fashion of placing a basin upon the head, and cutting the flowing locks in a line with its edge, and also by removing the obnoxious ribbons from their cloaks, after which they were committed to the prison, with an allowance of '2d. in bread,' and a quart of table-beer daily. These severe measures brought them to their senses, and they soon very humbly petitioned the guild to 'passe bye and be oblivious of all misdemeanours.' Both the morality and the religion of the apprentices appear to have received attention. In the year 1656, a guild, after 'much wofull experience,' enacted, that by reason of the abounding of iniquity, and consequent 'great apostasy and falling off from the truth, to all manner of heresy and unheard-of blasphemy and prophaneness,' lads who would not duly accompany their masters to public ordinances of religion, and also those of illegitimate birth, and those who were 'crooked, lame, or any other way deformed,' were not to be taken as apprentices under pain of heavy penalties. In the year 1665, a company enacted that every apprentice guilty of immorality was to be fined one hundred pounds. Prohibited from indulgence in music, dancing, dicing, mumming, and other amusements, the apprentices seem to have directed their attention to 'the fancy;' for, in 1697, they were forbidden to keep 'horses, dogs, or fighting cocks,' until they had served seven out of the ten years for which they were bound. Unfortunately for the good name of England, the apprentices appear to have taken their evil habits abroad with them, for an old order of the Galway corporation, and dated February 25, 1585, said: 'The young English tailours and ther boys' were undoubted 'vavagvaunts' (vagrants?), guilty of 'using all unlawfull pleis and laciuous expenses, both by daye and nighte;' and enjoins upon them the necessity of obtaining an honest livelihood, telling them to abstain from 'pantoffes, but rather be content with shoes.'

The apprentice of to-day may, like many of his elders, look back upon the past, and fancy that because masters were forbidden to give their servants salmon above three times during a week, that the apprentice of the misnamed 'good old times' was in an enviable position. Such an idea, however, would be very absurdly erroneous. So recently as the early part of the eighteenth century, Manchester apprentices to the cotton trade, who were, comparatively speaking, young gentlemen, were compelled to perform much manual labour, which to-day is reserved for porters only. The 'cotton lord' himself was at work at five in the morning with his children. Seven o'clock was the hour for breakfast, to which there was no tea and toast, but simply a large dish of oatmeal porridge, around which the 'lord,' his children, and the apprentices grouped themselves with wooden spoons. At a given signal, they plunged their spoons into the mass, dipped the spoonfuls into a bowl of milk

until the dish was empty, upon which they immediately returned to work. If such was the position of the very aristocracy of apprenticeship, what would be the state of the plebeians?

SAND-CASTLES.

I watch in meditative hour,
Upon the glistening sand, the tower
My laughing children rear;
Dear Babel-builders—sturdy Ned,
And rosy Kate, and tiny Fred,
What time the tide draws near.

How earnestly, and with what toil,
The little navigators toil
To build their house of sand.
Digging and dabbling all about,
Napoleon made no greater rout,
Stealing his neighbours' land.

No kings contending for a crown,
No generals battling for a town,
Made such a fuss before;
And fast the mound grows higher still;
With shouts they pile the crumbling hill
Upon the sloping shore.

The old King Canutes from their chairs
Look down upon these petty cares,
And much the work applaud.
Now ramp and bastion are complete;
The mason's work, begun so neat,
Is finished without fraud.

But just then comes an oozing drop,
That filters in, and then the top
Begins to nod and shake;
And now the countercarp caves in;
And now, its outer walls grown thin,
The sea begins to break.

True type of all the fading hopes
Of kings or grocers, queens or popes.
So crumbled mighty Rome;
And so that bank at Rottendeau
Went all to pieces in '15,
And froze us out at home.

So went that Double First I lost;
Just so my early love was crossed
For pretty Fanny Boyce.
Ambitions, hopes, Time's bitter wave
Washes into the common grave,
That vault for all our joys.

The fragile castle built of sand,
Though raised by many a busy hand,
Soon sinks below the sea.
The sunset comes, and at its heels
Black bailiff Night so stealthy steals.
Come, children, into tea.

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THE GREAT BARYTONE.

I WAS prompter, scene-shifter, and errand-boy general in the opera-house of Darmstadt, when Herr Swindlenbach acceded to the management by the grace of the Grand Duke's valet, and a marriage with his predecessor's widow. Of Herr Swindlenbach's antecedents, little was known, except that he had kept a German coffee-house in Florence, and an Austrian hotel in Milan; that he failed in both speculations, and left anxiously inquiring friends among the trades-people of both cities; yet, before he was a twelvemonth in possession of the opera-house, there was not a greater man below the court-circle in Darmstadt.

The Grand Duke had travelled through Italy *incog.* before his accession, which was also recent. Some said he had an Italian mistress, and that her confessor had great hopes of his conversion from Lutheranism. However that might be, his Serene Highness had come home with such a taste for everything Italian, and especially Italian music, that all the court fell to writing complimentary letters to distinguished maestros, and could not spare a minute from the humming and strumming of operas. There never was such a time for musical instrument makers in the grand duchy. Every official had to be suited with something he could play on: the prime minister came out strong on the piano; the secretary of state took to the violin; and the grand chamberlain performed night and day on the flageolet. Herr Swindlenbach was not the man to let slip such an opportunity of getting up in the world; he set his wits to work to get up an Italian company, and give Italian operas in what he called high-art style. I can vouch that he was never a league out of Darmstadt all that year; but his own account of the business was, that it cost him three journeys to Italy, the loss of sleep, appetite, and I forget how many hundreds of florins; but at last, he had the happiness of securing a divine soprano, a grand contralto, a painstaking tenor, and a conscientious basso. His Serene Highness shewed a princely sense of the manager's attention to his whim; he

sent his private secretary, his gentleman-usher, and his baron-in-waiting to inspect the company, and witness the rehearsals; gave orders for the opera-house to be new painted, and promised to come in state on the opening-night.

Of course, the whole court came to inspect too; there was scarcely space in the green-room for the barons and baronesses, ministers and aulic councillors who took a deep interest in the manager and his company. It was fearful work to get through business under so much superintendence; all the gentlemen had suggestions to make, and all the ladies wanted to improve the costumes. It was nearly as hard to get the scene-painters on; they were Germans every man to the backbone, and hated everything from Italy. But energy and perseverance will surmount any difficulty; so Herr Swindlenbach was wont to remark, and so it proved in his own case. In spite of its friends and its enemies, the first Italian opera under his management—the name has escaped my memory, but it ended with *Diavolo*—was cast and rehearsed, mounted and produced before the rank and fashion of Darmstadt, all in full-dress, and as close as we could pack them. The Grand Duke was as good as his word, and came in full state. All the court followed his example; all the officers of the garrison got orders to be present, and present accordingly they were. All our singers acquitted themselves powerfully, and the orchestra drowned everybody that went wrong. If my own services were not signal, they were sufficient to call forth the manager's gratitude, though of anything like knowledge of Italian, I am guiltless to this day. It was not etiquette to express an opinion of the performance till the verdict came from the ducal box at the close of the last scene, when the Grand Duchess smiled approvingly, the Grand Duchess Dowager rattled her fan, and his Serene Highness said: 'Very good indeed.' Thereupon the boxes exploded with rapture, and ladies who had pretensions to sensibility, felt it incumbent on them to faint. The curtain fell amid thunders of applause. The manager and his four polar stars, as he called them from that night, were summoned before it,

and got such a deluge of bouquets as had never been seen in Darmstadt before. Herr Swindlenbach made a speech of some length about gratitude and joy, and they all retired with pocket-handkerchiefs to their eyes. There was a triumphal supper discussed in the green-room that night; I had the honour of being present, and afterwards assisting the manager to find his own door. How the four polar stars got home, has always been a problem beyond my solution; but next day brought a gracious command from the Grand Duke to perform Italian operas regularly three times a week.

Such a command indicated the patronage and presence of his Serene Highness; few managers had been so honoured, and from that hour Herr Swindlenbach's prosperity set in with a flood-tide. Court ladies became his friends; titled amateurs sought his counsel in their musical difficulties; wealthy burghers grew proud of his acquaintance; his credit rose with all tradesmen, despite the tales from Florence and Milan; his opera-house was filled to overflowing; while Schiller's plays were acted to empty boxes in the Darmstadt theatre, and his exchequer flourished accordingly. Herr Swindlenbach deserved prosperity, for he could enjoy it. He took a house in one of the pleasantest spots in the neighbourhood, had it altered in the Italian style, had the grounds laid out in the same, and called it his *casteletto*. There he gave fêtes on his birthday, and the anniversaries of his wedding, which he said would be reckoned among the salient points of opera history. The prime minister had been seen at one of them, there were generally some of the foreign ambassadors present, a fair sprinkling of the court families, and a mighty muster of artists and amateurs. The entertainment was of the best that Darmstadt could afford; but its great features were the prevalence of Italian dishes, the abundance of choice wines, and an oration regularly delivered by the Herr, in which he drew a parallel between the management—that phrase always signifying himself—and Goethe, then directing the theatre at Weimar; the management was always proved to have much higher claims on the gratitude of mankind.

The path of glory, wherever it may lead, is apt to be thorny, and thus in his great days Herr Swindlenbach was not without his troubles. Darmstadt had always been a serious Lutheran place, and there was among its citizens a considerable proportion of old-times people, who preached and prophesied, in a private court-fearing way, against the opera-house and its manager. There was also the patriotic party, always alive and talking, but seldom of any use in Germany, who did not like to see their national music and poetry superseded by Italian trills, and as they could not venture to attack his princely patron, their small poets and critics took every opportunity to fall on Herr Swindlenbach. But the greatest of the manager's difficulties lay within his own camp. Madame Screcheli, the divine soprano, and Madame Ranterini, the grand contralto, carried on life and song in a manner which varied between sisterly affection and open war. Baulanti, the painstaking tenor, and Renorani, the conscientious basso, were recognised belligerents; it was whispered they were cousins of the name of Splitz, and I am in a position to state that they generally scolded in Low German. Nevertheless, the rest of our company were on the verge of rebellion at every new casting, on account of the kith and kin of the four polar stars, who came upon us from all quarters, like

eagles gathering to the prey. The divine soprano could not appear on any stage without the protection of an uncle never known to be sober, but bent on doing all the discreet characters. The grand contralto sent post for two maiden aunts, whom she said she worshipped; they were gaunt and grim as old fir-trees, but desperately determined on playing nymphs and shepherdesses. The painstaking tenor refused to sing or exist without the company of his devoted grandmother; she wanted my place at first, but finally settled on the whole of our witch business. The conscientious basso lost no time in summoning a flock of nieces, who, he assured the manager, were the well-spring of his comfort, and must be accommodated with lively and graceful parts.

Such complications would have driven any other man into a lunatic asylum, but Herr Swindlenbach was equal to his exigencies. What he could do to pacify all parties, he did; what he could not do, he promised, and from the most direful tempest he could retire into the shadow of the Grand Duke's patronage, the glories of his fêtes, his superiority to Goethe, and the amenities of his *casteletto*. The lady who presided over that abode, though the relict of one opera manager, and the spouse of another, never had a thought beyond mending house-linen and making *sauer-kraut*. But Herr Swindlenbach's wedded life was peaceable in the extreme. I don't think he had much of a counsellor or confidante in the excellent woman, which, together with the fact, that I had been useful in and out of the opera-house, and wanted to play no part but my own, made him select me as a sort of humble companion, to whom he could comment with safety on the doings of the four polar stars, enlarge on his own grandeur, and unfold his managerial designs.

It was in this way that I heard of a negotiation, kept secret from the company, from everybody, in fact, but the Grand Duke and his most prudent secretary, to bring upon the Darmstadt stage the newest wonder of our musical world, the great barytone, Signor Belorandini, in a new opera which the reigning maestro, Strumaldi, was known to be writing expressly for him. The name and fame of Signor Belorandini made so mighty a noise in the operatic universe of the time, that their echoes may still linger in the memory of many a manager. He had made his début in Paris some years before, and taken the ears of that discerning capital by storm. The connoisseurs were unanimous that such a barytone never had been heard before, and never would be heard again. The crowds and crushes at places where he was engaged to sing were said to have slain as many as some decisive battles. Crowned heads had vied with each other in doing him honour, and his plate-chests and jewel-cases contained miracles in the presentation-line. Managers had ruined each other in bidding for his voice; bankers were ambitious of his deposits; he had sung princesses out of fevers, and duchesses into insanity; prima-donnas had committed suicide in despair of winning his heart; basses, tenors, and barytones had died of envy behind the scenes; and Signor Belorandini never condescended to appear on any stage but that of a great metropolis.

Darmstadt with its twenty thousand inhabitants could not pretend to that character, but the Grand Duke had set his heart on bringing him there, and the Grand Duke's manager was dreaming of a patent of nobility as the reward of his services, if the thing could be accomplished. Moreover, he

wanted satisfaction on the four polar stars, and that was the way to get it. He wanted satisfaction on his enemies in the town, and that would establish his own and his opera's glory above their heads for ever. All the toil and travel for which Herr Swindlenbach gave himself credit in getting up his company, were truly and cheerfully borne for catching the Great Barytone. The journeys he made to see the Signor's friends, the flatteries and bribes he administered to them, the letters of supplication he wrote to everybody supposed to be influential, and, above all, the fibs and subterfuges he contrived to keep the business secret, were the wonder of my days then, and would take more time to tell than I can spare. But the Great Barytone was too rare a bird to be easily caught, and was well versed in the valuable art of making himself dear. At first, he could not think of breaking his grand rule, and singing in Darmstadt at all; then he was good-natured, and would consider the manager's case; then he would certainly come, and might be expected in the course of the following month; but about the middle of it he found out he was engaged beyond the possibility of being heard of in that part of Germany for seven years to come. Herr Swindlenbach made larger offers, but they were of no use. At last the Grand Duke put his princely hand to the work; I forget how many foreign embassies and ministers were retained for the persuasion of Signor Belorandini; but finally the Great Barytone yielded to the pressure, and signed an agreement to sing in the Darmstadt opera-house, on the express condition of his being paid down five hundred thalers at the close of each performance; to prevent, as he delicately hinted, the recurrence of a misunderstanding which he had once experienced with a German manager.

'Yes, Fritz,' said Herr Swindlenbach to me, flourishing the important paper while I was sweeping out the green-room—'the management has triumphed. What a sensation will be created when I disclose the astounding fact at my birthday fête to-morrow. You may come, Fritz, and wait at one of the tables; it will be something to tell your grandsons. I know His Excellency the Baden ambassador will be present, but rank should unbend at such a moment. Here,' he continued, producing a soiled and crumpled book, 'I will honour you with the first sight of it, for you have been faithful in your lowly degree. This is the new opera, written expressly for Signor Belorandini, *Il Cato del Palazzo*—an extraordinary novelty, founded on a remarkable incident connected with the royal family of Naples. I understand the chorus of cats in the second act is considered Strumaldi's *chef-d'œuvre*. Not a word about it, remember, till I astonish the company to-morrow; then we must begin the casting without delay, for Signor Belorandini comes this day-night.'

Herr Swindlenbach did astonish the company at his birthday fête by the publication of the agreement and the display of the soiled book. Next day, he had his triumph placarded in all the public places of Darmstadt, to the exultation of his friends, and the confusion of his enemies. The casting did begin without delay; but every laurel must be won, and every whistle paid for: the casting proved to be one of the most tempestuous transactions of Herr Swindlenbach's reign. Madame Ranterini went off in hysterics for three successive afternoons, because she couldn't get the heroine's

part; and Madame Screcheli threatened to take a brain fever if she did get it. Rorenario declared against singing a single note, unless his nieces were provided with characters; and Baulanti could be pacified only by assigning his grandmother a distinguished place in the famous chorus of cats. Through this sea of troubles, the Herr contrived to steer, with the help of the minister of police; the management once more triumphed; the rehearsals were brought to an end in something like peace; the mounting was pronounced unsurpassable by the ablest connoisseurs. All the Fashion of Darmstadt flew to secure box-tickets; all the court ladies got new dresses, or their best old ones turned for the occasion; and it was rumoured that the Grand Duchess would wear her diamonds. There never was such a ferment of preparation in court and town. Herr Swindlenbach was planning a monster fête for the Great Barytone and the third anniversary of his own wedding, when, lo! on the day preceding that on which the Signor was expected, there came a letter from his private secretary, announcing that the Great Barytone was indisposed, and had been advised by his physician not to sing or appear in public for some time. I thought the poor manager would have fallen to the ground when he read it. We were alone in the little room he called his cabinet, and 'Fritz,' said he, with a face as pale as ashes, 'this is a trick to get more money; these Italians never can be satisfied; but I'll give him anything to come. If we are disappointed now, the town, the court, the Grand Duke, and even myself will positively go mad. But he must come—he shall come! I will make him such an offer as no man in his senses could refuse. But this business is between ourselves. Fritz, my friend, I have splendid designs for you; I mean to elevate you to a position you never dreamed of. Prove yourself worthy of it by keeping my secret.'

I promised the deepest silence, and kept it too, though in very slight hopes of the position. Herr Swindlenbach immediately wrote a letter which he said would move a heart of adamant, offering seven hundred thalers if the Signor would only appear and sing one night in *Il Cato del Palazzo*. He also laid private siege to the secretary and the physician, by offering each a hundred thalers for his good offices; and these well-directed efforts had the desired effect. The Herr, who had courageously announced to his public that Signor Belorandini would sing on the opening night of the new opera, though unavoidable circumstances prevented him reaching Darmstadt as soon as he at first proposed, received, by the very next post, a letter stating that the Great Barytone was on his journey, travelling by easy stages, and would certainly sing, though he might arrive late.

The latter clause Herr Swindlenbach kept to himself, lest it might cause suspicion in the court, and doubt in the popular mind. Thanks to this precaution, all Darmstadt was alive on the appointed day with expectations of seeing the Great Barytone. The Italian Hotel, at which apartments had been engaged for him, was besieged from the earliest of our German morning by eager crowds, with bands of musicians among them, determined to see the first of the famous Signor, and give him a fitting welcome. The chief of the diligence-offices were equally beleaguered, for nobody knew how the Great Barytone might please to come. I believe they serenaaded seven travelling

parties in the course of that day, none of which proved to be the right one; yet the manager kept up his own and the public confidence. The latter seemed to increase as the evening drew on; the principal streets were illuminated; all the winter-gardens and conservatories were stripped for bouquets and triumphal arches; people poured in from all the neighbouring towns and villages; outside the opera-house, the crowd was immense; inside, it was stifling. The court came in fullest fig, the Grand Duchess *did* wear her diamonds; but still there was no Signor. Herr Swindlenbach proved himself the best actor in the house that night; he went about inspecting everything with more than his usual precision; talked and gave orders with a composed countenance and an easy manner; while the worst of his enemies might have pitied the poor man's anxiety as he kept the play back under one pretext or another, and kept me running between the opera-house and the Italian Hotel.

An hour had passed thus, and the crowded house was growing impatient; even the court was shewing signs of dissatisfaction, and his Serene Highness was seen to knit his brows. It was not possible to keep the play back any longer, but the Great Barytone did not come on till the second act; there was yet hope that he might arrive in time; all the company were conjured to stretch their performance as long as they could. I don't know what the manager promised them for the service, but he sent me off once more to the hotel. My answer was still the same—Signor Belorandini had not arrived, nor any message from him. I had found it impossible to penetrate through the crowd in front, and made a circuit to reach a narrow back-lane, on which a private door close by the Herr's cabinet opened. He was waiting for me there; and 'O Fritz!' cried the unlucky man, wringing his hands, 'the management is ruined! If this Italian villain don't come, the populace will pull down the house, and the Grand Duke will never forgive me. They are coming to the end of the first act in spite of all I have said to them; there's that wretch Ranterini galloping through her solo like a mare at full speed. If a fire would occur—if the upper boxes would come down—if anything would come in the villain's place, to make a diversion!'

As the manager uttered that unchristian wish, I heard the private door, which was only on the latch, open, and a tall man wrapped in a dark cloak stepped into the room.

'Signor Belorandini,' he said, with a slight bow, letting the cloak drop, and shewing us that he was in grand costume for his part. 'Am I in time?'

'You are, thank Providence, you are!' cried the manager, looking ready to fall down and worship him. The Signor waved his hand in a grand manner, as if he wanted no further parley, but to get on with his business. The manager led the way to the green-room, saying to me in German as he passed: 'Run to your box, Fritz; let them know the Signor is come, but in a matter-of-course manner, mind. The thing was just as we expected.'

In ten minutes more the house was aware of the arrival of the Great Barytone, and on its feet in boxes, pit, and gallery, to receive him with due honour. The applause seemed sufficient to rend the roof when he appeared on the stage, looking as like the portraits we had seen of him as one could look in the costume of a prince of the seventeenth century. The crowd outside had

caught the intelligence, and cheered him, too, with all their might. The Signor bowed somewhat haughtily, first to the Grand Duke's box, then to the entire house. The assembly subsided into their seats, and you could have heard a pin drop when he commenced his part. His voice was indeed a splendid barytone, and he sang powerfully. It seemed to me at the time that I had never heard anything like it, and its effect on the house was all that the most sanguine manager could have expected. There was nothing but thunders of applause, waving of handkerchiefs, showering of bouquets, with more than the usual allowance of hysterical cries, and ladies fainting in all directions, throughout his performance.

At last the opera came to a close, the house encored the Great Barytone over and over again, and the manager wanted to get up a tableau of himself and the Signor surrounded by laurels; but no Signor reappeared; and after shouting in vain for some time, they were informed by Herr Swindlenbach, with a countenance which he tried hard to compose, that the unrivalled singer was so fatigued by his rapid journey and his exertions on the stage, as to be obliged to retire at once to his hotel. He sent for me two minutes after. 'Fritz,' said he, when I had got into the cabinet and closed the door, 'tell the company to go home; I'll have no supper here to-night; that fellow the Barytone has put me out completely. After I had spent the whole evening preparing for my tableau, what do you think he did the moment his part was done? He asked me for the seven hundred thalers. I had them here in my desk—that was a comfort—and counted them out at once. He laid me down a receipt ready written, swept the money into his pocket, said "Good-night" as if he had been speaking to yourself, Fritz, and darted out by the private door.'

The company went home in high dudgeon with the manager and the Signor. The court went home in not much better humour. The crowd rushed to the Italian Hotel, shouted and serenaded for two hours under its windows, when the landlord made his appearance, and solemnly assured them that Signor Belorandini was not there, and never had been. It was some time before the people could be got to believe his assertion; but at length they were convinced of its truth, and scattered away to their homes, unable to imagine how the Great Barytone had contrived to come and go so privately. That was the subject of universal talk and wonder in Darmstadt next day; and Herr Swindlenbach was expressing his surprise to me in his cabinet, where he had come to settle accounts, and I to clear up, for there was to be no opera that evening, when the clerk of the box-office came to say that a courier was there inquiring for him. 'Send the courier here,' said Herr Swindlenbach, taking on one of his grand airs. 'Fritz, you will stay just as my man-in-waiting; it is some message from that Italian rascal to extract more money, and I want you to be witness.' He had scarcely spoken, when a courier, with crape on his arm, entered the room, made a grave bow, and handed him a letter in deep mourning. The manager opened it, read it, and I thought would have fallen from his chair, as he gasped out: 'Dead, Signor Belorandini! dead by a stroke of apoplexy, yesterday evening at seven o'clock, in Strasburg! For mercy's sake, then, who was it that came here at eight, and sang his part in the opera?'

'I know not, Herr,' said the courier, looking as if he thought the manager was out of his mind; 'but the statement in that letter is perfectly true; you see it comes from the Signor's private secretary, and I was myself present during the sad event.'

The manager tried to collect himself, explained what had happened in the preceding night, and questioned the courier more minutely. The latter appeared to entertain strong doubts of his sanity; till my testimony, as well as that of the conductor of the orchestra, who chanced to come in at the moment, and all the employés about the opera-house, convinced him that there was no raving in the case. But all the additional information he could give was, that the Signor had been pushing on to Darmstadt, though scarcely fit for travelling; but on his arrival at Strasburg, three days before, his illness increased so much, that his physician advised him to send an apology. That, however, he deferred from hour to hour, anxious about his lucrative engagement, and getting rather hazy in mind; till at seven o'clock in the evening of the day fixed for his appearance, when rising from dinner, he was suddenly struck by apoplexy, and died in a few minutes. The poor Signor had not led an exemplary life, and was covetous and grasping beyond the wont of even Italian singers. As the courier proceeded with his details, that sudden appearance and disappearance recurred to all our minds, and the general conclusion told by every frightened face was, that a spectre had sung in the opera-house, and carried off seven hundred thalers.

The effect on our manager was terrible. He had been with him alone in the cabinet, had uttered that graceless wish just before his appearance, and for some time it was thought the poor man would lose his reason. His four polar stars were not less terrified when they came to hear of the spectre, particularly Madame Srecheli, to whom, in her part of the beloved and banished princess, he had given a farewell embrace, the recollection of which threw her into a brain fever at least equal to the one she had threatened when contending for that coveted character. Her unsuccessful rival, Madame Ranterini, was said to have never given thanks so fervently in all her life as for the failure of her three afternoons of hysterics, by which she missed the fearful honour. The story spread through town and court. In the former, fear fell upon all opera frequenters. All the serious Lutherans considered it a special judgment on Herr Swindlenbach, his company, and his supporters; all the divines commented on it in public and private, and rather increased the general fright by their uncertainty whether it was the departed Signor or the Evil One himself who was permitted to officiate in the opera-house and carry off its sinful gains. How far the court was affected, I cannot say; but the Grand Duke happened to fall sick about the same time, and the Grand Duchess Dowager, on her way to pay him a state visit after her second breakfast, at which brandy was said to prevail over coffee, fell down stairs, and broke her Serene Highness's right leg. Thereupon, she sent for her private chaplain, the Grand Duke sent for his, so did the Grand Duchess, and the whole court became serious. The doors of the opera-house were closed by government orders, not to be opened again except for oratorios. The manager and his company, as soon as they were able, took to the study of sacred music, and the bass and tenor reverted to their ancient name of Splitz.

My occupation as a prompter was henceforth gone in Darmstadt. The fright and its consequences lasted out that Grand Duke's reign; but it was not a long one, and his successor changed all that, though Italian music never got the same ascendancy in court or town; yet the tale of the spectre-singer remains among the theatrical legends of Germany to this day. For myself, I believed it. Who could disbelieve a story so well founded, and with so many corroborations? I am not sure it did not frighten me as much as the rest. Remember, I had got the first sight of the apparition. At any rate, I looked for no more prompter's work, but betook myself to various employments, from waiting in coffee-houses to door-keeping in lecture-rooms. I lived, but I was never a lucky man, save upon one occasion, about fifteen years after the time of my story, when I got a full explanation of the Darmstadt spectre.

I had come as far south as Paris with a German firm of mineral-water makers, who were also to make their fortunes, and of course mine. But the speculation did not succeed; the firm were not to be found one morning; their creditors took possession of the premises; and I went in search of another situation in the great strange city, with very little of its language to help me. I had walked about all day, and found nothing; it was getting late in the afternoon, and I was dreadfully hungry, when, in the Boulevard des Italiens, a restaurant rather too handsome for my means tempted me to turn in. It was the quiet hour of such places, when the day's custom was over, and that of the evening had not begun. A solitary man was reading a newspaper at one of the tables; he evidently belonged to the establishment, and to him I addressed my inquiry for German sausages. He looked up as I spoke, and his face sent the blood back to my heart. I had seen it fifteen years before, for it was that of the Signor who came in grand costume through the private door I had left on the latch in the opera-house at Darmstadt. The man looked at me in surprise, as well he might, from the face I saw in the opposite mirror, and then said in tolerable German: 'What is the matter, friend?' I sat down with a cold sweat breaking on my brow, and stammered out: 'Were you ever in Darmstadt?'

'Were you ever there?' he said with a sly smile. 'Yes,' said I, gathering courage; 'I was prompter in the opera-house some fifteen years ago.'

'Indeed,' he said. 'Is the manager, Herr Swindlenbach, alive yet?'

'He was, the last time I heard of him, and that is not long ago.'

'Well, my friend, I see you recollect me, and your face is that of an honest fellow. Come into my private room; you shall have what sausages you like without payment, for I am master here, and I want you to do me a service.' He led the way, and I followed, much amazed, but no longer frightened; and when the door of his sanctuary was shut upon us, my new and old acquaintance began.

'I owe Herr Swindlenbach a debt of seven hundred thalers, which has long pressed on my conscience; and I will owe you a debt of gratitude, with substantial acknowledgments, if you can get him to receive his money on respectable conditions. You see I am from the Bas-Rhin, where people speak both French and German, and have the talents of both nations. I saw a good deal of life in my time, and part of it was in the

position of valet to the famous barytone, Signor Belorandini. He had a temper of his own, and uncommon stingy ways, but was a great artist, and not a bad master. He taught me singing for the love of it, gave me his old costumes to practise action in, told me most of his affairs, and what he didn't tell me, I found out. We should have lived and died together but for an envious secretary, who made him believe I wasted his hair-oil: but we had a tremendous quarrel about that when we got as far as Strasburg on his journey to Darmstadt, and I left his service. He would pay me no wages till the law made him; but next day it was plain the poor soul could not go on. I knew there were seven hundred thalers waiting for him at Darmstadt, and said I to myself: "Frederick, you may as well have that money; the honest Germans have never seen the Signor, and won't know onesinger from another." In short, I started by the first diligence, with one of his old costumes, made my way to the opera-house with the help of a friend I had in Darmstadt, sang my part, won thunders of applause, pocketed the money, and got safe back to French ground, where I heard of the death of my poor master, and bought a mourning-pin, which I wear for his sake every Sunday. Then I went on to Paris, where the seven hundred thalers enabled me to set up this restaurant. I have prospered in it; in fact, I have grown rich, and I want to return Herr Swindlenbach his money, with respectable interest, on condition that he gives no explanation of my little adventure to the public. It might be called cheating, and I am about to marry a German lady of good connections. Can you negotiate the business?"

I knew that seven hundred thalers would be welcome to my old manager on almost any condition, the sacred music never having paid him as well as the profane; and at once undertook the mission. The master of the restaurant paid my expenses back to Darmstadt; there I found the once mighty management reduced to the leadership of a church choir, and owing all his importance to the tale of the opera-house spectre, which he told at friendly firesides. I had no trouble in bringing him to terms, though I must say my employer rewarded me handsomely; but when I mentioned the condition of silence, the old man drew himself up with something of his ancient grandeur, and said: "Certainly, Fritz, the thing will never pass my lips. I have given up the wicked world, it is true; but I will not give it the opportunity of saying that I did not know a French valet from a Great Barytone."

MANCHESTER WAREHOUSES.

MANCHESTER is to the more northern counties of England what London is to those of the south—a great centre of ceaseless industry and boundless wealth, and thus, to the eyes of anxious parents with several sons to provide for, emphatically 'the place to get on in.' They will recount complacently the early history of a score of great Manchester merchants: how this one entered the town without either covering to his head or shoes to his feet; and that one began his career by sweeping out the offices of the very warehouse in which he was afterwards to rule as a master. Let Tom or Charley but get a footing in a Manchester house, and it will go hard if, endowed with all his father's intelligence and mother's wit, his name may not

one day be found among those of the wealthy of Cottonopolis. So friends are entreated and advertisements are consulted until the embryo trader finds some one willing either to take him as apprentice, or allow him to work at, say an invoice-desk, for a few shillings a week, or, in many cases, nothing, until the tuition of some months has effaced part of his school-boy dullness, and substituted a little sharpness and business readiness. And yet neither parents nor son, where they live at a distance, know, as a rule, the nature of the business to which the lad is going; that there will be 'Manchester goods' and 'office-work' they can tell, but as to the meaning of the former, or the nature of the latter, they are quite in the dark. To shew to what sort of work young men come when they have secured the position in question, is the object of this paper.

Manchester warehouses consist of home-trade and shipping houses, the former being of various kinds, many confining themselves to the sale and sometimes manufacture also of one article, others dealing in a variety of goods. These latter are entitled to the first consideration. Their principal customers are the drapers, and the classes of goods sold are very numerous; so, to insure order, they are divided among various rooms or departments, known as 'Umbrellas,' 'Trimmings,' 'Flowers,' 'Bonnets,' 'Linens,' and so on, according to the particular line of trade taken by the house: one dealing in heavy goods—grays, whites, linens, prints, and flannels; another in lighter articles—silks, furs, shawls, and small-wares; while the two classes are occasionally seen combined. Each department has for its head a buyer, on whom depends chiefly the prosperity of his room; next to him come the salesmen, some of them being often apprentices to the firm; to these succeeds a new apprentice or two, and in the case of heavy goods, a porter. It is usual to bind as apprentices all the lads (this does not include of course errand-boys and others of that standing) who enter the house, the mode of doing so varying somewhat. The number of years of apprenticeship is usually four or five, though in some cases the indentures are made binding until the apprentice is of the age of twenty-one. Each lad on being 'bound' is placed in a department, if there be a vacancy; if not, as frequently happens in the largest warehouses, he is employed at some other work, such as carrying parcels from and to the various departments, until his turn for promotion comes, when he ceases to haunt the staircases, and has a settled position in the place, after a probation which sometimes extends to two years or more. On his first entering the department, he has, being the last arrival, to assist in all the drudgery of the room; such as sweeping out, covering up the goods at night, and the general portering which may be necessary. In one of the handsomest warehouses of this class, the new hand is usually initiated into the mysteries of cleaning the brasses of the staircase, as a means of laying the foundation of a thorough knowledge of the trade.

The rule with respect to the length of the stay of an apprentice in a department differs much; in some houses he is moved from room to room periodically, so that he may have a chance of becoming acquainted with all the different kinds of goods; in others, he is moved into the principal departments, or remains in that in which he was first placed. In this latter case, he has the full

advantage of any vacancy which may occur above him, as, there not being any likelihood of his removal, he will be promoted, if capable of doing the work, and be one step nearer such a position as may entitle him to a fair salary on the expiration of his apprenticeship—a period to which all look forward, some with pleasure, others with a very opposite feeling; for, if the head of their room and the time-book—a book kept in some warehouses for the clerks and others to enter their initials in each morning—do not give a good account, a polite dismissal is the usual consequence, especially in a warehouse where young men are plentiful, and light-portering has many votaries. Should the apprentice in question, however, have proved himself steady and competent, he is confirmed in his situation, and an amount of salary given in accordance with the practice of the house on that point. During the apprenticeship, the usual terms are £80 for four, or £100 for five years, the amounts being divided over the number of years thus: For four years, £15, £15, £20, and £30; and for five, £10, £15, £20, £25, and £30; the sum given afterwards ranging, say from £50 to £90 for the first year, any further advance depending upon circumstances, or a previous arrangement. The post coveted by the force of each department is that of buyer, as a commission upon the amount of business done is commonly added to the salary, so that some buyers are in receipt of very handsome incomes. I have known as much as £1200 cleared in a year; the majority, of course, get less than this—some may occasionally get more. Where they are partners, their income is naturally large when a brisk business is doing; but I speak of those who have merely an interest in the room added to their salaries, as a means of inducing them to do their utmost. As there can only be one head to each room, many aspirants of course fail in their efforts, and are forced to be content with a subordinate position and a moderate salary.

Among the remaining classes of houses doing a home-trade, the principal are gray cloth and yarn commission agents and calico-printers. The former receive gray cloth (known to the outer world as unbleached calico) and yarn from manufacturers, and sell it to such houses as those described above. When the yarn, however, is in the cop (that is, just in the state it is when removed from the spindle after spinning, and ready for use in weaving), or in the warp, it is principally bought by manufacturers who only weave, and by shippers. The bulk of the yarn shipped from Manchester is in bundles usually of ten or five pounds-weight. One per cent. is the standard charge for selling both cloth and yarn, the manufacturer being in this case the sufferer should a bad debt be made. For a guarantee or commission of a half per cent., the agent takes the responsibility of all sales. Many manufacturers cannot afford to wait for money until the agent receives payment for their cloth. The manufacturer has often to make to stock, and so, unless possessed of a tolerable capital, will in any case soon be short of money. In this emergency, he has recourse to his agent, who advances him to the extent of about eighty per cent. on the cloth delivered, or sometimes allows a permanent over-advance, on condition of receiving the entire consignment. For this accommodation, the manufacturer pays a half per cent., and interest at a settled rate; five per cent. is the normal charge. Should

the balance be the other way, the agent pays interest at the same rate. If, the manufacturer's credit not being good, the agent has to buy yarn for him, one per cent. buying commission is charged. Insurance, portage, and other expenses are all defrayed by the agent, unless there be a stipulation to the contrary. Apprentices to this business learn the usual work of the office, having to assist in keeping the books, making out the clients' sale-sheets, &c. at the end of each month (Manchester months extend from the twenty-fourth of one month to that of the next), collecting the accounts, making out the invoices, and other incidental work; they have also to assist in the warehouse, where, at first, they have plenty of portering; afterwards, when they become better acquainted with the various descriptions of gray goods and yarns, they try their hand at selling, as a salesman's place is looked forward to in their future career. Salesmen have often a share of the profits in addition to their salary. The number of gray cloth commission-houses in Manchester is too great for the quantity of stuff produced; the business is one easily learned, so far as the working of it goes, and does not require very much capital. Many who are in it have not more than a thousand pounds, and some, there is no doubt, have less. A living may be made out of the trade with care and attention—but that is the utmost: where men who are in it have become wealthy or moderately rich, speculation has lent a hand.

In the warehouse of a calico-printer, an acquaintance with gray cloth of the descriptions used for printing, and with the various styles of prints, is gained. The post of gray buyer and print salesman (for these offices are commonly joined) yields a comfortable salary. In the office, the situations of cashier and book-keeper are of more or less value according to the standing of the house.

Lastly come shipping-houses, which send goods abroad either on their own account or to their customers, charging a commission on goods bought. The two methods are often combined. Very few care to consign goods at their own risk. Many commission-merchants confine themselves to the India and China trade; others to a yarn-trade with Germany; some combine yarn and goods. Most houses have special places to which they ship goods, and are known as India, American, &c. houses. In a shipping-house, various goods, such as whites, fustians, grays, prints, and dyed goods are kept in different rooms, and into one of these an apprentice is put, where he has the great advantage of gaining a thorough knowledge of a class of goods in which a regular trade is done. It is well known that there is no better method of becoming acquainted with the qualities and peculiarities of goods than looking them over, and this is constantly required in the case of those last mentioned. Good salaries are, as a rule, paid to those who shew that they understand their work, and render themselves useful. The office-work in these houses is very great and diversified: beside the cashier, his assistants, and the book-keepers, there are the invoice and shipping clerks, correspondents, and others. The salaries of the clerks vary in different houses; many Germans, for example, preferring to pay their own countrymen well, at the expense of clerks of other nationalities. It is not usual to put apprentices in the office, the clerks being paid at first, if lads, a few shillings, four or five, a week, with an increase as

they improve. Some enter on the understanding that they are not to receive anything unless they shew themselves worth it.

The foreign correspondence is conducted by natives of the various countries to which the letters go, or by any one in the office who may be competent to do the work. There are few connected with a shipping-house who are not well acquainted with some foreign tongue or tongues. To those who intend to enter either the office or the warehouse of a merchant, no better advice can be given than to study languages as thoroughly as they can: it must be remembered, however, that it is better to know one well than half-a-dozen imperfectly. To be able to turn the knowledge of a language to account, the possessor of it must be able to converse fluently with natives, and to read it and write it with ease. French, Italian, Spanish, and Portuguese are the most useful languages to know. German might be added to the list, but the number of natives in Manchester is so great that a knowledge of this language is rarely required in an Englishman. An acquaintance with goods is highly necessary to those who aim at advancement, and no pains should be spared to acquire it: those in the warehouse have, of course, abundant opportunities of doing this more or less, and to them it should be an object to obtain as great an insight as possible into the office-work, as this shews the method of conducting the shipping-trade. To those, then, who have no reason for sending their sons to some particular warehouse, I would advise that of a commission-merchant (avoiding those houses which confine themselves to a yarn-trade), believing that they afford the best means of getting on. It is often urged against shipping-houses that the clerks and apprentices have to work to a very late hour: in part, this is true; the busy seasons bring with them a quantity of work; and the shipping and invoice clerks especially, and others in a less degree, have, for weeks, to stop in the warehouse from nine or ten in the morning till nine, ten, eleven, or twelve at night—sometimes till one or two the following morning. This, of course, refers to a house doing a large trade. During the slack season, the clerks leave at from five to seven o'clock at night. Home-trade houses have also their busy season, and require late attendance during it, sometimes not leaving off work till eleven o'clock. Their seasons, however, are not so long as those of the shipping-houses, nor the hours so late. The usual time for going to business in the morning is from eight to nine in home-trade houses, work being finished from five to six during the ordinary season.

M I R K A B B E Y.

CHAPTER III.—ONLY 'THE HEART.'

IGNORANT of the ruin it had wrought, the rich full voice of the stranger still rang forth, manifestly to the admiration of the confidential maid, since her nimble tongue failed to interrupt its melody. She was not displeased that her lady too was listening with such unbroken attention, and probably also looking out upon the singer; for Mr Derrick was a very 'proper man'—at all events in external appearance—and had shewn himself in the servants-hall a while ago by no means unconscious of the personal charms of Mistress Forest,

which, although mature, were still by no means despicable. A few years younger than my Lady herself, Mary had been treated by Time at least with equal courtesy; her figure was plump, her eyes were bright, her voice, which, if not absolutely musical, could reach some very high notes, and upon occasion, was clear and cheery. One would have said she would have been too talkative to have suited my Lady's grave and quiet ways; but this was not so. Lady Lisgard had that blessed gift of being able not to listen unless it pleased her to do so, which enables so many conscientious persons to speak favourably of sermons; all the avalanche of her maid's eloquence passed clean over her head, and suffered her to pursue her own meditations at the easy tribute of an appreciating nod when all was ended. Even had she been much more inconvenienced by the *débris* of words, her tormentor would have been freely forgiven. The affection between mistress and maid was deep and genuine, and had extended over more than half their lifetime.

Mary Forest was the daughter of a fisherman at Cove-ton, the village on whose sandy beach Sir Robert had picked up his bride. To old Jacob Forest's cottage, the human flotsam and jetsam had been conveyed, and upon Mary, then almost a child, had much of its tending at first devolved. The kindly little nurse soon won the regard of her patient, cut off by that one night's storm from kith and kin, for this emigrant ship had contained all that were near or dear to her on earth, and ready as a babe to clasp the tendrils of love about whoever shewed her kindness. Removed from the cottage to the rectory, where the clergyman and his wife welcomed her very hospitably, first, as a poor human waif, that claimed some lodgment ere she could decide upon her future calling, for a short time after that as their nursery governess, and finally as guest and inmate pending those arrangements of her betrothed husband which subsequently took her to France, Lucy Gavestone—for that was the name by which my Lady was then known—did not forget little Mary and her loving ministrations. She asked and easily obtained permission of Sir Robert that the girl should accompany her to the semi-scholastic establishment at Dijon in which he had decided to place her previous to their marriage. This she accordingly did; and many a strange reminiscence unshared by others (itself a great knitter of the bond of friendship) had mistress and maid in common. The fortunes of the latter of course rose with those of the former, and of all the household at Mirk Abbey there was none in higher trust than Mary Forest, nor more certain of the envied position she held, since the affection of my Lady set her above the machinations of that Nemesis, of favourite servants, a Domestic Cabal. Those natural enemies, the butler and the cook, had even shaken hands together for the purpose of compassing Mary's downfall, but their combined endeavours had only obtained for a reward her sovereign forgiveness and (I am afraid I must add) contempt.

In a word, Mary Forest was as happy in her circumstances as any woman at her time of life could expect to be whose title of 'Mistress' was only brevet rank. She had subjugated many other male folks beside the butler (the ancient coachman, for example, with the back view of

whose broad shoulders and no neck the Lisgard family had been familiar for half a century), but such victories had not at all been owing to her charms. By them, hitherto, Man had been an unconquered animal, and this was the knot in the otherwise smooth surface of Mary's destiny which no amount of planing (within her philosophy) could make even. She had been wooed, of course (what woman of twoscore, according to her own account, has not?), but hitherto the suitors had not been eligible, or her own ideas had been too ambitious. The time had now arrived with her when compromise begins to be expedient, and high expectations abate. Matrimonial opportunities at the Abbey were few and far between. She had not received such marked attention from anybody for months as this stranger, living upon his own means at the *Lisgard Arms*, had paid her that very night in the servants-hall. No wonder, then, that while he sang, she should for once be content to be a listener.

O'er the hill and o'er the vale
Each king bears a present;
Wise men go a child to hail;
Monarchs seek a peasant;
And a star in front proceeds,
Over rocks and rivers leads,
Shines with beams incessant.
Therefore onward, onward still,
Ford the stream, and climb the hill—
Love makes all things pleasant.

'There, now, I call that very pretty, my Lady,' exclaimed Mistress Forest, as the last cadence died away; 'and a very pretty sentiment at the end—"Love makes all things pleasant;" although, for my part, I know nothing about *that*, thank Heaven, and prefer to be my own mistress—that is, with the exception of your Ladyship, to obey whom is a labour of love. I am sure there are few husbands for whom I would give up such a service as yours, my Lady. I wish Mr What's-his-name—dear me, how stupid of me—ah, Derrick! It's rather a pretty name too; don't you think so, my Lady? I wish this Mr Derrick would sing us another song. He has a very beautiful voice, and I am sure his expression—don't you think so, my Lady? Ahem. No; I hear them moving off. Well, he will be in the choir to-morrow morning, that's sure. Had you not better come to the fire, my— Ah, great Heaven! Mistress, my dear darling mistress, what is the matter? Let me ring for help!'

It was impossible to misunderstand my Lady's 'No,' although it was not articulate. Huddled up, as I have said, in the space between the curtain and the window-seat, white and cold as the snow without, voiceless and almost breathless as her maid found her upon venturing to draw aside the heavy damask folds between them, such a look of agonised apprehension yet shot from her eyes as at once to prevent Mistress Forest from putting her design with respect to the bell into effect; nay, more, having assisted my lady to the sofa, she rightly interpreted a second glance in the direction of the door, to mean 'Lock it,' and this she did even before arranging the cushions, which would have been the first action with most persons of her class. Mary Forest, although a babbler, was no fool, and she perceived immediately that the distress which was agitating her beloved mistress was at least as much mental as physical. Once before, and only once, she had known my Lady to be what females call 'overcome'—that was upon the eve of

her marriage with Sir Robert; there was much similarity between the two attacks, but the present was far more violent. In the first instance, she had been told by her Ladyship that it was owing to 'the heart,' which was fitting enough under her then circumstances—but now when there was no bridegroom-expectant to flutter that organ, it did seem singular certainly. Doubtless her mistress would speak presently, and afford the fullest information; in the meantime there was nothing for it but silence and *sal volatile*.

My Lady's eyes are closed, and her features pale and still as marble, but her lips are a little parted. With her white hands thus crosswise over her bosom, she looks, thinks the confidential maid—for all the world like that Dame Lisgard in the chancel, by the side of whose marble couch her twelve fair children kneel, and take their mother's ceaseless blessing. All twelve so near of an age, and so marvellously alike, thanks to the skill of the sculptor, that one would have thought the whole dozen—but that four, as Mistress Forest has read in *Portents and Prodigies*, is the extreme limit—had made their simultaneous arrival in the world. Stiff and cold almost as marble are my Lady's limbs, blue-veined like it and rounded; but by degrees, as Mary rubs them steadily, their life returns.

'Thank you, thank you,' murmurs her Ladyship. 'I feel better now; but' (this with effort) 'I wish to be left alone.'

'Alone, my Lady! I dare not leave you thus, without even knowing what ails you.'

'Nothing ails me now, Mary—nothing.' Lady Lisgard made a feint of smiling, but kept her eyelids shut. She did not dare to let her maid read what was written in her eyes.

'Was it your poor heart, again, madam?'

'Ay, my poor heart!' My Lady was speaking truth there. Among the thousand millions born to suffer on this earth, there was not one upon that Christmas Eve in mental agony more deep than hers. The blow received had been so terrible and unexpected, that it had at first half stupified all feeling; the real torture was now commencing, when she was about to realise the full extent of her injuries. Lady Lisgard was not without courage; but she was no Indian warrior to desire a spectator of such torments. 'I must be alone, dear Mary,' repeated she. 'Be sure you breathe no word of this to any one. Say, however, that I am not very well. The cold when I opened that window to the Waits'—here she visibly shuddered—'seems to have frozen me to the marrow—you may tell them I have taken cold. I shall not be down to breakfast.'

'And I should recommend you to stay indoors, my dear (as I hope to persuade Miss Letty to do), although it is Christmas Day,' said Mary tenderly, as she made up the fire before leaving the room; 'for the church is far from warm.'

'I shall not go to church,' said Lady Lisgard, with a decision that reassured her attendant, and enabled her to wish her mistress 'good-night' without much apprehension.

'He will be in the choir to-morrow morning' was the thought which was crossing the minds of mistress and maid at the same instant.

CHAPTER IV.—SIR RICHARD GAINS HIS POINT.

I don't know how it was in the Monkish times in England, but it appears that the keeping of

religious days—always excepting the Sabbath—is not in accordance with the genius of this country as it exists at present. By general habit, we are devout, or certainly reverent; and yet the majority seem unable to discriminate between a fast and a festival. Christmas Day, for example, is kept by the evangelical folks exactly like Sunday, which is with them very much the reverse of a feast-day. With the High Church people, again, it is a Holiday, to be enjoyed after a certain peculiar fashion of their own; while the great mass of the population outrage both these parties by treating half the day as a fast and the other half as a festival. After morning church, it is generally understood that one may enjoy one's self—that is, within the limit of the domestic circle. There is the rub. It is not every disposition which can appreciate forfeits and snapdragon. My own respected grandfather used to thank Heaven with much devotion that he had always been a domestic man, who knew how to enjoy a peaceful Christmas in the bosom of his family; but then he always went to sleep immediately after dinner, and nobody ventured to wake him until the servants came in to prayers, after which he went to bed.

It is a pleasant sight, says Holy Writ, to see brethren dwelling together in unity; but the remark would not have been put on record had the spectacle been a very common one. It is a sad confession to make, but I think most of us must own that the 'family gathering' in the country even at Christmas-tide is not the most agreeable sort of social entertainment. There is too much predetermination to be jolly about such festivities, too much resolution to put up with Polly's temper and Jack's rudeness, and to please grandpapa (who is funded) at all hazards. When we find ourselves in the up-train again after that domestic holiday-week, we are not altogether displeased that it is over, and secretly congratulate ourselves that there has not been a row. I am, of course, speaking of ordinary folks, such as the world is mainly composed of, and not of such exemplary people as my readers and myself. *We* have no family jealousies, no struggles for grandpapa's favour, no difficulties in having common patience with Polly, no private opinion—if he was not our brother—about Jack; no astonishment at Henry's success, no envy at Augusta's prospects. But with the majority of grown-up brothers and sisters, this is not so. Since they parted from one another under the paternal roof, their lines of life have diverged daily; their interests, so far from being identical, have become antagonistic. Margaret is as nice as ever, but Penelope is not a bit improved, and yet one must seem to be as glad to see one as the other. One must not only forgive, but forget; it is not (unhappily) necessary that we should be polite, but we must be affectionate; nay, we must not only be affectionate—grandpapa will think it extremely odd if we are not 'gushing.'

The Lisgard family circle was not large, though, as we have seen, there was room in it for disagreement; moreover, there was not a 'dead set' of domestic element, the consanguinity being relieved by the presence of Miss Rose Aynton. If grandpapa were wise, this should always be the case; for it prevents Courtesy from taking leave of the company, which she is only too apt to do, under the mistaken notion that near relations can afford to do without her. It was with no such intention, however, that my Lady had asked Miss

Aynton to visit Mirk. She would have thought it hard, indeed, if her two sons could not have spent a week together under the same roof without the presence of a stranger to prevent their quarrelling. Rose had been a school-friend of Letty, and the latter young lady had asked permission to invite her young friend to the Abbey for Christmas. She had no home of her own to go to, poor thing, having neither father nor mother. She lived with her aunt, Miss Colyfield, a fashionable old lady in Mayfair, very popular among her acquaintance, but a sort of person, not uncommon in that locality, whom it is not altogether charming to reside with as a dependent. Miss Aynton was evidently accustomed to suppression. It made a man positively indignant to see one whose youth and intelligence entitled her to be the mistress of all who approached her, so humble, so unegotistic, so grateful. It was evident that she had plenty of natural good spirits, and every faculty for enjoyment, if she had only dared exhibit them. Her very accomplishments, which were numerous, were timidly concealed, and peeped forth one by one, almost, as it seemed, by compulsion. She might have left Mirk, for instance, without a soul knowing of her taste for ecclesiastical decoration, if it had not been for a sore throat which prevented Letty from superintending the Christmas ornamentations in the chancel.

'Can't you do it, my dear?' said Letty, a little peevish at the disappointment, and hopeless that her place could be satisfactorily filled by a London-bred girl like Rose, who had never seen holly-berries except in the greengrocers' shops, or at the artificial florist's. 'Now, do try, and Richard and Walter will both help.'

'I will do my best, dear,' this young lady had answered simply. And never had anything so beautiful been seen in the county, as was the result of her efforts. So much was said of them that Letty had ventured to go to church that morning, despite her ailment, and was as earnest in her praise as any in the congregation. There was no such thing as jealousy in her composition, and the success of her friend was a genuine pleasure to her.

'O mamma, you have missed such a sight!' cried she, as Lady Lisgard made her first appearance that morning at the luncheon-table, looking a little grave and pale, but gracious and dignified as a queen in exile, as usual. 'Not only the chancel, but the whole church a perfect bower of evergreens, and everything so exquisitely done! The pillars, alternately ivy and laurel; and under the gallery, beautiful texts in holly-berries set in green. As for the wall at the back of the altar—the decorations there are such that it makes one cry to think they are ever to be taken down again. Oh, I do hope you will feel well enough, dear mamma, to come to church this afternoon and see them.'

'Really, Lady Lisgard,' said Miss Aynton, blushing deeply, and with her soft eyes looking very much inclined to be tearful, 'you must not believe all that Letty's kindness induces her to say about me.'

'Nay, but it's true, mother,' broke forth Sir Richard. 'I never could have dreamt of anything so beautiful being made out of leaves and berries. The old church looks enchanted, and Miss Aynton is the fairy that has done it.'

'Sir Richard suggested the centre design himself,' returned Rose gravely; 'and the fact is, I am

nothing but a plagiarist in the whole affair. Our curate in Park Street gives himself up to floral religion, and dresses up his church in a dozen different garbs according to the season. I am one of its volunteer tiring-women, and am therefore accustomed to the business—that is all.

'It is very honest of you to tell us that, Rose,' said my Lady approvingly.

'Yes, mamma,' broke in Letty; 'but it was very wicked of her not to tell Mr Mosely, who came to thank her in the churchyard after service. He actually made an allusion to her in his sermon—talked about her "pious hands." She never told him one word about this London curate.'

Letty's laugh rang merrily out as she thus twitted her friend, but her brothers did not echo it. Neither of them relished this mention of the Mayfair clergyman. They had each in turn enjoyed that religious work, in which they had been fellow-labourers with Miss Aynton, and each perhaps flattered himself that she had been most pleased when his own fingers were looping the berries for her, or holding the ivy while she fastened it in its place. Of course there was nothing serious between either of them and herself. Sir Richard would naturally look higher for a bride than to the dependent niece of a fickle old woman of fashion; while as to Walter, with his comparatively small fortune and expensive tastes, it was absolutely necessary that he should 'marry money,' and not mere expectations. Still, no man is altogether pleased to hear that a young girl he admires is engaged to somebody else; and although this had not been said of Rose, yet Mayfair curates are dangerous persons, and church-decoration (as they were aware by recent experience) is a fascinating occupation when indulged in by both sexes at the same time.

So Letty had all the laughter to herself.

'How strange it was to hear the people when they first came in,' continued she. 'Their "Ohs!" and "Ahs!" and "Well I nevers!" were quite irrepressible.'

'Especially the gentleman in the gallery, who expressed his opinion that it was for all the world like May-day,' observed Walter slyly. 'Miss Aynton's *chef-d'œuvre* reminded him, it seems, of Jack-in-the-Green.'

'Yes, was it not shocking, mamma?' exclaimed Letty. 'He spoke quite loud. I shouldn't suppose the creature had ever been in a church before. How he did stare about him!'

'You must have been looking in his direction yourself, miss,' returned the young dragoon, 'as, indeed, were all the female part of the congregation. We don't see such awful beards as his in Mirk church every Sunday.'

'How touchy dear Walter is upon the subject of beards,' observed Letty demurely.

The captain's smooth face coloured like a girl's, while Miss Rose Aynton sought concealment in her pocket-handkerchief. Even Lady Lisgard forced herself to smile at the embarrassment of her handsome boy. But Sir Richard did not smile; he was not on sufficiently good terms with his younger brother to enjoy even so innocent a joke at his expense.

'You have not yet seen this distinguished stranger, I suppose, mamma?' resumed Letty, without whom—what with Rose's shyness and the coldness between the two young men—the conversation would have languished altogether.

'What stranger do you mean, my dear?' said my Lady coldly.

'Why, the man that came with the Waits last night, and sang beneath your window. Surely you must have noticed his voice, so different from poor old Ash and the rest of them.'

'Now you mention it, Letty, I think I did remark that there was a strange singer among them. He had a voice like Mr Steve's.'

'Very probably, my dear mother,' observed Walter laughing; 'for they both use the same tuning-key—the Spigot. Steve is said to be quite jealous because this gentleman from foreign parts can take two glasses to his one, although it cannot be added that he doesn't shew it. Steve can look like a Methodist parson when he pleases, whereas his new friend has made a sacrifice of his very countenance to Bacchus; and yet he must have been a handsome fellow at one time.—Don't you think so, Miss Aynton?'

'I really scarcely looked at him,' returned the young lady addressed. 'I should hesitate to pass an opinion upon this distinguished'—

'O Rose,' interrupted Letty archly; 'how dare you!—Why, Walter, she told me herself, only five minutes ago, while we were taking off our bonnets, that she thought his expression "magnificent"—that was her very word—and that she would like to take him in chalks.'

'I must confess,' said Rose, 'without venturing to call it good-looking or otherwise, that his countenance, artistically speaking, seems to me very striking. He is just one of those wicked people, I fancy, in whom one feels a sort of interest in spite of one's self.—Now, don't you think so, Sir Richard?'

'My dear Miss Aynton,' returned the baronet with an air of hauteur that neutralised the familiarity implied by his words, 'if this person has won your sympathy, he is fortunate indeed; but I must say that I don't see that he deserves it. His beard, which is certainly a handsome one, has also—as it seems to me—the great advantage of obscuring half his countenance. I confess I think he looks to be a scoundrel of the first-salt-water.'

'That's what Rose means!' cried Letty, clapping her hands. 'He's one of those dear handsome villains who used to—ah, infest—yes, that's the phrase—who used to infest the Spanish Main. How charmingly mysterious was the very place in which they carried on their profession! If it was not for sea-sickness, I should like to have had something to do in the Spanish Main myself. I have not the shadow of a doubt that this Mr Derrick—evidently an assumed name—What's the matter, dearest mother?'

My Lady had uttered a low cry, such as is evoked by sudden and acute physical pain.

'Nothing, my love—nothing: it was a passing spasm, nothing more. A tinge of my old rheumatism again, I fear, which is a sign of old age, and therefore a malady I do not wish to be taken notice of.—Now, don't distress yourselves, my dears—for all had risen with looks of genuine and affectionate anxiety, except Miss Aynton, who had rapidly poured out a glass of wine.—'Thank you, Rose; that was all I wanted. Nobody offered me any sherry, so I thought I could try whether I could not obtain it medicinally.—What were you saying, Letty, about this—this person?'

'I was merely remarking that he had probably been a bucaneer, mamma.'

'In other words, that he deserves hanging.'

observed Sir Richard gruffly. 'I hope he will soon take himself out of the parish, for we have got tipplers enough in it already.'

'Dear, dear, dear!' said Letty sedately; 'to make such an observation as that, just after mamma has been craving for sherry! Besides, how can this gentleman annoy you, Sir Richard? He isn't come here to dispute the title, is he?'

My Lady kept her lips closed this time; but an anguish passed over her face that would have been easy to see, had not the eyes of those at table been otherwise engaged.

Letty was looking at her friend, in hopes that she should get her to laugh at her high and mighty brother; Rose did not dare look up, for fear she should do so. Walter, his handsome lips slightly curled, was contemptuously watching the baronet, who stared, Sphinx-like, right before him, as was his custom whenever he was in one of his autocratic humours, as at present.

'I don't choose to have persons of that sort in the parish,' said he with icy distinctness.

'But, my dear Richard, you can't turn him out,' reasoned Letty, rather vexed by an exhibition of her brother's pride before her school-friend beyond what she had calculated upon. 'He has a right to stop at the *Lisgard Arms* as long as he pleases.'

'And I have a right to turn Steve out as a tenant'—

'You have nothing of the kind, Richard,' interposed Walter quietly; 'you have no more right than I—not even legal right, for the inn is not yet yours, and as for moral right, it would be the most monstrous piece of territorial oppression ever heard of out of Poland. So long as the man behaves himself'—

'He does not behave himself,' put in Sir Richard angrily. 'He is a drunkard, and a brawler in church.'

'Gracious mercy! how you must have been looking up Burn's *Justice*. But you will not be a magistrate, a *custos rotulorum*, till you are of age, remember, so that he is safe for six months. In the meantime, he certainly means to stay here. He is so good as to say he likes Mirk, I understand; and the village folks like him. He is a great addition to the choir; and I shall certainly ask him, in case he remains, to join our Mirk volunteers: Steve tells me he is a most admirable shot with a rifle, and will do the corps credit.'

'That is all the worse,' quoth Sir Richard violently; 'he is only the more likely to be a poacher. We have more than enough of that sort already, and I beg that you will give none such your encouragement.'

'Encouragement!' returned Walter airily. 'What patronage have I to offer? I am not Sir Richard, who can make a man happy with a word.'

'Very well,' continued the baronet with suppressed passion, 'let him take care how he trespasses upon the Abbey-lands—that's all.'

'Nay, you'll see him at the Abbey itself,' laughed Walter carelessly, 'and that pretty often, unless I quite misinterpreted Mistress Forest's manner when she parted from him at the Lych Gate: I never saw two people more affectionate upon so short an acquaintance.'

'A most ineligible suitor, I am sure,' broke forth the baronet. 'I trust Mary is not fool enough to disgrace herself at her time of life by any such alliance.'

'She is almost old enough to choose for herself,'

responded Walter drily. 'The selection of a husband for one's servant is scarcely the privilege of even a lord of the manor, and when the servant is not one's own'—

'I believe, sir,' interrupted Sir Richard hastily, 'that I am only speaking the sentiments of her mistress, in whose hands, of course, the matter lies.—Mother, do you not agree with me that it would be very unwise to encourage any attachment between Mary Forest and this reprobate stranger, Derrick?'

It was plain my Lady had not recovered from her late ailment, of whatever nature the attack might have been; otherwise, she would have interfered between the brothers before a direct appeal for her decision had been made by either of them, it being a rule with her never to place herself in an invidious position with respect to her children. To the astonishment of the baronet himself, however, Lady Lisgard now forced her pale lips to utter deliberately enough: 'I think it would be very unwise.'

'And therefore,' pursued Sir Richard, hastening to push his advantage, 'it would be worse than unwise, it would be absolute cruelty, since you do not intend her to marry this fellow, that opportunities should be afforded her of meeting him under the same roof. I do not say that his offence of brawling in church this morning is a sufficient ground of itself for forbidding him the house, although to most persons with any sense of decency it would be a serious misdemeanour: but would it not be well, under these particular circumstances, to treat it so?'

'Yes,' returned my Lady, rising from the table, white as a ghost, 'you are right, Richard; let this Mr Derrick be forbidden the house.'

OLD ENGLAND.

SOME three hundred and sixty-five years ago, when England, ruled by the victor of Bosworth Field, was rapidly recovering from the effects of the civil strife which ended with the fall of Crook-backed Richard, a shrewd, observant Italian came to this country in the suite of a Venetian ambassador, and wrote therefrom, *A Relation, or rather a True Account of the Island of England*, for the benefit of some 'magnificent and most illustrious lord,' whose name, like that of the writer, has passed into oblivion. The picture he draws of England under the first of the Tudors is a pleasant and interesting one, and not the less so because it teaches us that the 'good old times' were not, after all, such very bad times as the self-conceit of an age which dubs itself the age of progress would have us believe.

Our Venetian attaché found 'this little gem set in the silver sea' to be a thinly-populated, well-cultivated, well-watered land of undulating hills and beautiful valleys, blessed with an exceedingly healthy climate, having cooler summers and warmer winters than those with which Italians were familiar, owing to the rain which fell 'almost every day during June, July, and August.' The dwellers in this nature-favoured land rejoiced in an abundance of varied food. Stags, fallow-deer, goats, hares, rabbits, pigs, and oxen were plentiful, while the number of sheep was enormous, and there were no wolves to worry them. Fowls, partridges, pheasants, pea-fowl, and other toothsome birds abounded beyond belief; between one and two thousand tame swans were to be seen at

one time on the Thames, destined for tables to which crows, rooks, and jackdaws were also welcome. That canny bird, the raven, was protected by law, and allowed to croak unmolested, in consideration of his services as scavenger; while kites—such rarities now a days—were so tame and sociable that they robbed the children of the bread, 'smeared with butter in the Flemish fashion,' given them by their mothers.

With the exception of carp, tench, and perch, fish of all kinds were common enough, and the want of that fresh-water trio was fully compensated by an abundance of salmon. As to fruits, England possessed all the fruits known to Italy, barring the orange and the olive; and our Italian thought passable wine might be made from English grapes, although the experiment was hardly worth making, while the country was so well supplied with the products of Candia, Germany, France, and Spain. 'Besides,' he says, 'the common people make two beverages from wheat, barley, and oats, one of which is called beer, and the other ale, and these liquors are much liked by them, nor are they disliked by foreigners after they have drunk them four or six times.' This preference for the national beverage—one, by the by, time seems unlikely to overcome—was not confined to the common people. Wine was drunk sparingly even by the rich, and was seldom kept in the house, being purchased from the tavern as it was required; and to the tavern, lovers of the grape resorted when they set their minds on a drinking-bout, and this was done 'not only by the men, but by ladies of distinction.'

Great stress is laid upon our island's mineral treasures, its iron and silver, its lead and tin; and though we look in vain for any mention of copper or coal. But whatever sources of wealth lay yet undeveloped, England was prosperous enough to make our author pronounce it the richest country in Europe. The king, personally frugal to the extreme, kept up the traditional hospitality of the crown, by spending annually fourteen thousand pounds sterling on his table. The incomes of the king, queen, and Prince of Wales combined are estimated at £169,400; equivalent, according to Mr Froude's scale of comparative value, to £2,032,800 at the present day. The nobility were rich, possessing among them no less than four thousand enclosed parks; while the establishments of the Benedictines, Cistercians, and Carthusians resembled baronial palaces rather than religious houses. Every parish church boasted its crucifixes, candlesticks, patens, and cups of silver; not a convent of mendicant friars but could make a goodly show of the same kind; while the poorest and humblest innkeeper's table had its service of silver dishes and cups; and no one was considered of the slightest importance whose household plate was worth less than a hundred pounds. The Italian seems to have been thoroughly amazed at the wealth of England, which he attributes to three things: firstly, the fertility of the soil; secondly, the richness of her tin-mines; and thirdly and chiefly, to the extraordinary quantity of wool produced, wool of such quality that it commanded the highest price in every European market.

It is pleasant to be told by an impartial witness that our ancestors were handsome and well proportioned (albeit somewhat given to extravagance in setting off their proper persons to advantage), and extremely polite, having the incredible

courtesy to keep their heads uncovered, while they talk together. They are credited with the possession of good understandings, and a quickness at everything to which they chose to apply themselves, but are reproached with a distaste for learning, spite of the advantages available to them at Oxford and Cambridge. They were regular in attending at mass, industrious in repeating paternosters, and scrupulous not to omit any form incumbent upon good Christians, but—sign of the coming Reformation—there were many among them holding various opinions concerning religion. As soldiers, Englishmen stood in high repute, and were especially feared by the French; 'but I have it,' says our critic, 'on the best information, that when the war is raging most furiously, they will seek for good eating and all their other comforts, without thinking of what harm might befall them.' Our ancestors held even then an invitation to dinner the highest compliment one man could pay to another. Another characteristic, too, we still share with them—that national pride which made them think no place equal to England, no men equal to Englishmen—'whenever they see a handsome foreigner, they say he looks like an Englishman, and it is a great pity he should not be an Englishman!'

Our anonymous guide comically complains that he has never noticed any one in love either at court or among the lower orders, and comes to the conclusion, that the English are incapable of love, or else that they are the most discreet lovers in the world. His conclusion, however, only refers to the men, for he hastens to inform us that he understands 'it is quite the contrary with the women, who are very violent in their passions,' and are consequently very jealously guarded by their husbands, although he rather significantly remarks, 'anything may be compensated in the end by the power of money.' He becomes very indignant when discoursing of the custom then prevalent, in noble families, of sending the children of the house to be reared by strangers, 'in order that they might learn better manners;' and insists that the real motive for the practice was the desire of the parents to enjoy all their comforts to themselves, and the knowledge that they could exact more from strangers than their own flesh and blood. In his account of the working of this system, he is very hard upon the ladies of the time. He says, the youth who happened to be in the good graces of the mistress of the house in which he was domiciled, when she became a widow, had his fortune made for him—'By ancient custom, every inheritance is divided into three equal parts, one for the church and the funeral rites, one for the wife, and one for the children. The lady takes care during her Goodman's lifetime to make a purse for herself, and then, when he dies, bestows herself, her thirds, and her savings, upon the one of the young men brought up in the house most pleasing to her, and who was probably not displeasing to her in the lifetime of her husband. Her own children are sent away into other people's houses, and they, if boys, in the course of time enact to others the same part their stepfather performed to them.' This practice, he says, was universal throughout the kingdom; and it was not considered discreditable for a woman to marry again and again, as soon as she was left a widow, however unsuitable the match might be in age, rank, or fortune.

From the beginning to the end of the *True*

Account, there is no passage more amusing than that relating to the world-famous, world-adopted English institution, trial by jury. It is too good to be abbreviated. 'If any one should claim a certain sum from another, and the debtor denies it, the civil judge would order that each of them should choose six arbitrators; and when the twelve are elected, the case is propounded to them; and after they have heard both parties, they are shut up in a room, without food, fire, or anything to sit upon, and there they remain till the greater number have agreed upon the verdict. But before it is pronounced, each of them endeavours to defend the cause of him who named him, whether just or unjust, and those who cannot bear the discomfort, yield to the more determined for the sake of getting away. And therefore the Italian merchants are gainers by this bad custom every time they have a dispute with the English, for although the national arbitrators are very anxious to support the cause of their principal, they cannot stand out so long as the Italians, who consequently generally have judgment in their favour. This practice also extends to criminal causes, and any one may be accused of great crimes, and be put to the torture. When the chief-magistrate of the place has received notice of such malefactor, he causes him to be thrown into prison. Then twelve men of the place are chosen to decide according to their conscience whether the prisoner is guilty or not guilty, and if the majority decide he is guilty, he is considered to be so. But before he can be punished, it is necessary that twelve other men be chosen to hear the cause again, and if the verdict agrees with the former one, he is punished immediately. It is the easiest thing in the world to get a person thrown into prison, for every officer of justice has the power of arresting any one at the request of a private individual, and the accused cannot be liberated without giving security until he is acquitted by the judgment of twelve men. Such severity ought to be efficacious, but there is no country so abounding with thieves as England, that few venture to go alone in the country after middle day, fewer still in the towns at night, and least of all in London.' The concluding sentence seems severe, but its truth is attested by Latimer, who, when an act was passed compelling every occupier of land to sow a quarter of an acre of flax or hemp for every sixty acres he had under the plough, said the act was a marvellous good one, but the quantity of hemp ordered to be sown 'were all too little, were it so much more, to hang the thieves that be in England.'

This superabundance of the pilfering tribe was scarcely surprising, considering that an offender, if he could read, could claim the benefit of clergy, and if he lacked that saving qualification, had only to get inside a church, and claim the right of sanctuary. For forty days at least he was safe from the clutches of the law; and supposing his would-be capturers had patience enough to keep watch and ward for that period, and prevent his escape, if he preferred exile to imprisonment, he had merely to say so. Stripped of his shirt, he was taken to the sea-shore, where, if he found a vessel willing to accept him as a passenger, he was dismissed with a fervent 'God-speed you!' If there was no such luck for him, all he had to do was to walk into the sea until the water reached his throat, and demand a passage. Having repeated this ceremony three

carried him away from his native land. 'It is amusing,' says the Italian, 'to hear the women and children lament over these exiles, wondering how they can live, so destitute, out of England, and adding, they had better have died than go out of the world—as if England were the whole world!'

At this time, England only contained two towns—Bristol and York—of any importance, except the capital. Of the latter, we are not favoured with many particulars. It is described as being as populous as Rome or Florence, abounding not only in the necessities of life, but in every article of luxury. The Strand alone contained fifty-two goldsmiths' shops, the contents of which outvalued the united treasure of Milan, Rome, Florence, and Venice—although they were limited to three articles—basins, salt-cellar, and drinking-cups, the English preferring pewter for their plates and dishes. The Lord Mayor was revered as much by the Londoners as the Doge was by the Venetians. The Tower was diligently watched over by the king, who had stored therein immense quantities of bombards, hand-guns, heavy artillery, arquebusses, battleaxes, bows, arrows, and cross-bows.

Ireland is not named at all by our intelligent foreigner, and he has very little to say about Wales or Scotland. The Welsh, he tells us, delight in large herds of cattle, and live upon the produce of their dairies. As to the Scotch, he confesses he merely repeats what he has heard from Don Peter de Ayala, when he says that the Scotch are very handsome, very courteous, and very valiant, hospitable, and favourably inclined to foreigners, and so loyal that they consider their first duty is to love and defend their king. Of their military abilities, he speaks in high terms, but says they only exercised them against the English, *their natural enemies*; and with this bit of information, so eloquent of a time long past, we bring our sketch of Tudor England to a close.

'THE AFFAIR OF THE MACRAES.'

A CURIOUS MILITARY EPISODE.

EIGHTY-SEVEN years ago, the city of Edinburgh was the scene of a very remarkable occurrence, and one happily now unknown in our military history—the mutiny of a regiment of British soldiers. As the event is probably unknown to most people, and its history is full of interesting details, we propose to give a brief account of the corps in which it occurred, and a narrative of the mutiny from its origin to its suppression.

The Seaforth Highlanders, in which the rebellion took place, derived their name from one of the most famous clans in the far north of Scotland. The earldom of Seaforth, forfeited in the rising of 1715, was restored in the person of Kenneth Mackenzie, grandson of the attainted nobleman, after the lapse of forty-six years. Seven years after his restoration, the country was hard pressed for soldiers, and among other patriotic men who used their influence in raising troops was the restored earl. In the year 1778, he embodied the regiment, which took the name of the 78th, or Seaforth Highlanders. Out of the 1130 men who mustered at Elgin in May of that year, five hundred were from the Seaforth estates, the remainder from Scatwell, Kilcoy, Applecross, and other estates of the great Mackenzie family.

the regiment—the sept of that name being followers of the 'Caber Fey'—the event at Edinburgh received the name which heads this paper. From Elgin the regiment marched to the capital, where, in the journals of the time, we read of the arrival of the several detachments, some having come direct to the metropolis, and others having been temporarily sent to Glasgow and various small towns in the west.

The first announcement bearing on the mutiny is to be found in the *Edinburgh Evening Courant* of 5th August 1778, where it is stated that 'Lord Seaforth's regiment, now in the castle, has got orders to hold themselves [*sic*] in readiness to march at an hour's notice,' adding, 'we hear similar orders have been sent to all the troops in England and Scotland, the ministry having received advice that the French intend to make an invasion upon some part of Britain.' We may be quite sure the gallant corps, as it afterwards proved itself to be, would have met such a foe with alacrity; and it was, as we shall presently see, no dislike to fighting, or want of loyalty, that created their discontent. A few days later, the newspaper named announces that the regiment had received orders to proceed to Jersey, to relieve the M'Leod Highlanders, under orders for the East Indies, and that the Seaforth regiment would also be kept in readiness to embark for India, should it be found necessary. Within the following three weeks, the detachments from Glasgow, Ayr, and Campbeltown arrived in Edinburgh, and a fleet of seven transports, under convoy of the *Jason* frigate, reached Leith Roads, where the armed ship *Leith* was in waiting to act as convoy southwards after the troops were embarked.

On the morning of Tuesday, 22d September, the regiment left its quarters to embark at Leith. Several companies had been lodged in the castle—apparently those which had been some months in the city—and these 'prepared for their embarkation with the utmost cheerfulness,' as is stated in a letter of one of the officers. The remainder of the regiment had been quartered on the inhabitants of the Canongate and Abbey, and in these companies some evil counsellor had been at work, spreading discontent and sedition among the men. According to the version given in the *Edinburgh Advertiser*, published on the evening of the mutiny, the discontent arose from the bounty-money and pay of the men being in arrear. The officer's letter referred to attributes the mutiny to the inhabitants having assured the men quartered in the Canongate that Lord Seaforth had sold them to the East India Company, and that they were on embarkation to be turned over to the Company, and separated from their officers. From the terms under which the men eventually capitulated, it would seem that both of these causes had been at work.

The departure of the companies from the castle had been so timed that they were to meet those from the Canongate at the North Bridge—or New Bridge, as it was then termed—and at this place the spirit of the men first shewed itself. Here, aided by the populace, the Canongate companies threw the whole body into confusion, refused to march unless all their demands were complied with, and repelled by force all the efforts of their officers to restore them to obedience and discipline. The officers were insulted, pelted with stones, and struck by the inhabitants, who thus encouraged the men in their lawless conduct. After a time, how-

ever, a portion of the men were got into order, and started for Leith, where they were met by the two companies from the Abbey. These men had marched to Leith by the Easter Road, where Lord Seaforth endeavoured to allay the mutinous feeling, by telling the men their demands would be complied with as soon as possible. By this time, however, the soldiers had been prompted to distrust even the nobleman at whose instance they had enrolled themselves, and the greater portion of the regiment broke into open mutiny. A detachment of the corps was got on board the transports, but about five hundred men 'shouldered their arms, and set off at a quick march, with pipes playing, and two plaids fixed on poles for colours.' They marched to Arthur's Seat, where they took up a position in which they were able to bid defiance to any endeavour to coerce them. By the people of Edinburgh and Leith, the mutineers were amply supplied with food, as well as with ammunition, and as the men appointed officers, and placed sentries round their camp in regular form, all attempts to surprise them were seen to be hopeless. But in the meantime the authorities began to assemble a considerable force in the city, consisting of the 1st Dragoons, two hundred of the Buccleuch Fencibles, four hundred of the Glasgow Volunteers, and bodies of regular troops of various corps.

The hill chosen for the rebel camp was very different from the Arthur's Seat as it is now seen. Until within a very recent period, the level grounds surrounding it were divided into fields, many of the hollows were marshy and impassable, and the only roads were mere sheep-tracks. On this height, a well-armed and provisioned force might have held its own for many months, in the then state of the military art. It is not a little curious that the last time Colonel M'Murdo reviewed the Edinburgh Volunteers, he led them through various movements directed against the very spot where the rebel Seaforths had taken up their encampment. Had it been necessary to reduce the mutineers by force, the attacking body would have had no splendid military road such as the Queen's Drive by which to approach the position, and would have found that in the marshy bog of Dunsappie, and the rugged heights surrounding it, the rebels had powerful auxiliaries, absent in Colonel M'Murdo's mimic war.

Among the minor incidents of the hill-encampment were the death of one of the mutineers, who fell over the rocks, and was killed, and the accidental shooting of another. The wounded man, who was shot through the thigh by one of his brethren in arms, was carried to the Royal Infirmary—then a building in the suburbs, though now so far in the heart of the city that proposals for its removal are being considered.

The most remarkable part of the story of this rising is the lenient view taken of it by the authorities, both civil and military. On the morning after the outbreak, General Skene, second in command in Scotland at the time, visited the hill-camp, and offered the men inquiry into all their alleged grievances, and oblivion of all that had passed, if they would consent to embark. The men, however, insisted on having their money paid to them at once, and that several officers named by them should be dismissed. They also asked that they should get security not to be sent to the East Indies. On that day and the following, the Duke of Buccleuch, Lords Dunmore and Macdonald, and

numerous noblemen, gentlemen, and clergy, visited the camp of the mutineers, endeavouring to bring about a solution of the difficulty. Finally, on Friday the 25th September, after they had held out four days, the following terms were accepted by the men: First, a general pardon for all that had passed; second, that all arrears and levy-money should be paid before embarkation; and third, that they should never be sent to the East Indies. These articles were signed by the Duke of Buccleuch, the Earl of Dunmore, the commander-in-chief, Sir Adolphus Oughton, and General Skene. At eleven o'clock in the forenoon, the men marched down, headed by Lord Dunmore, and were met at St Ann's Yard by General Skene, who read over and delivered the articles of agreement. He advised the men to behave well, and announced that a court would be held next day, when the complaints against the officers would be inquired into. The men were then billeted in the suburbs, and quietly embarked on the Monday following, their departure having been thus delayed about a week.

This amicable settlement did not give satisfaction to some of the officers of the corps, who complained that the men had been too well treated, and that the terms granted to them were subversive of all military discipline. Previous to the court of inquiry—which pronounced the complaints against the officers to be without foundation—one of these gentlemen wrote to the *Edinburgh Advertiser*, asserting that the terms made were inconsistent with discipline, and injurious to the officers, that they had been agreed to without their consent or advice, and that Lord Dunmore had acted without authority in making the conditions. A 'Friend to the Public,' writing from Leith to the *Edinburgh Evening Courant*, subjects this letter to some sharp criticism. He feels himself called upon to applaud the wisdom and prudence of the reconciliation. The case was desperate, and few cases could be mentioned where so wide a breach was cemented in so easy a manner. He does not see how the reconciliation can hurt the future discipline of the regiment, 'when sure it is there could be no discipline had there been no men, as would visibly have been the case here had not a reconciliation taken place.' The 'Friend to the Public' says the men would have submitted to the general on the first day of the mutiny, but for some evil reports that one of Colonel Gordon's officers had come up as a spy to soothe them until they were surrounded by dragoons. When Lord Dunmore came on the fourth day bearing the articles of capitulation, the men were engaged preparing a petition to General Skene, which forty men were to have presented to him; and when the general addressed them at St Ann's Yard, adjoining Holyroodhouse, they with one voice said they would die for him, and serve the king in any quarter of the globe, excepting the East Indies.

Thus ended what had threatened to have a very disastrous effect on the efforts then being made to recruit the army. It was the most important, though not the only disturbance in the Highland corps raised at that time. About the same period, a body of men from Skye had mutinied, and taken to the hills at Burntisland; and there are other cases recorded, all arising from complaints about pay and bounty-money. But the 'Affair of the Macraes' was the most formidable insurrection of its kind.

The regiment which thus threatened to fall to pieces is in a manner the ancestor of two gallant corps in the Army List—the 72d and the 78th; and it is almost impossible to avoid reflecting on the blank that would have been made in the history of those corps, if the provision against service in the East Indies had been acted on in the Seaforth regiments. As we find the first corps in India within a very few months of the mutiny, there is reason to doubt the accuracy of the newspaper records of the capitulation. One cause of discontent was the rumour that the Highlanders were to be separated from their officers, and sold to the East India Company. The probability seems to be that the third condition made with the mutineers was that they should not be so disposed of. Before six years had elapsed, the regiment was reduced in India, at a general decrease of the army; but it was immediately reorganised as the 72d Regiment, being filled up by many of the men who did not wish to leave the military life, though their engagement was ended by the 'termination of the war.' Volunteers from other corps, disbanded or ordered home, made up the strength of the corps to 800 men. In 1809, this corps lost its kilted garb; and in 1823 it received the name of the 'Duke of Albany's Highlanders,' from the second title of the Duke of York. But it is the descendant, by direct succession, of the old Seaforth corps. The Ross-shire Buffs were raised in 1793 by the successor to the nobleman who enrolled the first Mackenzie regiment, and was enabled to take the same number in the Army List as had been borne by the former body. The two existing regiments, it is well known, have won their highest renown in that country to which their military name-fathers are alleged to have stipulated they should never on any account be sent!

POETRY.

How many voices, sweet and strong,
Have cheered the path of Time;
The mortal form hath perished long;
Its notes for ever chime.

In every land, and o'er the sea;
In gentle hearts and brave;
Like mountain-airs that brace the free;
Like trumpets to the slave.

O well it is to feel a spark
Of this immortal power;
Though lowly as a meadow-lark,
To soar some golden hour!

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LOW LIFE ABOVE STAIRS.

Now, whom was it that he reminded me of? Why, of Spangles, of course. And as the tarly policeman had by this time arrived, and closed the proceedings, we did not stand upon the order of our going, but went at once.

I was returning from the theatre shortly before midnight, and, in one of the small streets leading out of Oxford Street, I perceived a goody-sized crowd, from the middle of which came a man's voice high in oath, and two brawny arms brandished in defiance. I always stop and look on at a row, for the sake of studying the realities; so I pushed my way into the crowd, and as I got near the heart of it, heard something like this, delivered at the top of the speaker's voice:

'Come on, you beggar! Let me go, I tell you. I'll break every blessed bone in his cursed carcass, before he's two minutes older. Come on, you —' (N. and M. to take a hint from the Catechism.) 'I'll spile your pretty face for you. Do you think, because you're a 'eavy swell, you can insult our wives, and play what tricks you like? I'll teach you to insult mine, anyway. Come on'—N. and M.—'and see if I don't knock every baton of wind'—

The rest of the passage was so corrupt, that it would be utterly unintelligible to, at anyrate, the *gentle* reader; therefore I will merely say that it was generally to the effect that the speaker proposed depriving some one of every particle of breath, and reducing this person's outer man to such a state of blood and bruises, that his nearest relations would be unable to tell the difference between him and an exploded Guy Fawkes; and that if he, the speaker, allowed himself more time than two minutes and a quarter to work this radical change, it was his ardent wish that all the elements of nature would unite to cause his own immediate and utter destruction.

By this time, I had got to the front row, and saw a big burly fellow, with his coat off, and his sleeves turned up, trying to pull himself away from his wife and a friend, in the direction of a

young man, evidently a gentleman, as his calmness, in contrast with the bluster of his antagonist, testified.

'I never insulted your wife,' he said, raising his voice no more than was necessary to make himself heard; 'she knows I did not. However, it's no good arguing with the fellow. Loose me, Charley.'

The costermonger—I am sure he was a costermonger—shook his wife off, broke from his friend, dashed past me like a whirlwind; I saw his brown arms cutting great curves in the air; then a white hand shot like a flash of lightning from his adversary's shoulder; and the defender of conjugal honour, when next beheld, was sitting in the gutter, with a look of the utmost astonishment upon his face. The crowd laughed, which increased the wrath, though it failed to refresh the courage, of the fallen costermonger. Warned by the force of the blow which had dropped him, and, perhaps, anxious besides to keep as near as possible to the fountain-head of inspiration, he did not attempt to rise from the gutter, but contented himself with shouting out at his antagonist a volley of vile and shameful words, for the selection of which his seat in the kennel must have been very handy. Nor were his denunciations directed entirely against his late adversary. His wife, who by some means was the cause of the quarrel; his friend, who had interfered; the lookers-on, who had laughed; and even his own eyes, body, and limbs came in for a share. Such a noise as this could not go on for very long without attracting a policeman, and it was just as this official made his appearance, and as the crowd, principals and witnesses, were hastily dispersing, that I smote upon my thigh, and cried: 'Spangles, of course.'

And who was Spangles? Not know Spangles! Not know the great tragedian, beloved by gods and men, but principally by the gods! Why, if a vote were taken as to what actor best deserves the title of the Roscius of the day, Spangles would have the people's voice to a man, for the people's voice is the voice of the gods. Still, if you ask me to say candidly what I myself think about him, I should whisper to you that, to my mind, Spangles,

as an actor, is *Vox et præterea nihil*; and I ought to be able to give an opinion, for on this very evening I had seen, or, more correctly, heard him in *Othello*. Not that it was with any wish either to hear or see Spangles that I had gone to the theatre this evening. No; Spangles was only a necessary evil that I was obliged to put up with. My real reason for going was, that I desired to see some low life above stairs; so I put on a very old hat, and a very old coat, which, however, seemed to me but thinly to disguise my naturally aristocratic exterior, and set off with the intention of going into the gallery. I wished to see what sort of people went there, how they behaved, and in what light they regarded the legitimate drama; for *Othello* was to be the play, and Spangles was to take the Moor.

I could not at first find the entrance to the sixpenny-gallery, the favourite abode of the gods; I found the shilling-gallery, but that was not nearly low enough for me; so I asked a policeman—with some embarrassment, I confess, and with a meaning smile that was intended to put the officer up to the fact, that it was no regular gallery-goer who asked the question, but a philosophically-inclined member of the most select circles—where the sixpenny-gallery was. The policeman, without exhibiting the least surprise at my question, or manifesting any wonder at my going to such a part of the house—my disguise was evidently more perfect than I supposed; but still, a policeman's eye ought to have penetrated it—stolidly replied: 'The other side the 'ouse—in Blank Street.'

'You'll never rise very high in *your* profession, my good fellow,' I muttered, as I followed his directions, penetrated to Blank Street, and began, with a number of others, the ascent of a staircase, which seemed as if it aspired the clouds. Flight after flight I surmounted; corner after corner I turned, and at last reached the money-taker's box; but this, which I had thought would surely be the end of my journey, was only the half-way house. I was delayed here for a short time, until a woman with four babies had concluded an argument with the money-taker on the subject of half-price for children; and after this was arranged, my progress was necessarily slow, as I was obliged to follow in the wake of this body of infantry. This, however, gave me all the more time for observing my companions, and judging of their position in life by the remarks that fell from them; and when I overheard one man whisper to his neighbour: 'I say, Bob, don't this remind you of the mill?' I felt much satisfaction in the thought that I was actually touching a thief, and still more in the recollection that my watch and purse were both safe at home.

When we had ascended about half a mile, according to my calculation, the mother of the four asked me whether I would mind taking charge of one of the children till we reached the summit. I am of a fatally-yielding disposition; the infant looked tolerably clean, so I consented; and as I slowly mounted the stairs,

Boswell's question to Johnson: 'What would you do, sir, if you were shut up in a tower with a baby?' recurred forcibly to me. The child contented itself during the journey with staring fixedly at me, and biting its thumb in an insulting manner; but when we had almost reached the head of the staircase, excited, I suppose, by the elevation which it had gained, it set to work crowing—don't they call it crowing?—like the early village cock; to stop which performance as speedily as possible, I pushed past the mamma, surmounted the remaining bit of the Hill Difficulty, gained the House Beautiful, and stood at last in the gallery, a god confessed. Rendering up my charge to its mother, who was very grateful, I walked along the barrier at the back of the gallery-benches, in the hope of finding a seat unoccupied; but I had come rather late; the first piece, a farce, was over, and the people were waiting anxiously for the curtain to rise upon the tragedy. As I did not come to see the play, this did not much matter, so I leaned against the barrier, and stared about me.

The gallery itself was a dingy, gloomy, by no means fragrant loft. Looking down into the house was like looking from under a shade, such as weak-sighted persons wear to defend their eyes. The roof came down like a huge poke to a cap; and almost in a line between me and the stage hung the chandelier. Eating and drinking, occasionally kicking the boards, to intimate to the management that they were waiting, but far quieter than I had expected, the gods thronged the benches before me. I was surprised at the quiet that prevailed. There was scarcely any laughing; conversation was, as a rule, carried on in a low tone; I heard but one of those shrill whistles with which a playful divinity is wont to make the whole house ring; and the grave and decorous feeling which seemed to pervade the entire assembly, was well expressed in this short speech, made by one near me: 'It [the tragedy] ain't begun yet. You're in lots of time. The first piece is just hover—only a hijiotic farce.' The coming tragedy evidently cast its shadow before; the gods were seriously preparing their minds for the terrible drama.

Feeling rather like Ixion in heaven, I proceeded to observe the gods more minutely, and, by what I knew of their attributes, to distinguish one from another. There was no difficulty in finding Vulcan—he was omnipresent. The grimy god was to be seen everywhere, with his coat off and his sleeves turned up, as if he had been forging thunderbolts up to the last minute. It was not easy, however, without making invidious distinctions, to say who should be considered the original Vulcan; but I at last pitched upon a person who, besides being of superior foulness to his fellows, was entitled to the preference on the ground of his being seated near a very pretty girl—Venus, of course. Venus was the gem of the gallery, and, with her soft dovelike eyes and bright smile, would have passed for the goddess of love in very much better company than she was in at present. Close beside Venus, as

might have been expected, was Mars, an immensely tall Lifeguardman, between whom and his fair neighbour there seemed to exist a certain sympathy, occasioned, perhaps, by the fact, that while she was dove-eyed, he was pigeon-breasted; or it may have been only the attraction that a pretty face invariably has for a red coat, and a red coat for a pretty face. But where was Apollo? Where was the god of day? I was inclined to think at first that my own immediate neighbour was the deity in question, from the extraordinary interest he took in the music.

'What d' you think of that now?' he murmured to a friend beside him. 'There's a twist for you. Don't he come round 'em? My! what a 'and for a fiddlestick he has got.' And so on. But as the music did not seem to me to merit especial commendation, and as my friend's facial parts did not at all come up to my ideas of Apollo, I changed my mind, and concluded that he was some inferior divinity, who took, after the custom of the Olympians, an especial interest in some individual fiddler in the orchestra. As I was gazing carefully round, looking about vainly for an Apollo, a voice from the farther side of the gallery called out—the gods have a habit of occasionally shouting to each other—'Bill, where's Ginger?' To which was replied from my side of the house: 'He's gone down.' This threw some light upon the subject. Evidently, amongst the Immortals, the sun-god was known as 'Ginger,' on account of the warm and brilliant nature of his duties; and the expression 'gone down,' with reference to him, needs no explanation. There was no chance of mistaking Bacchus; he was very near me, and past all controversy, rather in nectar. Neptune, in the disguise of a waterman to a cabstand, was leaning with his head over the edge of the gallery, as if he were sea-sick. And as for the god Pluto, a moment's thought reminded me that he could not be here; he would be in the pit, of course. So there they swarmed expectant, those happy gods; lolling about with their coats off, drinking their nectar out of black bottles, and staring down, as many of them as were near the front, upon 'the gleaming world' beneath.

But, hark! the cry is Silence. The overture ceases; the patron of the fortunate musician murmurs, referring to his protégé's fiddle: 'Hunscrew him, Jemmy—hunscrew him: that's right, my boy; don't keep him too taut. Ah, that is a hinstrument!' The curtain rises, and the gods, with one consent, cheer the entrance of Iago and Roderigo. About the acting, I have nothing to say, except that everybody, especially Spangles, was applauded; and that, before the play was done, everybody, especially Spangles, was hoarse; that, to my eyes, situated as I was at the very back of the gallery, and looking down upon the stage through two ambrosial whiskers, each belonging to a different god, Spangles was foreshortened to that degree, that he looked little more than a head and front, underneath which his feet worked backwards and forwards most absurdly; and that, though it was with some difficulty that I heard Iago, and very often did not hear Desdemona at all, yet, whenever Spangles spoke, his voice filled the theatre like the roar of a lion. I looked round upon my companions, and was astonished at the fixed attention, the reverent silence that characterised the whole congregation. Except when they applauded, or interfered in the cause of order, they were as quiet as mice; even murmured conversation

was silenced at once; the footfall of any one moving about was sure to cause indignant remonstrances; and Bacchus, who declined to hold his tongue when the curtain rose, and insisted upon singing that he wouldn't go home till morning, was summarily kicked out, and bidden to go home at once. The gods had eyes and ears for nothing but Shakspeare. I never saw in any other part of the theatre such deep attention as this. Here were artisans, navvies, porters, cabmen, and shop-boys listening to Shakspeare, as if they loved him—bending forward with an eagerness that was strangely at variance with the conduct of the better part of the audience. Position in the theatre may no doubt have something to do with this. If you are in the stalls, you lean back to look up to the stage; whereas, if you are in the gallery, you bend forward to look down upon it, and bending forward is the attitude of attention. Then, again, stalls and boxes can hear what is said without straining their necks, and giving their whole mind to it. It is not necessary for the occupants of those parts of the house to put their heads on one side, so that the orifice of the ear may present its full front to the voice of the speaker; neither are they obliged to make ear-trumpets of their hands in order to catch the sounds. But to say that the people in the gallery adopt these methods, is only to say that they put themselves to a great deal of inconvenience in their anxiety not to lose a single precious word; besides, it is only at the very back of the gallery, where I was, that there is any difficulty in hearing. The people on the gallery-benches appeared to me to hear perfectly well.

But there is far more in it than this. No one, I am certain, who will regard the whole house with an impartial eye, but must confess that we in the gallery are the true patrons of the legitimate drama. Let those born to private boxes, like horses, or to stalls, like oxen, delight in the flimsy artificialities of opera, where heroes die to music, and heroines sing their French morals in Italian verse to the tune of fifty pounds a night; let your tenants of the circle and the pit revel in the broad fun of farce, and go into ecstasies over the drivelling nonsense of burlesque, which, having undertaken to shew up the folly of opera, has succeeded in most effectually discovering its own: we in the gallery care little for any of these things. We want something real, something serious, and Shakspeare is the man for us. Why, while the gentlefolk below are lolling back in their arm-chairs, sighing and yawning, look at us in the gallery. Do we gape or sigh wearily? Look how we, with our coats off, and our sleeves turned up, so that we may have the full use of our faculties, hang on the inspired words! See how we bend over the iron rail, or hold it in our mouths like a bit, as if to curb our wild enthusiasm, and keep ourselves from shouting our admiration in the middle of a sentence! Look how we are piled one upon the top of another, face rising above face like the heap of heads at the gate of Samaria! Observe how every action and sentiment find their instant echo in the gallery! Othello is suddenly overcome with the conviction of his wife's faithlessness. To express that conviction, he rolls his eyes, and grasps his throat, as if choking. We, responsive to the magic of the scene, stare like him, and, like him, clutch our gullets. And now the jealous Moor, fury in his heart, bursts into a torrent of wrath, raves against the guiltless Desdemona for her

supposed inconstancy, and carried this way and that by the gusts of passion, rages by turns against his wife, his friend, and himself, till he is completely out of breath, and must be quite independent of his dye, being black in the face from natural causes. Then our pent-up admiration makes itself heard. Taking advantage of the full stop, we rise like one man, and shout our approval with a voice as loud as Othello's own.

No one can doubt who sees them, that these uneducated people in the gallery delight in what they have heard much more than the well-educated people below. And why is this? I don't believe for an instant that the better classes are insensible to the power and beauty of Shakspeare. I believe, on the contrary, that they (sometimes) read him at home, and heartily admire and love him. Then why is it that, when he is acted, it is only the most uneducated persons amongst the audience who seem thoroughly to relish what they hear?

It was this question that I was revolving in my mind as I paced along Oxford Street on my way home, and had the happiness to come upon the row that I have described at the beginning of this paper; and it was the sudden light that this row threw upon my reflections that made me smite my thigh, and exclaim: 'Spangles, of course.' This costermonger, under the belief that his wife had been insulted, raged and roared exactly as Spangles's Othello did when under the belief that Desdemona was untrue. My difficulty was solved at once. The real reason why a tragedy of Shakspeare is more acceptable to the uneducated part of the audience than to the educated, is because the way in which the ordinary tragic actor of the day, with one or two exceptions, delineates the intenser passions, strikes the gallery as true to nature, and strikes the boxes and stalls as untrue. When Othello raves, and foams, and yells, as Spangles forces him to do, the people in the stalls know perfectly well that a gentleman, however jealous he might be, would not behave in that way. The gallery, on the contrary, instantly acknowledges the truth of such a representation of jealousy. Every man of them feels that, if he were in Othello's case, he should roar as Spangles does; and every howl of the actor's reminds him of his own or his friend's conduct when under the influence of strong passion. What, therefore, to the gallery is a close and masterly imitation, to the stalls is a piece of vulgar blatant exaggeration.

I shall not take upon myself to decide which is the correct view to hold as regards Spangles's acting. I will only say that I have no wish that the tameness, against which Hamlet warns his players, should be characteristic of ours. If there is any one who cannot understand how passion can be expressed without noise, let him go upon the stage at once; he is certain to succeed as a tragic actor. The gods will love him, and if he do not break a blood-vessel early in his career—for 'whom the gods love die young,' remember—he will no doubt be in time considered one of the lights of the stage. But sound is no more passion than the binding is the book, than the frame is the picture.

And of a truth I felt, as I stood in the gallery that evening, that, put the picture into how wretched soever a frame—a frame heavy in design, and of the loudest pattern—yet the picture is still there in marvellous beauty. A play of Shakspeare, represented even in this way, must do these

people good. It must awaken in them the sense of admiration for what is beautiful and pure, and of hatred for what is cruel and treacherous. And it did me good, too, to stand there with Shakspeare's lines ringing in my ears, and their manifest influence upon others working before my eyes, and to feel, more strongly than I ever felt before, that to enjoy him, who of all poets is the most natural, no great amount of wisdom or learning is required; that rich and poor, and vulgar and refined, can all discover stores of delight in him; and that the magic touch with which he has represented nature, does indeed make 'the whole world kin.'

THE ROUND-FISH.

WHEREVER uncivilised man, guided by an unseen power, has been directed to take up his abode, there materials for the supply of food and clothing, such as are best suited to his wants and requirements, are invariably found. The cocoa-palm furnishes meat, drink, raiment, cordage, houses, boats, sails, drinking-cups, and paddles to the tenants of tropic islands. The banana, plantain, and maize find the Mexicans in all they need. Whales, seals, and other oil-yielding monsters, carry life and light to the dwellers in hyperborean regions. In like manner, the round-fish and the salmon are essential supplies, floated free of all freight, up to the very wigwams of the savages occupying the lands of British Columbia.

The cedar yields him wood for his canoes, planks for his winter-houses, hafts for his spears, shafts for his arrows, paddles, drinking-vessels, and fire-wood; from the roots, he constructs hats and baskets; with the outer bark, he builds his rude summer lodges; from the inner, he spins ropes. Native hemp grows on the banks of every stream and rivulet, wherewith he cleverly makes cord for his fishing-nets. The back-tendon of the wapiti furnishes an admirable thread, with which the squaws stitch their skin-cloths and moccasins. But the winters are long, dreary, and intensely cold, the deep snow putting an effectual stop to hunting or trapping. Starve the Redskin must, with both cold and hunger, did he not harvest a crop, dry it, and carefully store it away, to meet the privations of a seven months' winter.

It is not chance that directs the round-fish to quit the sea, and ascend the streams in October, for the purpose of depositing its spawn; it has another and a higher destiny to serve. The same Hand that guided the savage to people this far-away land, sent the finny hosts also, impelled by resistless instinct, to thread their way to the remotest camping-grounds of the savage, following the tortuous water-ways that from the very mountain summits roll on, gathering strength as they go, to be swallowed up at last in the vast Pacific.

Late in September, and during the earlier part of October, the round-fish (*Coregonus quadralateralis* of ichthyologists) ascend the Fraser in countless numbers, branching off into every tributary, and steadily working their way, arrive at last on their favourite spawning-grounds. There are few of the finny tribe more agreeable to the eye, or toothsome to the palate; claiming kindred with the aristocratic *Salmonida*, the round-fish is fairly entitled to all the praise and attention bestowed on him alike by red and white men. This beautiful fish is, to all the Indians west of the Rocky

Mountains, what the *Attihasomeg* is to the tribes residing on the eastern slopes. The jaw-breaking Indian name means, when reduced to pronounceable English, *Reindeer of the Sea*—the white-fish of the voyageur, trader, and trapper; *Coregonus albus* of the learned. The Redskin's name for the fish is, after all, the best and most appropriate. Several powerful tribes entirely subsist on the 'reindeer of the sea' for nine months of the twelve, and at many of the fur-trading stations, they get but a scant allowance (during the colder months) of anything but white-fish, either frozen or dried. I may cite one 'take' as an example of the prodigal abundance of the white-fish east of the Rockies.

In a small lake named Lake St Ann, near Fort Edmonton, forty thousand white-fish were taken in three weeks, the average weight of each fish being about three pounds, and this with the rudest appliances for fishing.

Our friend the round-fish is not by any means eclipsed or cast in the shade by his eastern brother, as regards utility or numbers.

My tent was pitched on the bank of a small stream, that, clear as crystal, and icy cold, twisted its way in many a bend through the Sumass prairie; here widening out into glassy pools, girt with a miniature forest of rushes and sedge plants, and there narrowing in, to be lost under the shelving banks. To the sportsman, or lover of the picturesque, few spots offer greater attractions than does this lovely patch of prairie; situated at the base of a lofty pile of densely-timbered hills, spurs of the Cascade Mountains, easily accessible from the Fraser river by boat, or, what is far preferable, a canoe paddled by Indians. Sitting at the entrance to my canvas-house, before me towered up a series of mountain-peaks, those of lesser altitude densely clothed with pine and cedar, that on the more lofty summits dwindled off into rock, snow, mist, and cloudy obscurity. To my left, and behind, the Sumass lake filled up the foreground, fringed with poplar, birch, and willow; to my right, the emerald green prairie stretched away, a rolling sea of grass and flowers, to the Sumass river, that, like a line of flowing silver, skirted the bases of some rounded knolls that shut off both river and prairie from the muddy Fraser.

To the sportsman, it offered a preserve so filled with game of all sorts that the excessive abundance really palled the pleasure of shooting. On the pools, flocks of stock-duck, teal, widgeon, shovellers, whistle-wings, and spirit-ducks floated idly about, fishing, pluming, quarrelling, and flirting; crowding all the swampy spots round about the lake, were busy little brant, crafty Canada, and noisy laughing geese. On the lake, trumpeter swans glided about, with their dingy brown cygnets. Snipe, continually flushed under one's feet, flew only a short distance in angular course, then quietly dropped again amidst the grass.

Leave the open prairie, and wander into the 'bush'; amidst the belt-timber, the ruffed grouse hardly condescends to get out of your way, but perched on branch or log, stares with stupid curiosity at such an unusual apparition. Dive deeper in, and the crashing sticks tell you that a herd of wapiti, or gray deer, are aware of your intrusion; climb on to the craggy pile of lichen-clad rocks just ahead, and you may be pretty sure that bear, black or grizzly, will be there, ready to dispute your right of forest.

The Indian summer was drawing to a close, the

trees shading the winding water-ways had assumed their autumnal fashions, and clad in bright yellows and browns, contrasted prettily with the darker liveries of the forest. The prairie was like a fair. Thickly dotting the banks of the many small streams that flowed through it, were scores of Indian lodges, of all shapes and sizes—some constructed of buffalo-hide, others of rushes and cedar-mats. Indians, old and young—whose costumes were more remarkable for extreme simplicity than elegance, and varied only betwixt a blanket or nothing—were all alike busy capturing the 'round-fish,' that had just commenced ascending the streams in countless thousands. So massed were the silvery legions, that baits, traps, even nets were thrown aside, whilst baskets, wooden bowls, and hands did the work; the savages, simply standing in the water, baled out the fish, just as sprats are shovelled into the scale when weighed for sale.

Thousands of fish were drying, quantities had been devoured, and as many more were wasting and rotting on the banks. If we could suppose every fish to escape Indians, otters, and other enemies, and succeed in depositing its spawn, perhaps about 3000 eggs, where or how they would ever find room enough to manage it, or what would become of the offspring, is more than I can tell.

All the fish obtained are not baled out; where they are less numerous, or in deeper water, other means are resorted to. Boys, girls, and squaws catch great numbers by using a hook and line; the line, about eight feet long, is tied to the end of a short stick, and baited with roe which has been dried in the sun—a process that gives it a rank, disagreeable odour to the nose human, but increases its power to attract epicurean round-fish. I tried my powers of persuasion by tying together on a hook a bundle-like affair, compounded of red wool from my blanket, duck's feathers, the *ruff* from the neck of a grouse—the whole showily lighted up and finished off with tinsel and a bit of gold-lace. This I called a *fly*. Although unlike anything that ever was created, or ever will be, it answered the purpose beyond my most sanguine anticipations. My fly was made fast to a strong cord; the cord to the end of a young larch. Plied with both hands, it circled gracefully round my head, and plunged into the water with a splash like a small anchor. Round-fish are clearly braver than trouts are in our streams; instead of being scared at such an unusual monster, leaping into the midst of them, they rushed at him, greedily seized, and would have swallowed hook, feathers, and all, had not a sudden transition from the stream to its bank frustrated their intention, and demonstrated the folly of judging by appearances. Thus I whacked out fish after fish, to the intense delight of the dingy young savages, who one and all immediately set to work manufacturing monsters.

Another system by which immense quantities of fish are taken is a regular 'Indian basket-trick.' The basket is most ingeniously and skilfully contrived; in shape it resembles a colossal sugar-loaf, with a very young one inside it. The smaller end has a hole in it, affording the unsuspecting fish an easy entrance; but once through the lesser cone-like basket, all chance of retreat is cut off—they are prisoners without the faintest hope of escape. The basket, is made of split vine-maple, lashed together with strips of cedar-bark. The baskets vary in

capacity, but the usual size is about twenty feet in length, and nine feet in circumference. The trap set in the centre of the stream, wicker-dams are constructed, preventing any passing on either side of it. The round-fish working steadily up in the current, run their noses against the dam, then blunder about, puzzled at the unusual obstruction; at last, in great measure directed by the swifter water, they discover a nice round hole, through which it flows; in go the finders, and perhaps, in fish-language, call to their lagging comrades to follow, and fear not; and thus a steady inflow of fishes rapidly fills the basket. When incapable of containing any more, it is dragged ashore, and a fresh one set in its place. Landed, its contents are tumbled on the grass. Anxiously awaiting this discharge of round-fishes, sit a circle of grim, dirty, blear-eyed Indian women, of varying ages, each armed with a knife, while tied to their waists are bundles of small sticks. Near them are poles stretched on other poles driven into the ground, like small gibbets, under each of which a fire smoulders. Judging rashly, one might suppose these amiable-looking Hecates suspended their dingy offspring on them; but if we wait patiently for a short time, we shall discover what they really are used for. Rushing pell-mell on the struggling heap, each seizes a fish, and with dextrous thrust, rips it open from end to end; a sudden twist removes the head and inside, a rub on the grass the blood and dirt; a couple of the waist-sticks, placed cross-wise, prevents the split fish from closing; then the operator throws it on the ground, and clutches another. Girls are busy picking up the fish thus split and skewered by their more practised seniors, and stringing them on the gibbets. The fish are not hung up side by side, but one before the other, as if marching in single-file.

The fires under the fish serve two purposes—one, to aid in their preservation by imparting the 'kyanizing' power of wood-smoke; the other, to keep away flies, wasps, and hornets, members of the insect world most disreputable and thievish in their habits.

The curing process, in which salt *never* takes any part, is complete in about fourteen days. Then the poles are stripped, and the dried round-fish packed tightly in small bales, covered with rush-mats, are securely strapped with rude cordage spun from cedar-bark.

The fishing season at an end, lodges are struck, and baskets hid for the coming year. The take equitably divided, canoes heavily laden with men, women, children, dogs, and bales of fish, paddled by stalwart arms, glide smoothly down the smaller streams to reach the lake. No creak or splash of oar, or boisterous mirth, marks the progress of this quaint-looking fleet, the soft rhythm of the many paddles alone breaks the silence. The lake crossed, the Sunass river is descended; and the large cedar-huts, constructed of planks, like huge menageries, built in sheltered nooks along the Fraser, receive their various inmates, therein to pass away the long, weary, biting months of winter, hard to bear at best: but all the warmth derivable from fur, fire, and shelter would be of little avail to resist and withstand the gripe of the ice-king; fuel must be swallowed; the life-stove must be kept alight, and burning briskly too, inside the body as well as out; and this fuel the savage has in his bales of round-fish, just as essential to him as coals are to us.

There is but little demand on his muscular system during the cold months; the temperature 30 degrees below zero, deep snow on the ground, and the streams all frozen over, forbids all outdoor exercise or employment; his system of living is reduced to a state very analogous to hybernation; heat and not flesh making materials are what he needs, and in fish, oily and fat, he has them in their most perfect form—free of all cost—without risk from fire-damp, foul air, or being buried alive, the redskin gathers his heat-making crop from the water, in harvest regularly sent for his use, as the cycle of the seasons run their course.

MIRK ABBEY.

CHAPTER V.—MASTER WALTER.

THE day after Christmas Day was friendly to the fox; in other words, a hard frost; and since Miss Rose Aynton and Letty had declined to play at billiards with Walter until the afternoon—for it is vicious (in the country) to indulge in that pastime in the morning, as it is to play at cards before candlelight—that young gentleman, being no reader, felt the time rather heavy on his hands, and strolled into the village to get rid of it. The snow had ceased to fall, but not before, like a good housekeeper when the family has left town, it had covered up everything very carefully, except the tops of the chimneys, through which the tidings of good-cheer rolled forth in dusky columns from every cottage; for there were no abject poor in Mirk, thanks to my Lady, or any that lacked victuals at that joyous season. The Lisgards had ever been a free-handed race, as generous out of doors as hospitable within; and their influence for good had been felt for generations throughout the village. I do not say that they expected no repayment; their rule was paternal, and they looked for something like filial obedience in return. If a villager had passed any member of that august family without pulling his hair, as though it were a bell-handle, in token of respect, it would have been considered a sign of revolution, and they would have congratulated themselves that the yeomanry were in a state of efficiency. The feudal system was still in vogue at Mirk, but tempered not only by excellent beef-tea in sickness, and port wine from the Abbey cellar during convalescence, but by the best Gothic architecture, as applied to cottages. If eleven human beings did sometimes sleep in a single room, and the domestic arrangements were inferior to those which Mr Chifney of the Farm provided for his race-horses, the tenement looked outside very picturesque, as seen from the Abbey windows. Nay, it must be owned that even this inconvenience of overcrowding was rare in the home-village, in comparison with other places on the Lisgard estate, not so near the family seat, about which everything was in externals, at least, becomingly spick and span.

Dr Haldane, indeed, who had property of his own, and could afford to entertain political opinions at variance with those in favour at the Abbey, had been of old accustomed irreverently to adapt a certain popular nursery ballad to the state of things at Mirk.

Who built the infant school so red?
Who set that striking-clock o'erhead,
To tell us all the time for bed?

The Lisgards.

Who made, and at such great expense,
Around our pond that iron fence,
To keep the pigs and boys from thence?
The Lisgards, &c.

In short, Mirk was a pet hamlet, and exhibited a hundred tokens of its patron's favour. It was surely only right and proper, therefore, that all the votes in the village at election-time, except the doctor's, went the same way with the squire's, and that even in social matters he exercised unquestioned sway. Mirk was as respectable as the brotherhood of Quakers, and was rendered so by the same simple machinery; any one in the place who shewed a disposition to be otherwise was immediately turned out. Did a man drink, so as to cause public disturbance, or pick up sticks (to save himself trouble) out of the park-fences—or, worse than all, did he Poach—were it but a pheasant's egg—he received the most peremptory notice to quit the model village. The issuing of these ukases of banishment had been, now and then, a severe trial to the popularity of the Lisgards; but it had overruled all such acts—nay, more, even its favouritism, that seemingly indispensable element of the feudal system, had been forgiven it. Nobody now complained that George Steve, who notoriously never went to bed quite sober, still continued tenant of the *Lisgard Arms*; while Jacob Flail and Joseph Dibble had been condemned, with their families, to banishment for life for a less habitual commission of the same offence.

Much less did it strike the villagers that it was inconsistent in a landlord, so careful for the morality of his people, to let so large a portion of the Abbey Farm to a trainer of race-horses, of which there were at present upwards of thirty in Mirk; and in summer, when the Downland above was fit for their exercise, there were often twice as many. But then Mr Chifney was not like an ordinary trainer; nor did his jockey-boys, thanks to his strict supervision, behave like ordinary jockey-boys. They attended divine service on alternate Sundays, and half a dozen of them were in the choir. Mr Mosely (who was Anglican) had even taken into consideration the advisability of putting these last into surplices, but Mr Chifney had dissuaded him from that experiment. They had always been accustomed to the most tight-fitting of garments, strait-waistcoats, buckskin breeches, and gaiters—and perhaps he thought the transition would be too abrupt. Their habits, in some other respects, were loose, and yet they were suffered to breathe the Lisgard air. Mr Chifney's boys were like the servants of ambassadors at foreign courts, who enjoy a separate jurisdiction from that to which the native inhabitants submit. The law itself—at least in the case of petty offences—was not called in to punish these young gentlemen; but I believe they were 'colted'—for the whole discipline was 'horsey'—by Mr Chifney's head-groom. I do not know the exact manner in which this chastisement was inflicted, but it must have differed from the ordinary method, since they never failed to pursue their daily equestrian duties as usual. Mr Chifney looked after that himself, and exceedingly sharp. Nothing went amiss through oversight in his establishment, and his employers had every reason to put confidence in him. He left no means untried to insure the success of the costly animals it was his mission to groom and guard. His very acceptance of the post of churchwarden

had been described by his enemies as an attempt to 'hedge'—to make friends with those powers of good which are generally supposed to be antagonistic, if they have anything to do with it at all, to the profession of horse-racing. It is certain that Mr Chifney, whose occupations seldom permitted his own attendance at public worship, never failed to come to church upon those Sundays which immediately preceded the Derby and the St Leger, and indeed it is very likely that he treated them (without knowing it) as the eves of his patron saints' days.

It was to the Abbey Farm that Mr Walter Lisgard was now bound; for to the young gentlemen of England, what is a more interesting spectacle than a racing-stable—what is a more charming subject of conversation than the next Great Event? And who more fitted to afford every information upon that important topic—if he chose—than Mr Tite Chifney? *If he chose.* Therein lay the whole matter; for Mr Chifney was reticent, as became one intrusted with a hundred thousand pounds' worth of horseflesh, upon whose performances depended perhaps, in the aggregate, millions of money. He had put 'Master Walter' up to a 'good thing,' however, more than once, and the captain had no doubt but that he would do it again. He never did doubt of his own success either with man or woman. Confidence, but without swagger, self-content, but without vanity, were evident enough in those handsome features, illuminated almost at all times with the desire to please. He lit his cigar at the hall-door, smoothed away a fallen spark from his sealskin waistcoat, and took his way down the leafless avenue, humming the latest lively air, as he crunched the snow beneath his dainty boots. How different from Sir Richard's measured step and haughty silence, thought the gatekeeper's wife, as she hastened out of the lodge, from the side-window of which she had marked her favourite approach. 'Never mind me, Martha,' cried he laughing; 'I'm tall enough now to lift the latch for myself. My boots are thicker than yours are—look—and I have no rheumatism, which, I am afraid, you have not quite got rid of yet. There—I won't speak a word with you till you go inside. How's the guidman? Ah, out is he? How's little Polly? Hullo, Polly, how you're grown! Why, I daresay she won't kiss me now, as she always used to do.'

'O yes, she'll kiss you, Master Walter,' answered the old dame; 'there's no harm in kissing o' you; although I wouldn't say that to my daughter of ne'er another young man in the county.—Come, lass, you need not blush so, for I've had many a one from the same young gentleman.' And the old dame laughed and chuckled, until that dread enemy of honest-hearted mirth, the lumbago, twitched her into her chair.

Polly, a very pretty country lassie, about sixteen, stood pink and hesitating while the captain removed his cigar, and waited—smiling demigod—for the promised favour.

'Come, gie it to him, and ha' done wi' it,' cried the old lady, exasperated by her tortments. Thereupon the girl stepped forward, head aside. Master Walter met her, touched her soft cheek with his lip, and as his silken moustache brushed her ear, whispered an airy something which turned her crimson. There was nothing in the words themselves save the merest compliment; their magic lay in the tone of him who used

them; so tender, yet so frank, so familiar, and yet so gracious. Then, with a smile, he bade them both 'good-bye,' and strolling through the gate, resumed his interrupted ditty, as though kissing were the most innocent as well as the most natural of all pastimes; but Polly pressed her throbbing brow against the pane for its very coolness, and watched him saunter down the village street with quite a flutter at her heart, and promised to herself that she would not forget the captain's kiss—no, not though Joe, the under-gardener, should speak his mind next 'feast' (as it was rumoured in well-informed circles that he intended to do), and 'keep her company' in earnest.

That she was doing no wrong in this was certain, for not only her mother, but everybody else in Mirk agreed that there was no sort of harm in Master Walter, let him do what he might. He had a way of doing things so very different from others. How the very dogs fawned upon him as he sauntered on, and the old horse in the straw-yard stretched its gray head over the gate in hopes of a caress as he went by! How the boys by the roadside left their Snow-man an unfinished torso, and ran to make their bows before the good-natured captain, with an eye to *largesse*, in the form of a copper scramble; and how the school-girls courted, with admiring awe, as they pictured to themselves how fine a figure handsome Master Walter must needs cut in gold and scarlet! He had a nod or a word for almost everybody, young or old; but if his look but lit upon another's face, it left a pleasure there, as the Sun leaves when it has shone upon one. Delayed by these reciprocal manifestations of good-will, like a young prince making a royal Progress among a well-affected people, Walter Lisgard at length got free of the village, and climbing a steep hill (never used by the racehorses even in much less slippery weather), arrived at his destination, the Abbey Farm. This was a long, low, ancient building, belonging to one could scarce tell what date, so pieced, and restored, and added to, had been the original structure; but when the Abbey was an Abbey, the Abbey Farm had been a sort of branch-establishment, in the occupation of the monks; there were traces of their sojourn even now: over the pointed porch yet stood a cross of stone, though broken; and in the garden, now all white and hoar, that lay between the house and road, there was a mighty sun-dial, carved like a font with noseless saints in niches, and round the rim a scripture, of which alone the words *nox venit* could be deciphered. The night had come, not only upon those who built and blessed such things, but on the faith which they professed. The very memory of themselves and it had faded from men's minds. Not one in ten at Mirk—where all had owned the Abbot for liege lord, and bowed their heads before his meanest monk, in token of their soul's humility, but a few centuries back—not one in ten, I say, could tell even what that niche on the south side of the communion-table meant, which the learned called *Piscina*. The mighty bower that had once been the granary of the Abbey, and to which the poor had looked with thankful eyes in times of scarcity, still stood beside the homestead, but the remembrance of its very use was gone; the only legend clinging to its moss-grown walls was that a Long Parliament had once held its sittings there. Save the farmhouse and the barn, all relics of the past had been swept away. Immediately behind them

was quite a town of stables and loose-boxes, all of the most modern construction, and furnished with the latest inventions for equine comfort. The enormous farmyard, strewn with a thick carpet of clean straw, was now the exercising-ground for the horses; but in the summer, a gate at the back of the premises opened immediately upon the grassy upland, the proximity of which had tempted Mr Tite Chifney to pitch his tent and enlarge his boundaries at the Abbey Farm. So high had been the rent he offered for this eligible situation, that the late Sir Robert had removed his own agricultural head-quarters elsewhere, and suffered Mr Chifney and his racehorses to occupy the whole place, which was now the capital of the Houwhyhims—the largest establishment in Great Britain, wherein man held the secondary position, and the Horse the principal.

CHAPTER VI.—THE RACING-STABLE.

It was Mr Chifney in person who admitted Walter Lisgard, after a precautionary glance at him through a little grating, which doubtless the monks had used for a similar purpose, although without the same excuse, for they had never possessed any Derby 'cracks' to be poisoned. Mr Chifney might have been himself a monk but for his apparel, which, although scrupulously neat and plain, fitted him almost like war-paint, so that there was not a crease to be seen, except at the knees, of which he made as much use as the holy fathers themselves did, though not precisely in the same way. His dark hair was closely cropped, and a little bald spot on the top of the crown might well have been taken for a tonsure. Moreover, he had a grave and secretive look, which would have well enough become one in whom were reposed the secrets of the Confessional; and when he smiled, he looked sorry for it immediately afterwards, as though he had given way to a carnal pleasure.

Captain Lisgard shook the trainer's hand with his usual hearty warmth, and Mr Chifney returned his pressure with unwonted cordiality. He was accustomed to meet men of a much higher social rank than his present visitor on something like equal terms; many of them shook hands with him; all of them treated him with familiarity. The Turf, like the Grave, levels all distinctions. Between the Lord and the Blackleg (to make an antithetical use of terms that are not seldom synonymous), there is but slight partition on that common ground; the widest gulf of social difference is bridged over, *pro tem*, by the prospect of an advantageous bet. How much more, then, was this wont to be the case in view of the trustworthy 'information' which Mr Tite Chifney had it so often in his power to bestow? Marquises had taken his arm in a confidential manner before now in the most public places, and dukes had called him 'Tite,' even ladies of the highest fashion had treated him to pretty speeches, and to what they hoped might turn out literally 'winning ways.' But the great trainer estimated all these concessions at their true value. He never concealed from himself the motives that caused these people to be so civil to him; and perhaps he had seen too much of the turfite aristocracy to be flattered by their attentions, even had they been disinterested. But Walter Lisgard's greeting was different from those which he was wont to receive from his great patrons; there was not only a cordial frankness about it, but a something of sympathy, conveyed with marvellous

tact, in his air and manner; which seemed to say: 'I unfeignedly regret that anything like friendship should be impossible between us, for I am your social superior; and yet, how ridiculous a thing it is that this should be so! I, but the younger brother of a man himself of no great position, and you, at the head of that profession in which the noblest in the land take so great and personal an interest.' If Mr Chifney did not read all this, it is certain that so acute an observer could not fail to read some of it. He was as far from being moved by any considerations not strictly practical as any man connected with horseflesh; his calling, too, rendered him as suspicious of his fellow-creatures as a police detective; but Master Walter's sort of flattery was too subtle for him. He had always had a liking for this genial young fellow, with his handsome face and pleasant speech, and who, moreover, rode across country like a centaur; he was one of his own landlord's family, too, and the heir-presumptive of the property, whose favour it was just as well to win and keep; and lastly, the lad had been so unfeignedly grateful to him for the little hints he had occasionally afforded him, as well as so wisely reticent about his informant, that he was not unwilling to help him again to a few 'fivers,' if he could do so without the betrayal of professional confidence.

'Come for another "tip," eh, Master Walter?' whispered he good-naturedly as he led the way into the house. 'You see I did not deceive you the last time you were here about *Cambyses*!'

'No, indeed, you did not, Mr Chifney' (Walter never addressed this friend of his without the *Mister*), 'and a very great blessing it was to yours thankfully at a time when he was even more hard-up than usual. Is your Derby "crack" visible to-day? I am poor, but honest. I have no motive beyond that of curiosity, and if suspected of a concealed weapon, will submit to be searched.'

'Well, Master Walter,' grinned the trainer, 'I can't say that I much credit the honesty of anybody myself; but I don't see why you should not have a look at his majesty, particularly as there is one coming here this morning already upon the same errand, and I'm sure I'd as soon oblige you as him—or, indeed, as any man, let it be who it will.'

'You are very kind to say so, Mr Chifney, and still more to mean it, as I am sure you do; but I feel that I have no right with my bagatelle of a stake depending upon the matter to take up your time—nay, I must insist upon throwing my cigar away before entering your house; it is all very well for Mrs Chifney to give you the privilege of smoking within doors, but I could not venture to take such a liberty myself. What a jolly place this is of yours; I always think it is so much snugger than the Abbey. I should never sit anywhere but in your grand old kitchen, if I were you.'

'Well, the fact is we do sit a good deal in the kitchen,' returned Mr Chifney reddening. 'It's warm, you see, although it's large, and my wife likes to see how things are going on. She's engaged there just at present, and—you're a great favourite of hers; but I would recommend you to step in as you go out, instead of now. A queer thing is woman, Master Walter, and no man can tell how queer till he comes to be married! Young gals is all sweetness and easily cajoled; but wives—O lor! Now, it's exactly different with horseflesh, for the brood-mares one can manage with a little care, and it's only the fillies that

give us trouble, and have such tempers of their own. There; that's a Derby nag, *Blue Ruin*, in the cloths yonder, and I believe the duke would not sell him for three thousand pounds; but I have told His Grace, as I tell you, that I wouldn't back the horse even for a place.'

'A splendid stepper, too,' exclaimed Walter admiringly, as the beautiful creature paced slowly round the straw-yard, with arching neck and distended nostrils, as though he were aware of the trainer's depreciating remarks, and could afford to despise them.

'That's true,' rejoined Mr Chifney drily; 'but we don't want steppers, but goers; there's a vast of steppers in this world, both men and horses.—Now, in that box yonder, there is an animal who, in my opinion, could give *Blue Ruin* ten pounds; but you shall judge for yourself presently. *The King's* palace is this next one.'

And truly, scarce could horse be better housed than was his equine majesty. No light-house could be more exquisitely clean; no drawing-room in Mayfair more neat, or better suited to the requirements of its inhabitant, although of ornament, save the plaited straw that fringed the royal couch, there was nothing. A dim religious light pervaded this sanctuary, which was kept at a moderate temperature by artificial means, while an admirable ventilation prevented the slightest 'smell of the stable' from being perceptible. The object of all this consideration was a magnificent bay horse, by rule of Liliput, very fitly named *The King*, since, if not a head taller than his fellows, he was fully 'a hand.' His coat quite shone amid the gloom, and as the key turned in the door, he pricked his long fine ears, and turned his full eyes upon his two visitors inquiringly, with far more expression in his lean-jawed face than is possessed by many a human creature.

'This gives the world assurance of a horse indeed,' muttered Walter to himself as he contemplated this wonder. 'Shew me his faults, Mr Chifney, for his excellences dazzle me.'

'Well, sir,' whispered the trainer, looking up towards a square hole in the ceiling, 'it is not for me to depreciate "the crack;" and there's a boy up yonder—for the horse is never left for a moment, night or day—who is getting too sharp to live, at least in my stables. But look at what he stands on.'

Most men who ride think it a disgrace not to know all about a horse. Every man who keeps a pony thinks himself qualified to 'pick' out the winner from any number of thoroughbreds before 'the start;' and when the race is over, protests that he *had* picked him out in his own mind, only something (not quite satisfactorily explained) made him distrust his own judgment, and back a loser.

It was a great temptation to Captain Walter Liscard, of the 104th Light Dragoons, to shew himself horse-wise, but he put it from him manfully, or rather with strength of mind far beyond that of most men of his class. 'The pasterns seem to be long and strong enough,' answered he, 'and the feet neither too large nor too small.'

'Just what my lord says,' observed the trainer in the same low tones; 'nor can I make him see that there is any degree of contraction. But he is not *your* horse, so tell me; look now—is it not so?'

It was so, or at least it seemed to be so to the captain, as the trainer returned the faulty member to its proprietor, with the air of a banker declining a forged cheque.

'It is of small consequence to me,' said Walter; 'but I shall be sorry if the winner does not come out of your stable. I took a thousand to twenty in October, which I can now hedge to great advantage.'

'If you take my advice, you will hold on,' said Mr Chifney confidentially. 'Twenty pound is little to lose, and what I have shewn you by no means destroys his chance; moreover, *The King* will not be deposed in the betting. I shall be surprised if, in the paddock, they lay more than three to one.'

'You were going to tell me something, Mr Chifney, only you thought better of it,' said Captain Lisgard, laying his finger upon the other's coat-cuff, as they emerged from the royal presence. 'And yet you trusted me when I was but a boy at school, and I never abused your confidence.'

'What a fellow you are to read a chap!' returned the trainer admiringly. 'Burst my buttons, but you are a cunning one, Master Walter! It is true that I was thinking of letting you into a little secret—though, after all, it mayn't be worth much. Let us come on to the tan-gallop for five minutes, for nowhere else can we get out of earshot of these boys.' With that, passing through a paddock, itself provided with a straw-ride, so that the race-horses need not set foot upon the frost-bound turf as they issued forth to exercise, Mr Chifney led the way to the upland, where a broad brown road of tan was permanently laid on the level down. Here the trainer paused, and speaking aloud for the first time, observed in a solemn tone: 'Now, look you, true as fate, I would tell no other man but you. What I said about *The King's* feet was on the square: but that ain't all. There's a horse here as nobody ever heard of, and yet who's a real good un. He's the one that I said could give *Blue Ruin* ten pounds. You may get two hundred to one against him at this blessed moment, and he'll be at twenty to one before April Fool Day. It's the best thing we've had at Mirk yet, and—Ah, the devil! here comes the man I was expecting; remember we were talking about *The King*.'

'Morning, Mr Chifney,' said the new-comer, nodding familiarly to the trainer.—'And morning to you, sir, if you ain't too proud to accept it.'

He was a large-built middle-aged man, with a sunburnt countenance, generally good-humoured enough, notwithstanding the presence of a truculent red beard, but upon this occasion, somewhat sullen, and even defiant. Walter recognised in him the stranger stopping at the *Lisgard Arms*, at once, and was at no loss to account for his displeasure. He had doubtless received some hint that his presence at the Abbey would not be welcome.

'Good-morning, Mr Derrick,' returned the captain cheerfully. 'There is no pride about me, since, unfortunately, I have nothing to be proud of; but if there was, why should I not return a civil reply to a civil speech?'

'Oh, because I ain't good enough to speak to,' answered the other scornfully. 'Because I ain't a gentleman, forsooth, like your high and mighty family. But the fact is, sir, although I have got decent blood in my veins myself, I come from a country where we don't care *that*—and he snapped his fingers with a noise equal to the crack of a whip—for who is a man's father, unless the man himself is worth his salt.'

'That, then, must have been the reason why this good-for-nothing rufian left that country,' thought

the captain; but he answered with humility: 'Then, I fear, I should be giving up my best chance if I went there.'

'Well,' answered the stranger, somewhat mollified, 'you don't speak like one of them beastly aristocrats—that I will say—as though it were too much trouble to open their darned lips.'

Mr Derrick himself did not speak like an aristocrat either; his voice, though rich in song, had in speech a strong northern burr, which rescued it from any such imputations. 'Why, if a man in my country,' continued he, 'should venture to warn another off his land—unless, of course, it was a mining claim—as Sir Richard Lisgard'—

'Mr Derrick,' interrupted the captain firmly, 'I am sure that it is not the custom in any country in the world to abuse a man's brother to his face. Having said that much, I will add that, if you have received any rudeness from any one at the Abbey, I am sincerely sorry for it. It did not emanate from me. Mr Chifney here will give me a character so far.'

'Master Walter is as civil-spoken and well-behaved a young gentleman as any in the county,' exclaimed the trainer warmly; 'and I will go bail has never given you or any man offence. He has just stepped in, like you, to see "the crack," on which he has a little money; and since I am not one of those who say: "It is no use now a days to attempt to take in your enemies, and therefore your friends must suffer," I have been giving him some advice.'

'About *Manylaws*?' inquired the stranger suspiciously, turning sharp round upon the captain.

The look of blank astonishment upon that gallant officer's face would have set at rest the doubts of a Pollaky.

'It is not my habit to disclose my customer's secrets,' observed the trainer tartly; 'although I may say that, with Master Walter, everything is as safe as wax.'

'Is it so?' quoth Mr Derrick warmly; 'then let him come with us and see the Black.—Only mind, Mr Walter Lisgard, I will not have that brother of yours bettered by a fourpenny-piece by anything you may see or hear to-day.'

'My brother never bets upon any race,' answered the captain quietly; 'so that promise is easily given.'

'Then come along with me and Mr Chifney,' said the stranger, holding out his hairy hand in token of amity. 'You've read a deal about that crack as I've just been looking at; but I dare say, now, you have never so much as heard of this same *Manylaws*.'

'Not unless you mean the French horse, about which there were a few lines in *Bell* some time ago—*Menelaus*.'

'Ay, that's him. But it's called *Manylaws*, explained Mr Derrick; 'for you wouldn't think of calling the Oaks' mare *Antigone*, I suppose, *Antigone*. Well, the Black ain't fancied much, I reckon; but he *will* be, Mr Chifney, eh? He *will* be!'

'It is my opinion that he will be at very short odds indeed,' returned the trainer; 'and many more people will be desirous of paying him a call than do him that honour just at present. This is his stable. He does not look quite such a likely horse as *The King*, Master Walter, does he? There's bone for you!'

'An ounce of blood is worth a pound of bone, says the proverb,' remarked the captain.

'So far as that goes, although he *is* a Frenchman,' answered the trainer, 'he has Godolphin's blood in his reins. But only look at his ragged hips!'

'Ragged enough, Mr Chifney. And do you mean to say that this animal will be a public favourite?'

'We hope not,' returned the trainer, winking facetiously at his bearded friend; 'but— Shall we tell him what we *do* hope, Mr Derrick?'

'I'll tell him myself,' quoth the other impulsively, 'for you say the young gentleman is safe, and I have taken a sort of unaccountable fancy to him. We hope, and more than that, believe, Captain Liscard, that that same ragged-hipped horse will win the Derby!'

'Two hundred to one against Mr Blanquette's *Menelaus*,' murmured Walter pathetically, as though it were a line from some poem of the affections.

'That's the present quotation,' answered Mr Derrick with a chuckle, and rattling a quantity of loose silver and gold in his breeches' pockets. 'Perhaps you would like to lay it in ponies with Mr Chifney and me.'

'No, Mr Derrick; but I should like to thank you very much for letting me into this secret, which, I assure you, shall never pass my lips;' and he held out his hand to the stranger.

'Our way lies together as far as the inn,' returned the other warmly; 'we'll liquor— But there; I forgot I was no longer in Cariboo. I dare say a gentleman like you *don't* liquor so early in the day.'

'At all events, I will walk with you, my good sir,' answered the captain laughing; and so, forgetting to repeat his request to be permitted to pay his respects to the trainer's wife, he took his departure with his new acquaintance.

'And who *is* this Monsieur Blanquette?' inquired Walter carelessly as they walked down the village street.

'He was a mate of mine at the gold-diggings in British Columbia, and the only Frenchman as ever I saw there. We did a pretty good stroke of work together; and when we came home, he invested his money in horseflesh, and that there *Manylaws* was one of his cheapest bargains.'

'I think I saw it stated somewhere that Mr Blanquette is only part-owner of the horse?'

observed the captain inquiringly.

'That's so,' rejoined the other. 'It belongs to him and a company.'

'And you are the company, eh, Mr Derrick?'

'You have hit it,' responded the bearded man with the air of a proprietor. 'This here child is the Co. in question.'

THE ART OF TYING THE CRAVAT.

A VERY absurd but amusing old book fell into our hands the other day, and recalled a thousand recollections of the fantastic extravagance of fashion in the days when George IV. filled the throne.

It was a little volume, with a pink enamelled cover, and bore on one side a steel engraving of a Cupid seated, and holding over a large ledger the head of a most immaculate dandy, the neck encircled with an unwrinkled cravat, the ends of which, still untied, depended with exquisite grace. This remarkable work was entitled *The Art of Tying the Cravat*. It was the seventh edition, and contained explanatory plates of eighteen modes of putting on the cravat, and a portrait representing a dandy with black curly hair, and pink and white

complexion, like a Bond Street barber's dummy, and a neck bound up in a deep swath of spotless white muslin, highly starched. In such a garb, Romeo Coates rehearsed the Italian lover's passion.

The preface professes that the book contains demonstrations and lessons of the art of tying the neckcloth, coupled with a résumé of the latest Parisian improvements and amplifications, together with a history of the cravat from the time of Adam to the present day. The motto from Addison is chosen with exquisite tact: 'Nothing is more laudable than an inquiry after truth.' This high key-note being struck, the author goes on to assert boldly, that although foreigners are slow to give us credit for any invention that has dignified and elevated the human race, they are forced to confess that we have at least led the way in the art of *tying the cravat*. The invention is ours; the merit of perfecting it and tracing it to further uses and developments belongs to the French.

This book has, we should mention, a history of its own. It was found under a pile of unworn waistcoats in the chambers of an old ex-dandy, who had degenerated into a forlorn, eccentric, miserly old bachelor, a hermit only to be seen at sale-rooms and in print-shops. He was a man of enormous fortune; but the disappointment of some hope, the frustration of some whim, had soured his blood, and turned his heart from a jar of honey to a pot of vinegar. Old and neglected, he died, untended and unwept, surrounded by stacks of unhung pictures, littered of unread books, heaps of unused clothes, tins of preserved food, and mouldy pieces of bacon.

From such a treasure-house of good intentions, such a lazarus-house of defeated purposes, came this pert little book, the memorial of the indestructible follies of fashion.

Fashion shakes off its slough, but it never ceases to be foolish. The ruff of starched cambric, large as the wheel of a perambulator, gave way, but only to be replaced by huge bows of coloured ribbon. The broad-laced collar of the Cavaliers changed into the Puritanic-looking falling bands and bone-lace strings of Charles II.'s age. In 1660, the year of the Restoration, the huge lace-collar and the plain falling band both yielded to a new fantasy. A regiment of Croats arrived in Paris, and brought with them a new way of adorning the neck, which soon became the rage. The common soldiers wore neckcloths of common cloth, taffeta, or cotton; the officers, of lace, muslin, or silk, the ends of which were arranged in rosettes, or were ornamented with buttons or tufts, which fell gracefully on the chest. The officers wore Mechlin lace at the end of their neckcloths, which were fastened at first by strings, and at a later period by clasps or buckles. This neckcloth soon became known as the Croat or the Cravat.

But fashion cannot remain satisfied for any length of time with any article of dress that is merely useful. Grand people spend half their life trying to run away from their humble imitators, and endeavouring to dress like a distinct and superior species.

The cravat soon ceased to be that mere elegant soft fold of pierced and honeycombed lace that had enveloped the throats of the stanch men who fought at Steenkerke and the Boyne. It was thickened with stiffeners, buckramed with starch, and increased fold by fold till it grew into a bolster that made the neck as large or larger than the head.

Just before the French Revolution, the cravat had in fact become the crowning absurdity of dress. The 'Gilded Youth,' after Robespierre's fall, when ladies tried to dress like Greek statues, and almost succeeded, wore cravats that covered the mouth and part of the nose. The whiskers, of enormous size, rose to the hair, which was combed down straight over the eyes. The shirt-collars rose half-way up the ear, and then the head could not be turned without the consent of the whole body.

But as crinoline, though detestable, is light and adapted for the display of dress, and as Hessian boots, though ludicrous, were good to shew off a neat leg, so cravats, even of the bolster species, had their advantages. A certain Dr Pizis, writing of the French wars in Germany, says: 'I was laughing at General Lepale on account of his enormous cravat. At the moment of entering into action, his regiment charged. There was a roar of cannon, a fiery flash of sabres, a stormy gallop of horses; and after dispersing the enemy's cavalry, some men of the regiment returning to the bivouac informed me, to my great distress, that the general had been struck by a pistol-shot in the throat. I immediately hastened to his assistance, and was shewn a bullet which had been stopped in its career by the very cravat I had just been ridiculing. Two officers and several privates had also received sabre-cuts on the cravat, and escaped without injury; so that I was obliged to confess that these immense bandages were not always useless.' To wear a bolster round one's neck is, however, paying rather a heavy insurance against such exceptional dangers.

Stocks came into use early in the eighteenth century. Choiseul, the Minister of War under Louis XV., first presented them to the French troops in place of cravats. Military pedants soon turned this article of dress into an instrument of torture. The cravat, now called a stock, became an iron ligature, excellent to produce apoplexy, vertigoes, and fainting-fits; and, judiciously used in India by martinets, it has much encouraged *coup de soleil*.

The French colonels who cheated their men out of their food, and half starved them to increase their own profits, obliged the men to drive the blood up into their faces and heads, to give them the appearance of florid and irreproachable health. Ingenious pedantry—to case a soldier in tight inelastic dress, to bind up his limbs, to make him a machine of mere routine, when he should be lithe as a panther, as full of self-resource as an Indian trapper, as vigorous as a backwoodsman, and as nimble as Lcetard. In Lintrell's elegant and gay poem, *The Advice to Julia*, the fit of the cravat is regarded as the great work of the day. Old anecdote-tellers rejoice to relate how that accomplished master of folly, Brummel, being once found knee-deep in rumpled white cravats, remarked that 'those were his failures.' The French marshals wore black-silk neck-handkerchiefs, twice round, and tied in a neat crisp bow in front. Napoleon wore such a cravat at Wagram, Lodi, and Marengo; but at Waterloo he appeared, contrary to his usual custom, in a white cravat with a flowing bow.

The cravat was the mark of a less republican and levelling age than ours; it was for exclusives who dreaded the march of intellect, reforms, and the removal of rotten boroughs. The cravat that took one hour to tie served to distinguish the man

hand Club, and of Boodles, the patron of the ring, the indulger in rouge-et-noir, chicken hazard, and cock-fighting, from the Pretender of Bloomsbury, who used plated forks, and hired green-grocers to wait at dinner-parties.

Many pages of this great work are devoted to preliminary instructions.

When the laundress brought home the cravats, they had to be carefully examined by the valet, to see whether they had been properly washed, ironed, and folded, and to study the exact style in which each might be worn to the best advantage. If badly got up, the cravat became faded and yellow. The quality of starch was also of infinite value, remarks the profound author, as it gave substance, elasticity, and suppleness to the muslin, and in summer possesses this incalculable advantage, that it prevents the cravat from adhering too closely and warmly to the neck. When arranged, it was necessary to pass the fingers lightly along the top, to smooth and trim it, and make it coincide with the shirt-collar.

It was requisite to have, and carry everywhere with one, a small iron, made for the purpose, to smooth the tie, and to produce a thin and equal edge. To prevent a bunch at the back of the neck, it was necessary to fold the cravat of the requisite height, and to remember to fold the one end down and the other up. 'No gentleman, with the least respect for his appearance,' says the author of this volume, 'could travel without a box, eighteen inches long, and divided into compartments; and this box was to contain a dozen plain, a dozen spotted and striped, and a dozen coloured cravats, three dozen collars, two whalebone stiffeners, two black silk cravats, and a small flat iron.'

Our talented author insists especially on the following great laws. In whatever style the cravat is put on, the knot once formed, good or bad, is irrevocable, and must on no pretence whatever be changed. As in the *sauces blanches* in cooking, so in the cravat, the smallest error is fatal to the whole. A new tie must be produced by a fresh cravat, as a new sauce must be prepared with fresh ingredients.

There were also medical rules to be observed with respect to the cravat, which was a high-pressure sort of decoration, and required to be handled with scientific prudence. It required to be loosened in cases of fainting and apoplexy, before study or business, and during a heavy dinner. Apoplectic, short-necked men were adjured to wear it loose, and to remove it during sleep.

Coloured cravats could only be used for undress. The white cravat, with spots or squares, was received as half-dress; but the plain white, as at present, was indispensable at balls or soirées. The black stock was restricted to military men when in plain clothes, and not on service.

There were eighteen methods of putting on the cravat, and it required sixteen lessons to obtain any mastery over them. The *chef-d'œuvre* of cravat ties was the Nœud Gordien. This was so intricate that it was usual with impatient dandies to remove the Nœud Gordien by cutting the cravat off their necks. This tie, the key to all the others, could only be worn once. The slightest error in its first fold vitiated its whole construction. The author explains its form, in five diagrams, which are more difficult to comprehend than the most puzzling problem of Euclid's. You passed the

became a labyrinth of confusion. It was usual with the dandies to practise first on a block.

We shall now sun up some of the names and characteristics of the more celebrated cravat-ties, for the amusement of those who are fond of old prints and caricatures, to which such fashions serve as notes and comments.

The Cravate à la Turque was shaped like a turban; the starched ends formed a crescent under the chin. This cravat was made of the purest white muslin or cashmere. The Cravate à la Washington was sea-green, striped blue, or red and white, and the ends fell in front *en cascade*, and were pinned to the shirt. This tie, the author observes, when correctly formed, presented the appearance of a column, such was its smoothness and height. The Cravate Collier de Cheval, greatly admired by the fair sex, required no starch, and was generally striped or spotted, or of a Russian-leather colour; the ends were fastened at the back of the neck. The Cravate Sentimentale was not to be worn by the most agreeable after the age of twenty-seven. It required a face with 'a sympathetic charm,' and a physiognomy 'that inspired sensations of love and passion.' It was especially hideous, and was fastened by a single rosette or small bow immediately under the chin.

The Cravate à la Byron was adopted by the poet from whom it derived its name, because a tight stock cramped his imagination, and suffocated his thoughts. The Byron cravat was really a sailor's tie, fastened in a large careless bow, six inches in length, and four in circumference. It only turned once round the neck, and was thought comfortable for summer or during a journey. In the Cravate à la Bergami the ends were not tied, but crossed on the breast, and tied to the braces. The Cravate de Bal was a spotless bandage of unwrinkled muslin, with the ends pinned to the shirt. The Cravate Mathématique was black, the ends crossing each other athwart the throat with the most geometrical exactitude.

The Cravate à la Gastronome was a cravat planned by the wise and philanthropic. It was seldom worn by men under forty. It was only three fingers broad, and fastened with a very elastic knot, that slackened with the slightest movement of the neck, the faintest vacillation of the jaws, the most imperceptible swelling of the throat. It possessed this great and inestimable advantage, that it loosened itself in cases of indigestion, apoplexy, or fainting. The Cravate de Chasse was of a deep-green or dead-leaf colour, while the Cravate à la Dane was white. The Cravate à l'Anglaise was never starched, the Cravate à l'Indépendance was always striped with red, blue, and white.

The Cravate Porte-manteau was a huge structure of a Russian-leather colour, the ends hidden by the knot, which was shaped like a travelling porte-manteau. The Cravate en Tresse was another eccentricity, for the triple knot was fashioned to resemble a shell on a twisted French roll. In the Cravate à la Paresseuse, the ends were unfolded and crossed over the chest—a plan which served to conceal the shirt, and display the neck-handkerchief. Old beaux and married men favoured this sort of cravat. The Cravate à la Fidélité was worn by the French National Guard when in uniform. The Cravate à la Talma was consecrated to mourning only. In the Cravate à la Romaine, the ends were passed through a ring, and then fastened behind the neck in a small knot. The Cravate à la d'Arincourt

received 'its first impulse,' as our author graphically states, from the back of the neck.

This book must have been invaluable to the dandies. 'Persons,' as the phrase went, 'who were ambitious of mixing in polite society' could not surely have done without it. The French ranked the art of tying the cravat as essential to the true dandy as the art of giving a good dinner was to an ambassador. A well-arranged cravat was considered in itself a letter of introduction, and when coupled with a handsome face, it was irresistible.

In his final chapter, 'On the Importance of the Cravat in Society,' our author rises almost into inspiration. He says that when a man of rank makes his *entrée* into a circle of taste and elegance, he will see, after the usual compliments, that his coat attracts small attention compared to the critical and scrutinising examination that will be made 'on the set of his cravat.' If this be not correctly and elegantly put on, though his coat be of the reigning fashion, and Stultz's most exquisite performance, all eyes will be coldly turned on the folds of the fatal cravat; his reception will be icy; his name goes down for ever branded as that of a bad dresser; he will be considered an ignorant pretender; he will be compelled to suffer the impertinence of every contemptuous fop; he will have to bear in silence the perpetual jeering whisper: 'He cannot even put on a cravat properly.'

But, on the other hand, the fortunate wearer of a scientific cravat, a cravat *savamment* and elegantly formed, even although his coat may not be of the last cut, will meet with a very different reception. Every one will rise and receive him with marks of distinguished respect. They will cheerfully resign their seats to him; their delighted eyes will be fixed upon his well-covered throat; even though he talks downright nonsense, he will be applauded to the skies, and the remark will be certain to be made by the best qualified person present: 'That man has critically studied the thirty-two lessons on the art of tying the cravat.'

The author concludes his volume with a hint for persons entering polite society for the first time, and it is worthy their treasuring up: 'The greatest insult that can be offered to a man *comme il faut* is to seize him by the cravat. In this case, blood only can wash out the stain upon the honour of either party.'

Without puffing ourselves about the advanced civilisation of our age, we can at least, even from such a small landmark as this book, see that in some things we have at least grown wiser than our ancestors. Fashion is still frivolous, fickle, and irrational; but its aberrations are certainly fewer and less absurd; while we have ceased to try and make mere dress a mark of exclusiveness and social distinction.

THE SOONDERBUNS OF BENGAL.

The river Ganges, on debouching into the plains of Hindustan, pursues an easterly course, and after flowing parallel with the Himalayan chain for hundreds of miles, turns to the south. On approaching the sea, its waters distribute themselves into numerous channels of varying depth and width, which form what is known as the Delta of the Ganges. Each of these rivers has innumerable outlets, which flow into one another, and

connect the main channels together by a most elaborate net-work of streams. The tract of country thus intersected was for many years covered with densest jungle, and the undisputed domain of the tiger and wild boar. Much of it, too, was marsh, created by the frequent encroachments of the sea. It is known as the Soonderbuns, often incorrectly spelled *Soonderbunds*. The name is compounded of *soondri*, a particular kind of wood, and *bun*, a forest, and means the soondri-wood forests. Those whose business it is to supply the markets of Calcutta and its vicinity with firewood, get portions of these forests farmed out to them by the government, and employ men to cut down the trees. The wood thus obtained is chopped into slips a foot long and two inches in diameter, which are made up into bundles, and sold for fuel. Hundreds of open boats, large and small, are to be seen in the shady creeks and rivers of the Soonderbuns, conveying their cargoes to Calcutta; and as Bengalis never use anything but wood for cooking, the trade has always been a most profitable one. The wood-cutters are, of course, exposed to considerable peril from wild beasts, and not a year passes without fatal encounters with tigers, or panthers, or wild boars; but the risks are counterbalanced by the profits, and the men who undertake to cut the wood, are content to make the best provision circumstances will allow against the attacks of their four-footed enemies.

It is commonly believed that the Soonderbuns never were anything but a tangled mass of forest, given over to wild beasts; but this is a mistake. Before the Mohammedan conquest of Bengal, when Arracan, now a British possession, was an independent kingdom, its rajahs, taking advantage of the effeminacy of their Hindu neighbours, made frequent inroads into Eastern Bengal, the Mugs, or Arracanese, colonising large tracts of country along the sea-board. Sundry ruins, which still exist in the depths of the forests, shew that the Soonderbuns must once have been extensively populated by them. When they retired to their native province, the lands they had cleared returned to jungle, and this jungle remained undisturbed from that time to about twenty or thirty years ago, when Bengali villages began to spring up on its outskirts and along the banks of some of the larger and more frequented rivers.

But though the lands of the Soonderbuns have lain unproductive, its rivers have been of no small advantage to the trade of Eastern Bengal. For many years now, by far the largest portion of the traffic between the districts of Backergunj, Fureedpore, Mymensing, Dacca, Sylhet, Tipperah, and even Chittagong and Calcutta, has flowed through the Soonderbuns, whose channels are navigable for the largest boats all the year round, and are safer than the treacherous Ganges. The Soonderbuns route is also the shortest of the river-routes, no mean consideration in a country whose highways are not roads, but rivers. Let the reader open a map of Bengal, and he will see what I mean. A merchant wishing to send a cargo of jute or safflower from Naraingunj, one of the two chief marts of Eastern Bengal, and eight miles south-west of Dacca, has two courses open to him:

he may either send his boats up the Ganges by Fureedpore and Pubuah, and then down by the Mattabanga and Hooghly to Calcutta; or south to Burrial, and so through the Soonderbuns. But he invariably prefers the latter course, and that for obvious reasons. The passage up the Ganges is the longer one, as well in respect of the distance to be traversed, as of the unavoidably slow rate of progress. There is a season of the year when the most powerful steamers are staggered by the terrific current of this leviathan river: the reader may conceive what the difficulties are in the case of crazy native boats, seemingly built with a view to secure the smallest amount of progress in the largest amount of time. They are towed up against the current by men who can just crawl along the steep bank, pulling the boats after them by means of strings fastened to the mast-head. Any extra strain on the *goon*, as these strings are called, breaks it at once, and the boat thus suddenly set adrift is whirled round in a moment, and borne back by the current for miles, before the boatmen, who have been left on shore, can recover it. Thus the accident of a moment undoes the toiling effort of one or two days. The Soonderbuns route, on the other hand, has less risk, and the passage is accomplished in half the time. The rivers are all tidal, and if, owing to the jungle which grows to the water's-edge concealing the very bank, there are no facilities for tracking, this mode of progressing is not necessary. The boats are rowed all through the Soonderbuns, and keep moving on by night as well as by day, as long as the tides serve them. During the intervals of ebb or flood, as the case may be, the anchor is dropped, and the boatmen eat or sleep.

Although the navigation of these rivers has always been free from risks, there used in former days to be not a little danger from wild beasts. Old boatmen with whom I have conversed, as on moonlit nights we have followed the endless windings of the creeks and broader streams, with no sound to break the slumber of the forest save the measured dip of our oars and the dismal howl of the *fayo*,* remember well the time when to row too close to the banks was to tempt some tiger prowling in the neighbourhood to spring on the boat, and make a meal of one or two of the men. Since then, however, much of the jungle has been cleared; the land in the northern half of the Soonderbuns is now dotted with villages, and the wild beasts have been driven southwards, to the Great Soonderbuns. Here they are for the most part undisturbed, and continue to be very bold. I was moving up one of the rivers in these parts on one occasion, when at midday I was startled by a chorus of the most unearthly yells, sent forth by my boatmen. I hurried on deck to ascertain what was the matter, when I saw an unusually large-sized tiger ten yards in front of my boat, swimming across the river. The beast turned to look at us, but did not seem in the least disconcerted at the sight of the boat or the shouts of the men. He pursued his course with the utmost deliberation until he reached the opposite bank, when he disappeared in the woods.

Travelling through the Soonderbuns used, till very recently, to be dangerous also by reason of the dacoits or river-pirates that swarmed in these

* An animal resembling a jackal, so called from its peculiar cry, *fayo, fayo*, and believed by the natives always to precede the tiger.

parts. This danger especially threatened boats laden with merchandise. The people inhabiting the villages scattered among the jungles spent their days in cultivating their fields or attending market, and their nights in plundering passing boats. Wending their way in their long, narrow canoes, as night set in they stationed themselves close under the banks, where they were effectually concealed by the deep shadows of the trees that overhung the water. Some unfortunate boat coming up late at night anchored in mid-stream, perhaps, waiting for the next tide. This was their opportunity. Cautiously emerging from its hiding-place under the trees, first one canoe, manned by a dozen men or more, all armed with knives, but each deftly and noiselessly plying his paddle, made its way to the boat. The men on board, tired after the day's work, were probably by this time all fast asleep, the very watchman snoring over his hookah. On ascertaining this to be the case, the other canoes came out of the shadows fringing the shore, and reaching the boat, were noiselessly fastened to it. The robbers then mounted to the deck, and with their knives, called *dao's*, cut the matting, and so effected an entrance into the hold. If, while busy transferring the cargo to their canoes, they were interrupted by the boatmen awaking from sleep, they curtly recommended them to keep quiet, lest a worse fate than the mere loss of cargo should overtake them. The threat seldom failed of the desired effect, and the robbers completed their work unmolested.

Sometimes the dacoits were impatient to secure their prey before the boatmen had had time to fall asleep. At such times the way was to sidle up to the boat on some pretext that would avert suspicion. If their approach was noticed, and they were asked what they wanted, the usual reply was: '*O bhairi, aagon achhé?*' ('O brother,* can you give us some fire?')—the men pretending to be in want of fire to light their hookahs with. If the boatman thus accosted was so simple as to let the canoe come near enough for the fire to be handed over, the boat was immediately boarded, and the usual dacoity ensued.

The daring and expertness of these dacoits have become a proverb in Bengal. Even Europeans threading the mazes of the Soonderbuns were not exempted from their friendly attentions; but as they seldom go about without firearms, they were not often molested. It used to be a common thing, and is still, for native boats falling in with a European's howdah, to keep close to it all through 'the land of the dacoits,' for the sake of the security thus gained. In the 'good old times,' before steamers invaded the holy Ganges, and railway trains flew puffing and screeching along its banks, people travelled to and from the North-western Provinces of India in heavy, lumbering budgerows, which took three months, and sometimes more, to accomplish the journey. Those were golden days for river-pirates, who, among other expedients for securing their prey, frequently scuttled the boats marked for plunder. The way in which they did it was certainly ingenious. In the cool of the evening, your budgerow being safely moored by means of ropes fastened to stout stakes driven into the bank, and you being seated on the roof of the boat dreamily gazing on the expanse of river before

you, broken as it is, here and there, by the long, low sand-banks which the waters have thrown up in their impetuous flow—you happen, in a listless sort of way, to observe an earthen pitcher floating bottom upwards, and slowly approaching your boat. You forget, a moment after, that you have seen it; floating ghurrahs (as these pitchers are called) in a river into which hundreds of empty ghurrahs are daily thrown in company with the bodies of their dead owners, are a by no means uncommon sight. Soon after, however, and as the darkness begins to come on, you make the disagreeable discovery that your boat is filling with water. It sinks, and makes a cozy bed for itself in the soft mud, before you can do any thing to save it. You wade to shore, and make the best of your way to the nearest thannah (police station) for assistance. The thannah is miles away inland; and by the time you get back, you find that the people of a neighbouring village have helped themselves to your property, and escaped. It does not occur to you to connect the sinking of the budgerow with the harmless ghurrah that came floating down the stream in its purposeless course, and bumped accidentally against the side of your boat; and yet the two things stand very much in the relation of cause and effect. That ghurrah was not an empty one, nor was it accident that brought it in contact with the boat. In it was a human head, to which was attached a living body; and this body, which you did not see because it was under water, directed the course of the ghurrah. The villain who thus got to the side of your boat unsuspected, bored a hole or two into it before the ghurrah floated off again. He was in league with a band of dacoits who watched and waited for the dénouement from a distance, and then came down like vultures upon their prey.

I am not aware that the dacoits of the Soonderbuns have ever practised the ghurrah stratagem, but they have done things quite as clever. I have known them, for example, to take away not only the blanket under which one has been sleeping, but the very sheet on which he has been lying asleep, and that without awaking him. A gentleman was once travelling through the Soonderbuns in 'a native boat,' that is to say, a boat surmounted by a mat-constructed cabin. It was December, and as the cold north wind came oozing in through the matting, he drew his blanket over him on getting into bed. He awoke earlier than usual the next morning, feeling very cold, and wondering at the large amount of morning light that pervaded his cabin. To his dismay, he found not only that he was blanketless, but that a hole two feet square had been cut in the matting. While pondering these things, he made the further discovery, that the sheet on which he had lain was no longer on the bed. The inference was clear that he had had a nocturnal visitor. He had heard stories of sheet-lifting before; but not till now, that he had himself been successfully practised upon, did he believe that the feat could be accomplished. The scoundrel who covets the sheet under you, approaches your bedside armed with a feather, with which he gently tickles your ear. Accustomed as you are to the buzz of mosquitoes, which, by the way, have a notable penchant for singing in one's ears, you only fidget a little in your sleep, and turning on your side, press the ear that has been operated on, on the pillow. Immediately, the one half of the sheet thus released is rolled up lengthwise close under your back. The feather is then again cautiously applied

* Natives call one another 'brother' when they want to be friendly, or secure a favour.

to the exposed ear; you turn once more, and the other half of the sheet is released. One more tickle, adroitly administered, disengages the sheet altogether, and the rascal no doubt inwardly chuckles as he leaves you to your slumber.

But it is only the men who do business on their own account, and who go out alone, that care to observe caution in their proceedings. Every villager in these watery districts owns a canoe or dinghy for going to market in, so that he needs no further stock-in-trade when he takes to the thieving line. His dinghy, generally about seven feet long, is propelled by a single pole, feathered at both ends. Standing upright in his boat, and grasping the pole in the middle with both hands, he manages, by an easy action of the wrists, to dip the ends alternately into the water on either side, and so to shoot along with wonderful rapidity. Being alone, he is timid, and will try to escape the moment he is likely to be discovered. But professional dacoits go about in large parties, and, till recently, were very bold. Their canoes are from thirty to forty feet long, and are propelled, with marvellous swiftness, by a double line of paddles, which are preferred to regular oars because they do not rest on the side of the boat, and may be worked noiselessly. The paddle is worked with both hands. Held out over the side, and dipped perpendicularly into the water with the blade at right angles to the boat, it pushes back the water very effectively, and a canoe rowed by twenty-five or thirty men, each with a paddle, secures to it a speed which makes capture hopeless.

About six years ago, the dacoit nuisance became so formidable, that it was beginning seriously to affect the trade of the eastern districts. Accordingly the government finding the ordinary police unable to suppress it, organised a special department of service, with a view to cope with the evil. A Dacoity Commissioner was appointed, the choice falling on an officer who had once himself been vigorously pursued by dacoits in these same Soonderbuns, and a couple of gun-boats were placed at his service. These little steamers being narrow and of light draught, did the work assigned them very effectually. Canoes were captured, scores of dacoits were brought to justice, more than one confederacy was completely broken up, and dacoity in the Soonderbuns became too hazardous a profession to pay. The rivers of this region have thus been rendered tolerably safe again, the dacoits having either settled down to agricultural pursuits or migrated elsewhere.

Large tracts of Soonderbun land have, within the last six or seven years, been cleared and brought under cultivation. Formerly, the traveller, wending his way through the maze of streams, saw nothing for days together but the densest jungle, growing down to the water's-edge, with its shadows, cast from both banks, often meeting in mid-stream. The scenery was here and there varied by fens and marshes, where the tall rank feather-grass bent to the breeze, or bowed under the weight of the long-legged herons that here seek their prey. Now, however, the entire aspect of things has changed. The government of India has published an Act for the grant of Waste Lands, under whose provisions capitalists, both European and native, have begun the cultivation of thousands of acres but recently covered with jungle. Lands, too, long subject to the periodical inundations of the sea, and hitherto of no use except in the manufacture of salt, have

been dyked, and rendered culturable. Villages are springing up in all directions, and the population daily increasing; and as the notorious unhealthiness of the delta disappears with the clearances that are made, and the lands that are redeemed from marsh and swamp, the Soonderbuns will become one of the most productive regions of Bengal. They have so long had a bad name for miasmatic fevers, that it requires very judicious management on the part of the landholders to induce ryots to settle there; but they are succeeding in doing this. Gifts of plough-oxen, low rents, and sundry other advantages, are offered, and they have the effect of attracting a population which grows every day. The capitalists who have obtained grants under the terms of the Waste Lands law, are required to bring their lands under cultivation within a specified time, failing which, those lands are liable to be resumed by the government. Whatever may be the justice of the principle, the government will do well to abstain, as far as possible, from such resummptions, considering the peculiar difficulties that capitalists have to contend with. Ryots are timid about settling on untried lands, and labour, owing to the great demand for it elsewhere, is scarce.

CHRISTMAS IN THE WORKHOUSE.

THE prickly holly, spotted with red,
Bristled at every pane;
There were wagons shaking with holly
Brushing down many a lane;
Laughing children raced and ran,
Red as the winter berry;
I listened outside the workhouse gate,
And even 'the paupers' were merry.

Pleasant to see the frosted flowers
On every window pane;
Pleasant to hear the red-faced lads
Run shouting down the lane;
But the sound that cheered me Christmas through,
Over my dry old sherry,
Was hearing there, at the workhouse gate,
That even 'the paupers' were merry.

Christmas was gay in the old squire's hall,
Gay at the village inn,
Cheery and loud by the farmer's fire,
Happy the manse within;
But the surest signs of the general joy,
And that all the world was happy—very,
Were the sounds that proved at the workhouse door
That even 'the paupers' were merry.

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THE MYSTERY OF SLEEP.

TWELVE hundred millions of dreams make a network of wild fancies nightly about our planet. To go, if it were possible, through this world of sleep would be a stranger process than that of exploring the whole waking-world; for in sleep every living being is a poet, from the baby that clings in its dreams to the breasts of goddesses, to the centenarian who, with staff and spectacles, hobbles about paradise at the heels of seraphs. Sleeping and waking are the two great phenomena of our existence. What is done and thought in the everyday working-world, where the ordinary business of life is carried on, no living creature has ever fully revealed to another. There are reticences in the confessions of the most frank, things which cannot, and therefore which never will be spoken—thoughts which transcend the limits of language—hopes which the power of no fairy could satisfy—fears which even Lucifer himself would fail to exaggerate. If this portion of our life, which is at least subjected to our own observation, cannot be faithfully and fully described, still less can that other portion which defies even our own scrutiny, converts us into mere spectators of ourselves, sets free our actions from the control of our will, and transforms us into so many passive spokes in the great wheel of destiny. Whatever may be the laws by which it is regulated, sleep presents the counterpart of the waking-world—distorted, mutilated, thrown into irremediable confusion by the force of the imagination.

How sleep comes over him, every man may observe, if he will be at the pains—and it requires pains—since the drowsy state which precedes the complete absorption of our faculties is inimical to observation. If you make the experiment with your windows open on a summer night, you may notice a curious succession of emotions and sensations in your mind and frame, produced by the softly-approaching footsteps of sleep. You are lulled almost into forgetfulness, when the bark of a dog, the crowing of a cock, the grinding wheels of some passing vehicle, or the shout of a drunkard

returning from his orgies, frights away for a moment the gentle influences of slumber. If you then take notice of your condition, you will become sensible that your heart, which had been soothed and rocked into a sweet tranquillity, experiences a slight but painful shock, accompanied by a transient agitation. At the same moment, the curtain, alive all over with strange imagery, which sleep had begun to let down before the retina of your inner sight, is sharply drawn up, though not so sharply but that you may discern what it represents, as it slides upwards like a film into some dark sheath concealed in the intricate mechanism of your brain. I have noticed this process several times, though not so many times as to justify me in using the word often.

The physiologist assassinated in a bath by Charlotte Corday, wrote, before the beginning of the Revolution, an extremely curious book on Man, which is scarce and little read now. The copy I possess was found in a prisoner's cell during the pillaging of the Bastille in the month of July 1789. This strange man—at least when he wrote his book—may be presumed to have enjoyed sweet sleep, since in discussing its nature and phenomena he obviously speaks from experience. 'At the approach of Morpheus,' he says, 'the force of our activity is diminished; our fatigued limbs yield to lassitude, and sink under their own weight; the head drops gradually upon the shoulder; a sentiment of tranquil delight pervades the frame; and it seems as if our blood paced through our veins with a more peaceful flow. Our senses have already ceased to act, though none of them has altogether lost its power; little by little, consciousness deserts its post, the eyes are closed by the soft fingers of slumber, a delicious calm reigns through the whole frame; even the soul is steeped in an inexpressible serenity, forgetting everything, forgetting itself, and seems to lose itself imperceptibly in insensibility.' To bring about this desirable state of things, which will not always come at our bidding, men have had recourse to various contrivances. Bacon, before retiring at night, used to indulge himself with a posset of strong ale, which

helped better than wine to subdue the sprightly activity of his fancy, which would otherwise have resisted the force of sleep; Harvey, who taught his contemporaries the old Greek discovery of the circulation of the blood, used, like Franklin, to induce somnolence by getting out of bed, and walking about his chamber in his shirt, till half congealed, after which the warmth of the blankets was welcome, and soon induced slumber. Other persons afflicted with wakefulness call the bards to their aid, and compel the presence of Death's half-brother by the magic of potent verse. The best plan is, when health and the supply of animal spirits will allow, to determine not to go to sleep at all, but to draw up the blinds, and look out, if it be a clear night, at the stars, endeavouring to divine whither they and we are travelling through the infinite gulfs of space. This pious exercise gradually subdues, if anything can, the perturbations of the mind, and brings on, as if against our will, the tranquillity we covet.

Some have contended that grief and sorrow are things inimical to sleep, which cannot, they imagine, repose under the same roof with such guests. Thus, Young:

Sleep on his downy pinions flies from woe,
To light on lids unsullied by a tear.

But this is inconsistent with experience: deep grief and protracted sorrow almost inevitably cause sleep, by exhausting the animal spirits, and producing a collapse in the nervous system. Children and women often sob themselves to sleep. Tears are, in fact, soporific; for, by deserting the well-springs where they are generated in the brain, they render flaccid the thinking apparatus, and occasion a mental weariness, which is followed at the next step by oblivion. Care, anxiety, and remorse are, on the other hand, altogether hostile to this innocent nourisher of life. To know what a human being is, and has been, you should steal upon him or her, when, by whatever preliminaries, long or short, agonising or delightful, the total absorption of the senses has at length been brought about. It is affirmed by many, and may be true, that the course of life is left stamped indelibly upon the features after death. It is certainly so stamped in sleep. In the court of the Roman emperors, men habitually wore, through fear, what was aptly termed a *jussus vultus*, or countenance at command. The same is the case, more or less, at all times and everywhere. Few would be willing to seem what they are; the majority need a mask, and are at pains to put it on every morning, to delude their fellow-creatures when they come into their presence. None but those who think themselves good enough to be contemplated by gods or men in their true lineaments and proportions, omit this precaution, and they are commonly hated for their intrepidity. But all put off the mask in sleep, though in most cases sorely against their will. Even in earliest infancy, the character, to a discerning eye, begins to loom above the horizon. In some, whether young or old, there is, during sleep,

a grace, an *abandon*, a serene contentment, a placid absence of anxiety, all betokening innocence of life and purpose. Painful reserves reveal their existence in the small muscles about the corners of the mouth, which, being pinched and drawn tight during the day, as if to keep back by physical exertion the confessions always ready to escape, fail to relax even in sleep, and give to the countenance a hard, repelling aspect. To gaze at such a face when unprotected by its habitual disguise, is in a high degree humiliating and painful; the idiosyncrasy of the consciousness concealed beneath that screen of skin, muscles, and sinews, you do not, and perhaps never can know; but you may be sure that if you did, you would not be rendered happier by the discovery. On the other hand, there are faces which in sleep look like a vision of paradise—not for their beauty, not for their youth, but for something internal, far transcending both, which sleep reveals in all its power for the delight of those who observe. Everybody knows the language of the features, which does not cease to speak because the possessor ceases to be waking. There are innumerable minute muscles in the tissue of the lips, the slightest movement of any one of which changes the expression of the countenance; and so throughout the face. When all is serene, the meaning conveyed by the whole is merely that of sweet repose; but when the imagination is at work within, creating, arranging, painting, shifting its scenery and characters, slight evanescent indications become visible without; smiles, tremors of the lips or eyelids, blushes, tears, which roll down the cheeks like molten sorrow, raise in part the curtain from the soul, and shew what it is enjoying or suffering at the moment. What ideas are, no man has explained, still less can we reveal how they affect or act upon each other. Perhaps they are strictly affiliated from birth to death in one unbroken chain, which, waking or sleeping, runs through our whole being, or rather constitutes it, for, except as to the mere shell, we are nothing but a series of ideas and emotions. Like rivers which run partly above, partly under ground, our life is alternately visible and concealed when it moves through the sunshine, or through the caverns of sleep.

Few have endeavoured to follow the soul in its retirement, to note what it then does, thinks, or speaks. That it is powerful, that it is eloquent, that it is poetical then, if at no other time, has been demonstrated by many examples. But the waking and the sleeping soul are identical; what the latter does when freed from all fetters, the former would do if it dared. The character cannot be put off, like a change of raiment, when we step from one condition of existence into the other; our virtues, our vices, our passions, our aspirations cling to us sleeping or waking. The greatest writers have paid most attention to the visions of the night, 'when deep sleep falleth upon man.' Shakspeare is rich in descriptions of the avenues to the palace of dreams, sometimes paved with horror, and overshadowed by shapes of agony

and dread. Listen to the murderer-king, as he reveals, from his dreamless couch, his cravings for the solace of forgetfulness:

How many thousands of my poorest subjects
Are at this hour asleep! O Sleep, gentle Sleep,
Nature's soft nurse, how have I frightened thee,
That thou no more wilt weigh my eyelids down,
And steep my senses in forgetfulness?
Why rather, Sleep, liest thou in smoky cribs,
Upon uneasy pallets stretching thee,
And hushed with buzzing night-flies to thy slumber,
Than in the perfumed chambers of the great?

Sleep, however, has no objections to the buzzing of night-flies, to smoky cabins, or to hard pallets, provided he can lay his head on the soft pillow of a clear conscience. The inmates of the smoky cabins might not have butchered their cousins by treachery, might not have put strangers to death without law or justice, might not have indented the peaceful plains of their country with the hoofs of hostile steeds, as the regal criminal to whom sleep refused to come had done. What frightened away the gentle god was the howl of the hell-hounds that attend on guilt, the Erinyes, as Shakspeare himself calls her, that tracks the blood-spiller to his grave. Well might he wail and lament as one with whom 'nature's sweet restorer' refused to abide. To him, with more justice than to the lover maddened with jealousy, might it be said:

Not poppy, nor mandragora,
Nor all the drowsy syrups of the world,
Shall ever medicine thee to that sweet sleep
Which thou ow'st yesterday.

Pallets hard or soft have not much to do with the slumbers that visit those who lie upon them. I have enjoyed the sweetest of sweet sleeps stretched on pease-haulm in a cow-house; on a stone floor in a caravansaray, with five thousand armed enemies prowling about on the outside; on horseback in a dark night on the edge of precipices; and exclaimed with Sancho: 'Blessed be the man that invented sleep! It wrappeth a man about like a garment!' Yet place occasionally enhances the delight of the sleeper, by aiding to paint his dreams with brilliant or delicate colours, and soothe the ear of his fancy with the sound of loving voices. Once, far up in the Nile, on a little mammillated sandbank, I tasted sleep in its sweetest, richest, most fascinating and gorgeous habit, down beyond the Sahara. The sun had sunk, leaving in the heavens long trails of glory—a mixture of sapphire and blood-red vapour, with saffron, amethyst, and beryl. All day the thermometer had stood at 100° in the shade, but so tempered by refreshing winds from the west, that it seemed then only to have reached pleasure-point. There was a languor in the atmosphere, filled with the dozy, drowsy hum of insects, rendered doubly slumberous by the low, rippling murmur of the great river, as it glided past towards the northern tropic. These influences subdued the mind to a pleasing melancholy, so that I passed out of the waking into the sleeping world with delicious unconsciousness. Without being too profound in the metaphysics of dreams, I yet venture to believe that the testimony of the senses enters largely into their structure; colours borrowed from the skies and landscapes around, the figures of palm-trees, the masses of rock, the lake-like breadth of waters, camels, horses, buffaloes, thrown confusedly together by the kaleidoscopic power of fancy, converted my dream on the

sandy island into a reflection of paradise. Nevertheless, when the curtain first dropped between me and the outer world, I found myself, not on a tropical river, but in my mother's garden in England, over which tropical skies expanded, tropical vegetation beautified, the banana, the mimosa, and the doum-palm. Long rows of beehives, with clusters of insects entering or quitting them, stretched beside the hedges; flowers of brilliant hues sent forth from their tiny bells the hum of their plunderers; while my mother, in the attire of her bright youth, led me hither and thither by the hand as a little child. Suddenly, the sky became clouded; a deep, prolonged wail assailed the sense of hearing; the whole landscape shivered and broke up, and I woke abruptly, with the dismal howl of a troop of jackals in my ears. They were sweeping northward after some fleet prey, probably a light gazelle; and in a few minutes the sound died away in the distance. Calm and stillness then returned, and brooded over the whole scene. Never did earth appear more beautiful than at that moment, overhung by hosts of stars and constellations, large, liquid, flashing rather than twinkling in the dark-blue vault of infinite space. It was on such a night as that I felt sure that some antique Egyptian priest, meditating, perhaps, on that very island, persuaded himself that the voice he heard on both sides of him was the voice of a god—of Osiris himself. From the whole expanded surface of the rippling waves it ascended musically and solemnly into the dusky air, where, mingling with the lisping of the breeze, it produced a delicious concert. At no great distance, in a grove of palms, sang the nightingale, not sullenly or sadly, as poets feign, but with a rich, full gush of joy. Was that also a dream? It may have been, for at no other time did I hear the nightingale in tropical Africa. About Cairo, her song is common, where, as she perches among cypresses, surrounded by mortuary cupolas, her notes undoubtedly sound like a lament for the dead.

Physiologists admit—and if they did not, it would not be the less indisputable—that the mind is not entirely separated from the senses in sleep. To demonstrate this fact, numerous experiments have at various times been made. The difficulty in such cases is to insure a report strictly conformable to truth, without additions, without abatement, without colouring—in short, an exact photograph of the dream. Shakspeare alludes to this sort of practical philosophy, and puts forth his subtle theory under show of describing the pranks of Queen Mab. His exposition is lively, and not without a dash of satire, but exquisitely true to nature. The predominant sense being out of the question, the experiment has to be made with the other four, and first with hearing. A gentle sleeper in full health, youth, and animal spirits, has been set to sleep during summer in a chamber opening upon a garden, at the extreme end of which a skilful person has played soft music late in the night. The sleeper, describing her sensations, said she at first appeared to be plunged into a world of bright clouds, which folded her round, exciting sentiments of strong delight. Then she descended upon a bank of violets while voices of exquisite harmony filled the air. Being watched by the light of a dim lamp, the sleeper's face at this time seemed pale with emotion, and presently, as the music became more and more sad, tears appeared between the eyelashes, and gradually trickled

down the cheeks. Had the sounds ceased, the lady would have awaked at once; to prevent which, a transition was skilfully made to a lively air, which in a short time brought smiles upon the lips. No memory is sufficiently tenacious to record without breaks or stops the multitudinous evolutions of a dream. The sleeper, who was not a mother, said she dreamed she was shedding tears because persons were forcing away from her a baby which she had at her breast; when suddenly the scene changed, and she found herself in a vast saloon, encircled by singers and dancers, sometimes eating grapes or pomegranates, drinking wine, and laughing merrily. One or two strokes of martial music striking violently upon the sensorium, awoke the sleeper at once.

In Shakspeare, we find a curious record of a wife's observations on the countenance of her sleeping husband. The passage may at first sight be thought too prolix and minute; but as many persons do in exciting circumstances talk in their sleep, the statement is not inconsistent with nature. The speaker is Lady Percy, and the time immediately before the breaking out of Northumberland's rebellion against Henry IV.

In thy faint slumbers I by thee have watched,
And heard thee murmur tales of iron wars;
Speak terms of manage to thy bounding steed;
Cry, Courage!—to the field! And thou hast
talked

Of sallies and retires; of trenches, tents;
Of palisadoes, frontiers, parapets;
Of basilisks, of cannon, culverin;
Of prisoners' ransom, and of soldiers slain,
And all the current of a heady fight.
Thy spirit within thee hath been so at war,
And thus hath so bestirred thee in thy sleep,
That beads of sweat have stood upon thy brow,
Like bubbles in a late disturbed stream;
And in thy face strange motions have appeared
Such as we see when men restrain their breath
On some great sudden haste. O, what portents are
these?

Some heavy business hath my lord in hand,
And I must know it, else he loves me not.

This obviously is not a mere fanciful description, but a record of the accurate study of a sleeping face. Elsewhere, in a more sportive and sarcastic mood, he suggests what would probably be the effects of touching at various points the persons of sleepers. To Queen Mab is delegated the task of awakening by the delicate pressure of her wand the imaginations of slumber's prisoners; though she is likewise represented as driving bodily in her carriage through the halls of fancy:

Her chariot is an empty hazel-nut,
Made by the joiner squirrel, or old grub,
Time out of mind the fairies' coach-makers;
And in this state she gallops night by night
Through lovers' brains, and then they dream of love;
On courtiers' knees, that dream on courtships
straight;
O'er lawyers' fingers, who straight dream on fees;
O'er ladies' lips, who straight on kisses dream.

As is implied by the various portions of this speech, the passions are the great fountains of dreams—love, pride, ambition, which exert their magic power in sleep, calling up forms of beauty, placing the individual in elevated situations, or soothing him with the exercise of power. Milton's most exquisite sonnet is based on a dream of love and sorrow:

Methought I saw my late espoused saint,
Come to me like Alceas from the grave.

And throughout the poetry of the world, we find scattered here and there pictures or fragments from the land of dreams, more lovely than any the material world could supply.

Nevertheless, sleep is no flatterer, but gives to every man a compound of the acquisitions he has been at the pains of making, and a keen consciousness of the result of the actions which he has been in the habit of performing. But though, in the base and malignant, nature hangs out during slumber a flag to warn all whom it may concern that snakes and aspics are coiled secretly within, her revelations go no further. No one can step within the curtain which conceals the delights or the agonies that come to the happy or to the unhappy man in sleep. Byron used to say he should like to know how a man felt who had committed a murder—a point upon which some of his ancestors could have enlightened him. The feelings in that case would greatly depend on the part of the world and the state of the society in which the murderer might live; for there are regions in which, when one has killed and eaten his victim, he rests as comfortably as if he had snipped on mutton; while there are others in which he would never again find a moment's peace, but, waking or sleeping, be hunted by remorse to his grave. It is a common belief that, in sleep, fancy and imagination wake, while reason slumbers; in which case, many persons may be said to pass their whole lives in a dream.

Goehe used to discuss with the physiologist Müller the phenomena of sleep and dreams, but could come no nearer their substance and structure than the philosophers of past times; nor will discoveries be made unless through a long series of experiments on food, drink, dress, habits, air, water, and situation, in connection with sleep. Others have remarked that there are wine-dreams, spirit-dreams, and beer-dreams; and it may be mentioned with equal truth, that there are dreams of the mountains and dreams of the plains. If you sleep on the Alps, and observe the phenomena which attend it, you will find that they differ according to the scale of elevation, and are even modified by being on the north or south of the chain. If your chamber be about five or six thousand feet above the level of the sea, it is highly probable that you will experience a delicious feeling; the heart will seem light and buoyant; a gentle thrill of pleasure will pass through the whole frame; the brain seems steeped in ambrosia, and you will sink into forgetfulness through layers, as it were, of exquisite enjoyment. Even on the summit of the passes, at an elevation of eight or nine thousand feet, little difference in the state of your sensations is perceptible; but on the Andes and Himalaya, if you ascend much above the level of Mont Blanc, the lungs labour with the thin air, and small blood-vessels are apt to start. Sleep is then disturbed beyond description, haunted by dreadful phantoms, and scarcely at all refreshing. It is still worse in places like Rome, where malaria prevails. The miasma then appears to feed upon the flame of life, diminishing its force imperceptibly, sapping the energies of the frame, rendering the mind dull and spiritless, and descending like a nightmare on the soul in dreams, indescribably loathsome and depressing. An Italian general, talking on this subject, used a very strong expression. A night, he said, passed in the Pontine

Marshes, or in the Maremma, is hell. When a fugitive, previous to escaping into lifelong exile, he had tried it often, and it made so terrible an impression on his memory, that it might almost be said to have haunted him like a Fury through life, towards the close of which it urged him to seek, by the fumes of ardent spirits, to subdue the enemy in his brain. It is equally true that pleasant odours refresh the sleeping brain, playing with its fancies, and shaping them into scenes of extraordinary beauty.

MIRK ABBEY.

CHAPTER VII.—A BROKEN FRIENDSHIP.

WEEKS and months have passed by at Mirk Abbey; the snow has thawed, and the cold winds of March have done their worst, and the spring is clothing nature's nakedness with garments of green. Yet all this time, my Lady, who is so fond of outdoor exercise, even in rough weather, and such a constant visitor of the poor, has never been seen beyond the Park gates. To be sure, she has had more to keep her within than usual, for the captain not only got his leave prolonged at the beginning of the year, but came home for three weeks very shortly after, and is at Mirk again at the present time. Miss Rose Aynton, too, a very nice young lady, and most attentive to her hostess, seems to have become quite a resident at the Abbey, for, with the exception of a week's absence in London, she has remained there since Christmas, her departure having indeed been vaguely fixed more than once, but only to be as indefinitely postponed. It is now understood that she will certainly stay over the festivities attendant upon Sir Richard's coming of age in June. The baronet himself, who, his detractors say, always prefers the country, where he is somebody, to town, where baronets are plentiful, has scarcely been away at all. He writes to inquiring friends in London, most of whom happen to have marriageable daughters, that he is immersed in business connected with the estate, and cannot leave Mirk at present. Mr Rinkel, the agent, however, has seen no cause to relax his ordinary exertions, in consequence of this new-born application of the young gentleman to his own affairs; and Walter wickedly asserts that his brother is in reality occupied with no other business whatever, save that of keeping the man Derrick from trespassing upon the Abbey lands. He is very glad, he says, that Richard has at last found an object in life, and hopes that, like the French sportsman's woodcock, it will last him for a good long time.

It does not help to heal the breach between the brothers that Walter and this same man have grown very intimate, a fact which Sir Richard (assuming to himself a metaphor usually applied only to Providence) stigmatises as 'flying in his face.' His mother, however, declines to take this view of it—declines even to express an opinion about it one way or another, and avoids the subject as much as she can. Even with the confidential maid, notwithstanding her decision about Mr Derrick's ineligibility as a suitor, she forbears to reason with respect to this matter, although it is understood that the forbidden swain is gaining ground in the affections of Mistress Forest. There is but one person to whom my Lady has opened her lips concerning the man she dimly saw by lantern-light on Christmas Eve,

and has never seen since. Her confidant—if one can be called so to whom so little was confided—is Mr Arthur Haldane, the only son of the doctor, and one who has been a great favourite with Lady Lisgard from his youth up, not for his own sake merely, although he is honest, and kind, and very winning with those who look beyond externals (for he is not good-looking, or at least does not appear so by contrast with her own handsome sons), but for another reason: my Lady owed him a reparation of love for a wrong that she had inadvertently done his father.

Dr Haldane and the late Sir Robert had been at school together, and their boy-friendship had lasted, as it seldom does, through their university course. Their mutual esteem had not afterwards suffered by propinquity, when they came to pass their days within a few hundred yards of one another; and when my Lady married, she found that the dearest friend her husband had on earth was Dr Haldane. She was not the woman to come between her husband's friends and himself; and the doctor (who had had his doubts about the matter before he came to know her) was wont to declare the Abbey was even more of a second home to him than it used to be, now that his old friend had placed so charming a mistress at the head of it. He was always welcome there, and being himself a widower, was glad to take advantage of Sir Robert's hospitality whenever he could; a knife and fork were laid for him at table all the year round; and when he did not appear at the dinner-hour, either husband or wife was sure to observe: 'I am afraid we shall not see the doctor with us to-day.' It would have seemed as though nothing short of death could have interrupted such cordiality as this.

But in those days there was such a thing as Politics. The baronet was a Tory, and his friend a Whig of what was afterwards called 'advanced opinions.' They bickered over their wine three nights out of every seven, though they never failed to drink each other's healths before they sought the company of the hostess. These political discussions (unfortunately, as it turned out) were scrupulously confined to the dining-room, so that my Lady had no idea of the strength of the respective prejudices of the combatants, and of the severity of the trial to which their friendship was so often subjected. Brought up as she had been among persons in humble life, who were engaged in bread-winning (a very monopolising occupation), and educated in France, where the question of English reform was never mooted, she knew little or nothing of the matters which formed the subjects of dispute, although they were setting half England together by the ears. It seems strange to read of now, but the idol which Toryism had set up to worship at that epoch was a heartless and vulgar fop, whom it hypocritically dubbed the First Gentleman in Europe; while the Whigs pinned their faith upon the virtue of his wife, a woman as vulgar as himself, and whom her enemies endeavoured to shew was almost as vicious. Over this good-for-nothing pair, Lords, Commons, and People were quarrelling together, like a mob at a dog-fight, and the public press was solely occupied with bounding them on. To dip into a newspaper of that date is to make an excursion to Billingsgate, for both parties, equally unable to whitewash their candidate, confined themselves to vilifying their opponent.

When the report upon the bill of Pains and Penalties against Queen Caroline was finally approved by a majority of nine only, and those nine representing the votes of the ministers themselves, the popular excitement culminated. The Whigs decreed that there should be illuminations throughout the kingdom, and (what seems hard) that their adversaries should express the same satisfaction in a similar manner. For three consecutive nights, the Londoners made plain the innocence of their queen, so far as pyrotechnics and oil-lamps could do it; and for one night, the country was expected to do the like. Vast mobs paraded the streets of the provincial towns, to see that this was done, and even made excursions to the country-houses of the Disaffected. Among others, Mirk Abbey was threatened with a visitation of this sort; and I must confess that the doctor rather chuckled over the notion, that the stubborn Sir Robert, who had called his sovereign lady so many opprobrious epithets, would have to dedicate his candles to her, as though she were his patron saint. The baronet, on his part, protested that every window in his house should be broken rather than exhibit so much as a farthing dip; but he said nothing to his wife about the matter, lest it should make her nervous.

They happened to be engaged to pass that November week at a friend's house in the country, and left home accordingly. The gentleman with whom they stayed himself suffered some inconvenience from the rioters on the night in question; and when Sir Robert came back, he was even less inclined to be a convert to his Whig friend's opinions than before.

'But you *did* illuminate,' said the doctor with a chuckle, as they sat together after dinner, as usual, upon the day of his return.

'I did nothing of the kind, sir,' returned the baronet angrily.

'Well, your servants did it for you, then, and I presume by your orders. Mr Brougham himself could not have exhibited his patriotism more significantly. The Abbey was a blaze of light from basement to garret.'

'That is a lie!' cried Sir Robert, making the glasses jump with the force with which he brought his fist down upon the table.

'A what?' exclaimed the doctor, rising from the table livid with rage. 'Do you, then, call me a liar?'

'Yes,' thundered the baronet; 'like all your radical crew.'

The two men that had so long been nearer and dearer to each other than brothers never again interchanged one word.

Dr Haldane left the Abbey, solemnly protesting that he would never cross its threshold again during the lifetime of its owner; and he kept his determination even in the hour when his old friend lay a-dying.

Now, poor Lady Lisgard was the person to blame for all this. Before Sir Robert and she had set out on their visit, the housekeeper had told her that everybody was going to illuminate their houses on the 12th, on account of what had happened in London with respect to Queen Caroline; and she was afraid that if some sign of rejoicing was not shewn at the Abbey, the mob would do some damage. A candle in each of the windows would save a hundred pounds of mischief belike. 'Well, then, put a candle,' said

my Lady, not dreaming that by that simple order she was wounding her husband in his most vital point, his pride, and making a sacrifice of principles that he held only second to those of the Christian Religion. She did not even think it necessary to tell him that she had left this command behind her; but when she heard him praise the determination of the friend with whom they stayed, not to submit to the dictation of the rabble, she had not the heart to tell him of the mistake she had committed, and which it was by that time too late to remedy. That mistake, and, still more, her unfortunate reticence, had caused the quarrel, destined never to be healed, betwixt her husband and his friend. They both forgave her, but she could not forgive herself. It seemed to her that she could never do enough to shew how sorry she was for her grievous fault. We have said how she made up so far as was in her power, in love and duty to Sir Robert, for the loss of his friend; but to that friend himself, self-exiled from her roof, and out of the reach, as it were, of reparation, how was she to atone for the wrong she had inadvertently done him? When the quarrel first took place, the doctor's wrath was quite unquenchable; he would listen to nothing except an apology—a debt which Sir Robert (although he certainly owed it) most resolutely refused to pay. The doctor, who had hitherto confined his Whiggism to after-dinner eloquence, and coarse but biting epigrams, which had earned him the reputation of a philosopher with those of his own party, thereupon became an active political partisan, and not only voted at election-time, but canvassed with might and main against the Lisgard interest; nay, he even composed, as we have ventured to hint, satirical ballads against the paternal rule of that respectable family.

But although neither sex nor age was spared in those savage days, not one word did the vengeful doctor breathe about my Lady; nay, it was on record that when some too uncompromising apostle of Liberty had reflected upon her humble extraction in the presence of that friend estranged, he had risen to his full height of five feet eight, and levelled the slanderer to the earth. Perhaps my Lady did not esteem him the less upon that account; but certain it was that the first visit she paid after Sir Robert's death was to the doctor's house, taking with her, it was said, from her husband's dying lips a message of affectionate reconciliation. The baronet had never brought himself to alter the words in his will by which he had appointed his tried and loving friend, Bartholomew Haldane, trustee for his children; and of course the doctor accepted his trust. He never could be induced to visit the Abbey, although his oath no longer forbade it; but the Lisgard children were his constant guests, and his only son, Arthur Haldane, was as another brother to them, and almost as another son to my Lady. His nature was grave and serious, like Sir Richard's, but very tender within, and she felt that she could confide in him what she could not have confided to the rigid young baronet, although he was her own flesh and blood; nevertheless, or perhaps for that very reason, when she took Arthur's arm that April morning, upon pretence of shewing him some alterations that were proposed to be made at a place in the Abbey-grounds called the 'Watersmeet,' she thought it necessary to preface what she was going to say to him with an explanation.

'My dear Arthur,' said she, when they had got out of view of the house, 'you will think it cruel that I have brought you away from the society of that charming young lady, Miss Aynton, to chat with an old woman like me, who have boys of my own to take counsel with; but the fact is, I have inveigled you hither to get an opinion from you which I could scarcely ask of your learned brother.'

This was conferring a brevet rank upon Sir Richard, who had not yet been called to the Bar, although he was reading for it; while Arthur had been in practice for some years.

'My dear Lady Lisgard,' returned the other smiling, 'I must, for my professional credit's sake, enter my protest against what you say about Miss Aynton, as irrelevant, and travelling out of the record, but besides that, it is a delusion which I should be sorry to see you entertain. Miss Aynton is nothing whatever to me; although, indeed, if she were, I would rather chat with you than with any young lady (save one) in Christendom.'

The young barrister's tone was so unnecessarily earnest and impressive, that one so acute as Lady Lisgard could scarcely have failed to see that he courted inquiry concerning such excess of zeal. She either saw it not, however, or refused to see it; and he was far too delicate by nature to press it upon her attention. 'And now, *ma mère*,' continued he, taking her hand in his affectionately, 'in what way can I be of use to you?'

'By your good sense, and by your good feeling, Arthur. I need the aid of your talents and your virtues, too, dear boy; I want your best advice, and then your promise that you will never disclose that I have asked it.'

'You shall have both those, *ma mère*. As the pashas say to the sultan when there is nothing to fear: "I bring you my head;" as for my heart—that has been devoted to you these many years.'

CHAPTER VIII.—AT THE WATERSMEET.

Lady Lisgard and her young friend had by this time arrived at the Watersmeet, a lovely spot, where the river branched into two streams, the one still pursuing its course through the Lisgard property, and the other escaping under a sort of swing palisade—which prevented the passage of boats—into public life. The way had lain for some time along a broad beech-walk, paved with an exquisite checker-work of light and shade; but they now came upon an open spot on which a rustic bench was placed for those who would admire at leisure what was called the home-view. The prospect from this seat was remarkable, since it took in all that was best worth seeing at Mirk, without laying under contribution anything, with the exception of the church, that was not the property of the family. Two sides of the Abbey, an irregular but very picturesque structure, could from here be seen, at a distance not so great as to lose the bolder features of the architecture, or to mass the ivy which Time had hung about the southern front; the sloping lawn, with its marble fountain, and alcove of trellis-work, which the spring-time had but sparsely clothed with leaf; the boat-house, with its carved and gilded roof—all these, backed by a living wall of stately woods, made up a charming picture. The Park lay across the stream, which, although both broad and deep, was only used by pleasure-boats; and above the one-arched bridge which linked it with the hither

bank beyond the lawn, stood up the gray church tower. Gazing upon this view, not as one who had seen it a thousand times before, and might behold it as often again, but with eyes that had a strange yearning and regret in them, Lady Lisgard thus addressed her companion.

'I want to speak to you about my Walter, Arthur. A mother, alas! cannot know her son as his friend knows him; and you, I believe, are Walter's truest friend.'

'One moment, Lady Lisgard,' interrupted the young man gravely; 'everybody is Walter's friend, but some are his flatterers. I must tell you at once that he is displeased with me at present because I am not one of those.'

'Yes; you have warned him of some danger, and he is piqued because he thinks that is treating him as a child.'

'Since you know that, *ma mère*, you know all that is necessary to be said. Go on.'

'What is the bond, Arthur, that links my Walter to this person Derrick? I pray you, do not hesitate to tell me. There is more depends upon your answer than you can possibly guess.'

'Really, Lady Lisgard,' returned the young man hesitatingly, 'you ask a difficult thing, and, in truth, a delicate. There are some things, as you say, which a son does not tell his mother, and far less wishes to have told to her by another. Women and men take such different views of the same matter. If men are vicious—which I do not deny—in their love of horse-racing, for instance, women reprobate it in an exaggerated way.'

'Horse-racing!' murmured Lady Lisgard, clasping her hands. 'Does my Walter bet? Is he a gambler?'

'I did not say that,' answered the young man with irritation. 'If you insist upon making me a tale-bearer, Lady Lisgard, do not at least heighten the colour of my scandals.'

'I beg your pardon, Arthur; I was wrong. Perhaps this eagerness to suspect the worst is the cause of that distrust which the young entertain of the old. And yet he might have told me all, and been sure of forgiveness.'

'Doubtless, *ma mère*; but then we don't tell our mothers all. Now, pray, be reasonable, and assure yourself that Walter is no worse than other young men, because he makes up a book upon the Derby.'

'You do not do so, Arthur.' Why should Walter?'

'I do not, *ma mère*, because my taste does not lie in that direction. My vices—and I have plenty—are of another sort. I unsettle my mind with heterodox publications. I entertain opinions which are subversive of the principles of good government as believed in by your Ladyship's family. You know in what sort of faith I have been brought up. Moreover, I live in town among a slow, hard-working set, who have neither time nor inclination for going to race-courses; and, indeed, I am now getting a little practice at the bar myself. If I were a handsome young swell in a regiment of Light Dragoons, then, instead of publishing that amusing work upon the *Law of Entail*, which, with a totally inexcusable pang, I saw lying upon your library-table to-day *uncut*, I should without doubt be making a betting-book. Having no call towards that sort of employment, however, I am very severe upon it. I term it waste of time, loss of money, &c.; and in the case of your son, I have even been

so foolish as to remonstrate with him on that very account—an interference which, I fear, has cost me his friendship.

'Has he lost money through this man Derrick, think you?'

'Not yet, or they would not be upon such good terms. A turf friendship ceases at the first bad bet. The fact is, it was about his intimacy with this drunken fellow that I ventured to speak; it increases the misunderstanding already unhappily existing between your sons; for you know what a dislike Sir Richard has shewn for this person, while for Walter himself I believe him to be a most dangerous acquaintance.'

'Dangerous?' inquired my Lady hurriedly—'how mean you dangerous?'

'He is bad company for any young man, and he has acquaintances who are worse. Walter is "hail-fellow-well-met" with everybody, and may find himself one day so deeply involved with these folks, that extrication may not be easy. He has plenty of wits, and well knows how to take care of himself in a general way; but all his great advantages are useless to him among this particular class. His genial wit, his graceful ways, his tenderness of heart—nay, even his high spirits, all go for nothing with such vulgar good-for-naughts, whom, in my opinion, he will be lucky not to find downright cheats and scoundrels.'

'Is this man Derrick, then,' inquired my Lady, gazing fixedly upon the dark swirling stream, 'irredeemably base and vicious?'

'No, not so,' answered the young man frankly; 'he has the lees of good still left in him, without which, indeed, he would be less harmful. Walter was taken from the first with his openness and candour—which are so great that he seems quite lost to the sense of shame—and with his lavish generosity, which is probably the result of rapid fortune-making. He made five thousand pounds or so, it seems, in a few weeks at gold-digging, and I should think he was in a fair way to spend it in almost as short a period.'

'Perhaps he may have been spoilt by that mode of life,' observed Lady Lisgard pitifully.

'I speak as I find, *ma mère*,' said the young man, shrugging his shoulders. 'It is nothing to us if this man may have been a good boy at one time. You may charitably suppose, if you like, that he has been crossed in love, or unfortunately married — Ah! that reminds you, I see, of his *tendresse* for Mistress Forest. Since it moves you so deeply, you must look that matter in the face, Lady Lisgard, and very soon, if you wish to keep Mary. If something about this fellow pleases Walter, you need not wonder that it has fascinated your waiting-maid.'

'Is it this fancy of his, then, think you, which alone keeps him here at Mirk?' asked my Lady, who had started for a moment as though stung, but was now once more looking thoughtfully at the river.

'No. Being totally without anchorage in the world, the cable-strand of a partnership in a race-horse at present at Chifuey's stables here holds him to the place where he can be near his property. His pecuniary affairs are, as I understand, bound up in that four-footed creature, and beyond them he has nothing to look to. You who have all things settled about you, Lady Lisgard, with home, children, and friends, and from whom so many interests radiate, are doubtless unable to picture

to yourself such a state of things. But if this man should marry Mistress Forest, and still keep his share in *Menelaus*, I should not be surprised if he were to take up his residence at Mirk altogether.'

'God in his mercy forbid!' ejaculated my Lady, clasping her hands.

'My dear Lady Lisgard!' cried the young man, in alarm at her emotion, 'I am afraid I must have said something very foolish, to have frightened you about this fellow thus. After all, there is no harm done, and I may have been very wrong—as my mind misgives me I have been very officious—in anticipating any harm.'

'No, no,' cried my Lady, rocking herself to and fro; 'your good sense has only told you Truth. Do not—do not forsake me, Arthur. I look to you not only for warning, but for succour. Are you sure that you have told me all? Is there no other reason besides those you have mentioned why this man, having lain in wait, and entrapped my Walter, should sit down before this house, and, as it were, besiege it thus?'

'Well, Lady Lisgard,' returned the young man gravely, 'there is, I fear, another reason; but it is one I am very loath to speak of—Are you cold, *ma mère*? I fear it is too early for this sitting by the river.'

'No, Arthur, I am not cold. Why should you hesitate to tell me anything about this—this stranger?'

'Because, Lady Lisgard, I respect you as though you were indeed my mother—as you have shewn towards me always a mother's love; and this matter in some sort concerns yourself.'

'Myself?' whispered my Lady hoarsely. 'No, not myself, good Arthur. What can there be in common between this man—whom I have never seen—and me?'

'Ay, there it is,' replied the young man quietly. 'It would have been far better had you not shut yourself up, as you have done these three months, expressly to avoid this fellow—by that means making him think himself of consequence.'

'Who says I have done that?' asked my Lady vehemently. 'Who dares to say it? Why should I fear him? Why should I think about him well or ill? What is he to me, or I to him?'

'Ay, what indeed, *ma mère*! All this arises from giving ourselves such airs, and carrying matters with so high a hand; you have nothing but Sir Richard's pride to thank for it, to which I must say, in this instance, you have injudiciously, and, most unlike yourself, succumbed. It was a harsh measure, surely, to forbid this man your house, when coming, as you knew he would, upon a lawful errand of courtship; but to serve the landlord of an inn with notice of ejection if a certain guest should not remove himself—which your eldest son has caused to be done with Steve—is a most monstrous exercise of authority. No wonder this Derrick was greatly irritated; any man so treated would be: but, in the present case, Sir Richard has made the unhappiest mistake. He is dealing with one who is to the full as obstinate as himself; and (what makes the odds overwhelmingly against him) a man entirely reckless and unprincipled. Your son does not understand how any one can be proud who is not a gentleman. Now, this fellow is possessed of a very devil of pride. He is come from an outlying colony, where there is conventional respect for nothing; and where every man does pretty much what is right

in his own eyes. He has been lucky there; raised by a freak of fortune, and not by plodding industry (although he has doubtless worked hard too), to comparative wealth, he is by no means inclined to consider people his superiors. A beggar on horseback if you will, he is still *mounted*, and may ride in Rotten Row itself if it pleases him. He resents, of course, being thus meddled with; he is one of that class who would deem it a great liberty in the law should it punish his actual transgressions—who would think it hard to be smitten for his faults—but to be interfered with in a harmless avocation, such as love-making, or to be dictated to as to where he is to reside, stirs his bile, I can imagine, pretty considerably. It is my belief that he would have got tired of Mirk and Mary too before this, and wandered off somewhere else, scattering his bank-notes on the way, poor devil, like the hare in a school-boy's paper chase, but for this unjustifiable attempt on the part of Sir Richard to curtail his liberties. I am sure, also, that Walter was at first inclined to patronise this man, for the very reason that his brother had exhibited towards him such uncalled-for animosity.

'This may be all very true,' said my Lady sighing, but at the same time not without a certain air of relief; 'but I cannot understand how it affects me, Arthur.'

'Well, you see, my dear Lady Lisgard, although Sir Richard issues these foolish edicts, it is you who are responsible for them; and I have no doubt this Derrick has been told as much. At least, I hear, that over his cups he has declared he will never leave Mirk till he has had a sight of this Queen of all the Roosias (as he terms you), who holds herself so— Pardon me, *ma mère*; I was wrong to repeat this fellow's impertinence. Heaven help us! Why, my Lady has fainted!'

Arthur Haldane spoke the truth. For the moment, Lady Lisgard's mind was freed from all its anxieties, of whatever nature they might be. The young man sprang down the bank, and dipping his handkerchief in the stream, applied its wet folds to her forehead. Gradual and slow the lifeblood flowed again, and with it thought, although confused and tangled.

'Save me, save my Walter!' murmured she. 'Tell him I will die first. He shall never look upon my face.'

'He never shall, *ma mère*,' said the young man soothingly, while he chafed my Lady's stiffened fingers.

'Keep him away!' cried she, endeavouring to rise; 'he is tearing off my wedding-ring. Help! help!'

'No, no, it is not he; it is I, Arthur Haldane—a well-meaning fool, but who has worked a deal of mischief. I have told you all I know, and I wish my tongue had been cut out first. It makes my heart bleed to see you thus distressed.'

'Then give me comfort, Arthur,' groaned my Lady; 'you have warned me well, but what is the use of warning without advice. How shall I make him cease to persecute us? Gold will not buy him. I have heard of such a man, who, being bribed, cried but the more "Give, give;" as the whirlpool swallows ship after ship, and yet gapes for more—for navies.'

'Bribe him? No, Heaven forbid! That, indeed, would be the very way to keep him what he is—to make that chronic which is now, let us hope, but a passing ailment. But I would take care, if I were

you, that nothing further be done to irritate him. He may revenge himself—I only say he *may*—by doing Walter some ill turn. And, above all, you must persuade Mistress Forest to give him his *congé*. If once you get her to say "No," of her own free-will, he will soon tire of haunting the Abbey; while, if his racehorse does not do the great things expected of him—and what racehorse ever did?—he will soon tire of Mirk itself.'

My Lady shook her head.

'Come, *ma mère*, there is no need for despondency about this fellow's going—nor, indeed, for much apprehension if he stays—and, moreover, I really think the matter lies in your own hands; at all events, you have more influence over your waiting-maid than any one else, and my advice is that you speak to her at once.'

'Yes, I will speak to her,' said Lady Lisgard mechanically. 'Thank you, good Arthur, much.' She rose from her seat, and, heaving a deep sigh as she turned from the fair home-scene, was about to saunter to the beech-walk, when the young man laid his hand upon her arm. It was the lightest touch, but, like that of an enchanter's wand, it seemed to remove all trace of selfish trouble, and in its place to evoke the tenderest sympathy for another.

'You wish to speak to me upon your own account, dear boy; and, alas! I know the subject you would choose.'

'*Alas, ma mère!* why *alas*? I want to talk to you about your Letty.'

'Not now, not now,' cried Lady Lisgard. 'Spare me, dear Arthur, for this time; I feel so uninged and woe-stricken, I can give you neither "Yea" nor "Nay."'

'I hoped that you would not have thought of "Nay," dear Lady Lisgard,' said the young man pathetically. 'I did not look for the same cruel arguments of difference of station and the like from you as from—others. I shall have a home to offer your daughter such as will be wanting in no comfort, although it may not be one so fair as your Abbey. My professional prospects are, I am glad to say, —'

'It is not *that*, dear boy,' broke in Lady Lisgard hastily. 'You should know me better than to suppose so, Arthur; yet I cannot, nay, I dare not tell you what it is. It may be you will hear the truth some day, though never from these lips; it may be—I pray Heaven for that—that you will never need to hear it. But for the present, press me for no reply; for when you ask to be my daughter's husband, Arthur Haldane, you know not what you ask.'

'That is what Sir Richard says,' replied the young man bitterly. 'The Lisgards are such an ancient race, their blood so pure, their scutcheon —'

'Spare me, spare me, Arthur!' cried my Lady earnestly. 'Give me only time, and I will do my best. If I have said anything to wound you, ah! forgive it for the sake of those old times, which you may think of some day, boy, not without tears, when I shall be to you but a memory. Think then—whatever's said—"Well, she was always kind to me; and when I wooed her daughter (you will own) she was kind too, although I did not think so then." My Lady's face was hidden in her hands, but through the fair white fingers, as though the diamonds in her rings had started from their sockets, oozed the large tears.

'Dear Lady Ligard, good, kind friend, *ma mère*,' exclaimed the young man, deeply moved, 'what sorrow is it which overwhelms you thus? I pray you, let me share it. I am young and strong, and I love you and yours, and there is help in me. Come, let me try.'

'No, Arthur, no,' answered my lady gravely, as she once more arose, and re-entered the beech-walk. 'I must bear my own burden—that is only right and fitting. Heaven knows I am willing to suffer to the uttermost, if I be only permitted to suffer alone. It is when the innocent suffer for us that the burden galls the most. No; you can do nothing for me but keep silence about all that we have spoken of to-day. Not to do so, would be to do me a grievous hurt. You have passed your word, Arthur Haldane—remember that.'

'Yes, *ma mère*,' replied the young man sighing. 'The Haldanes always keep their promises, you know.'

'ANOTHER FIRE IN TOOLEY STREET!'

THERE always is Another Fire in Tooley Street. There is no end of them; they are appealing to public attention continuously. Fires in Tooley Street have become almost an accompaniment of our commerce, a regular institution, a thing to which the newspapers look as affording them pabulum, a phenomenon to which the directors of fire-offices are supposed to be always lending their attention. It is true, the designation is not at times quite correct. Bermondsey would be a better name sometimes; or Dockhead, or St Saviour's Dock, or Shad Thames, or Horsleydown, or Rotherhithe. But it is all one to the west-enders, who know very little about the S.E. postal district, and who very rarely penetrate any part of it beyond the London Bridge Railway Station. They have an indistinct knowledge that Bermondsey is a place for hat-makers and leather-tanners, glue-makers and wool-staplers; but further than this they are silent. To them, Tooley Street is a sort of general name for all the unknown region on the south bank of the Thames, between London Bridge at the one extremity, and, say the Commercial Docks or the Surrey Canal at the other.

And good reason there is, if we knew it all, why the 'devouring element' (as newspaper writers call it) should so often reign supreme in this region. Let the reader ferret out for himself, and he will see what there is to feed the flames there. Passing the Station, which has been in course of building and enlarging for these thirty years, and is not finished yet, we plunge at once into Tooley Street. But Tooley Street, we see, is for the main part a street of shops, not more likely to catch fire, nor more likely to burn quickly when they do catch, than similar houses elsewhere. The little crooked turnings out of Tooley Street, the streets beyond it towards the east, and those between it and the river, are those which contain the warehouses, bonded stores, and wharfs towards which the fire-engines are so often summoned in haste. There are Hay's Lane, and Morgan's Lane, and Mill Lane; there are Fenning's Wharf and Topping's Wharf, Chamberlain's Wharf and Cotton's Wharf, Beal's Wharf and Willson's Wharf, Griffin's Wharf and Symond's Wharf, Stanton's Wharf and Phoenix Wharf, Freeman's Wharf and Brook's Wharf; there are Shad Thames and Pickle Herring Street, Horsleydown and Dock

Head, Bermondsey Wall and Mill Street, and other streets and lanes so crooked and narrow, so dark and dirty, that we cannot imagine anything interesting in them except that they are worth millions of money. The timber docks and wharfs are down further east; but the region round about the streets and wharfs above named is crammed with wholesale stores of valuable things to an extent almost incredible. Wherever the owners deign to announce by inscription-board their trade or calling (and they do not always condescend to do this), we find that here is a granary-keeper, there an Irish provision-merchant, then a wharf-inger, then an alum-dealer, then a lead-merchant; just at hand are ham-factors, cheese-agents, paper-agents, tarpaulin-dealers, oil and colour merchants, seed and hop dealers, ship-biscuit bakers, shumac-dealers, drug-merchants, sail-makers, tallow-merchants, sack-manufacturers, rice-mills, flour-factors, chicory-manufacturers, and other storekeepers, literally 'too numerous to mention.' Besides the establishments which contain certain definite kinds of merchandise, the general wharfs, as the great commission and deposit warehouses in this part of the world are usually designated, are filled from cellar to roof, over acres of area and in numerous ranges of stories, with goods from every clime under heaven—mostly deposited here until the merchant finds the state of the market suitable for sales, or (in the case of bonded warehouses) until he finds it convenient to pay the customs' duty.

Now, imagine a fire to burst forth in such a district. What a temptation to the flames to lick up all around them! The streets are so narrow in Shad Thames and thereabouts, that galleries run across to connect huge granaries on the one side, with equally huge granaries on the other. The corn in thousands or perhaps millions of bushels purchases up, and charrs and burns; the flour clogs together, making a hideous kind of dough when the water from the fire-engines mixes with the heat from the flames, and smells like overbaked bread. The cheese in the provision-stores becomes toasted cheese of a most unwelcome kind; the butter melts out of the casks, and the lard out of the skins, and feed the flames; the bacon and ham frizzle in their own fat; the tongues send out an effluvia still more offensive, from having less fat to frizzle in. In the tallow-stores, the white enemy melts out of the casks in such quantity as to form literally pools of tallow in the lower ranges of warehouses, which give forth a body of flame most difficult to deal with. The vast stores of oil and turpentine, of camphine and petroleum, are still more rapid in their destructive propensities. The gunpowder stored thereabouts may possibly not be very large in quantity; but two of the ingredients, saltpetre and sulphur, are in immense store, ready to give forth their thunderous reports and lurid flames on the smallest provocation. The drugs and chemicals, the dyes and colours, are exceedingly numerous in kind; and as many of them are highly inflammable, they do not fail to take their part in the dread display of fireworks, especially as some of them give forth vivid colours, and others brilliant sparks, when burning. The atmosphere is sometimes filled with a strange medley of odours, that would singly, and in other circumstances, be pleasant—coffee, cocoa, chocolate, mace, cinnamon, cloves, nutmegs, perfumes, all burning at once. Then, ginger and pepper, rice and sago, mustard and salt, macaroni and vermicelli,

liquorice, jams, preserves, pickles, sweetmeats, dates, figs, raisins, currants, all tend to produce that strange compound of colours and odours so often noticeable at a Tooley Street fire. We once stood upon a heap of half-charred flour, still hot underneath, with this indescribable conglomerate of smells around us, on the *forty-ninth* day after the breaking out of the greatest of these fires—so long continued is the smouldering of some of the commodities thus heaped up in incalculable quantities.

When Southwark was a pleasant country suburb, to which Londoners were wont to take boat across the water, to see the bull-baiting and bear-baiting at the small theatres thereabouts, there were, of course, no very large stores of merchandise in the Tooley Street (St Olave's Street) district—London north of the Thames being then not too crowded to warehouse its own goods; consequently, the Southwark and Bermondsey fires, in bygone centuries, were not largely associated with warehouses and granaries. There was one in 1212, in the reign of King John, by far the most awful fire ever recorded in the annals of our country, not for the property, but for the human life sacrificed. The fire broke out at the Southwark end of the London Bridge of those days. The bridge had a double row of houses from end to end; and there happened to be some pageant or show, which caused the bridge to be crowded with people at the time. The flames leaped along from one wooden house to another, caught both ends of the bridge, and enclosed a crowd of frightened persons between them. Maddened by the obstacles at both ends, the surging multitude pressed those before them into the very flames, and all was wild horror. 'There came to their aid,' says Stow, 'many ships and vessels, into which the multitude so unadvisedly rushed, that the ships were thereby sunk, and they all perished. It was said, through the fire and shipwreck, there were destroyed about three thousand persons, whose bodies were found in part or half burned, besides those who were wholly burned to ashes, and could not be found.'

One of the fires which affected the strange jumble of houses on the bridge, rather than those on the south side of the river, was that of 1632 (or, as we should now call it, 1633, for the year began on Lady Day in those times). A maid-servant 'set fire to a tub of hot sea-coal ashes under a pair of stairs,' in the house of one Mr Briggs, a needle-maker, on the bridge. During one night, the fire consumed all the buildings from the north end of the bridge southwards, until forty-two were in ruins. Water being very scarce, and the Thames nearly frozen over, the fire continued smouldering in the cellars and underground rooms (if such there could be on a bridge) for a whole week. Wallington the Puritan, a friend of Prynne and Bastwick, speaking of this fire, said: 'All the conduits near were opened, and the pipes that carried the water through the streets were cut open, and the water swept down with brooms with help enough; but it was the will of God it should not prevail. For the three engines' (fire-engines had been only just then introduced), 'which are such excellent things that nothing that ever was devised could do so much good, yet none of them did prosper, for they were all broken, and the tide was very low that they could get no water, and the pipes that were cut yielded but littel. Some ladders were broke to the hurt of many; for several had their legges

broke, some their armes; and some their ribes, and many lost their lives.' The names of seventeen shopkeepers on the bridge, mostly in the mercery line, are recorded as among those who suffered by this fire.

The most celebrated of all fires in England, the fire of London beyond all comparison—that which, in 1666, filled up the cup of horror which had almost overflowed during the plague-year of 1665—did not immediately touch the south side of the river. It was only in a secondary way that Southwark was a spectator of the scene. Evelyn, in his *Diary*, describes in vivid language what he saw when he crossed the river to Bankside (near the great bridge for the Cannon Street Station, now building for the South-eastern Railway) some hours after the fire commenced: 'The whole city was in dreadful flames near the water-side; all the houses from the bridge, all Thames Street, and upwards towards Cheapside, and down to the Three Cranes, were now consumed. The fire having continued all this night (if I may call that night which was as light as day for ten miles round about) after a dreadful manner, conspiring with a fierce east wind in a very dry season, I went on foot to the same place, and saw the whole south part of the city burning. Here we saw the Thames crowded with goods, floating all the barges and boats laden with what some had time and courage to save, as on the other side the carts carrying out to the fields, which for many miles were strewn with movables of all sorts, and tents erecting to shelter both people and what goods they could get away. Oh, the miserable and calamitous spectacle! such as haply the world hath not seen since the foundation of it, nor can be outdone till the universal conflagration thereof! All the sky was of fiery aspect, like the top of a burning oven, and the light seen above forty miles thereabout. God grant mine eyes may never behold the like, who now saw above ten thousand houses all in one flame! The noise and cracking, and thunder of impetuous flames, the shrieking of women and children, the hurry of people, the fall of towers, houses, and churches, was like a hideous storm, and the air all about so hot and inflamed that at the last one was not able to approach it, so that they were forced to stand still and let the flames burn on, which they did for near two miles in length and one in breadth. The clouds also of smoke were dismal, and reached, upon computation, near fifty miles in length. Thus I left it this afternoon burning, a resemblance of Sodom or the last day.' Such was the fire which swept away everything that covered 436 acres of ground, including 69 churches and 13,200 houses.

There was a fire in Southwark in 1676, that brought down sixty houses; and another in 1725, commencing near St Olave's Church, which also swept away sixty houses, and reduced to a tottering state the 'Traitors' Gate,' which in those days spanned the south end of London Bridge. It was, however, towards the end of the last century that the great warehouses began to be built, which have fed the flames so profusely. The year 1780 witnessed a fire at Horsleydown that speedily lapped in its embrace granaries, provision-warehouses, ships' stores, boat-houses, cordage and sails, lighters and barges, and a ship under repair. Eleven years afterwards, in 1791, Rotherhithe lost several vessels and sixty houses by a great conflagration. In 1814, a fire broke out at some mustard-mills near St Saviour's Church, on a Sunday evening.

London Bridge was thronged with spectators, in carriages and on foot; and as night came on, they saw all the buildings on the north bank of the river magnificently lighted up by the reflection of flames from an extensive range of warehouses; and boats so thickly studded the river that 'the water could hardly be seen.' Corn, flour, and hops were destroyed to a vast amount. In 1820, nearly sixty houses, besides warehouses and vessels, were consumed during a great fire at Rotherhithe. The year 1836 was marked by that vast conflagration at Fenning's Wharf, not far from London Bridge, which consumed warehouses and merchandise to the value of £250,000. Then came, in 1851, a fire that swept away £50,000 worth of property in Tooley Street; and afterwards, in the same year, another that figured for £150,000. In these fires, hops (Southwark is the head-quarters of the hop-trade) were consumed in enormous quantity; and in one of them, at Humphrey's Wharf, it was only by flooding whole acres of premises for several days that the flames could be kept away from enormous stores of butter, cheese, and bacon. In 1852, a fire took place at Rotherhithe, the flames from which, fed by corn, casks, boats, and timber, sent up a glare into the sky to such a height as to be visible all the way from Gravesend in the east to Windsor in the west. A rope-factory at Bermondsey in 1854; four large warehouses at Bermondsey Wall in 1855; a provision dépôt at Rotherhithe in 1856, containing millions of bottles of ale, wine, and beer, intended for the Crimea; a flour-mill at Shad Thames, containing £100,000 of stock, in the same year; cooperages and paper-warehouses in 1860—all went. At the Bermondsey Wall fire in 1854, after thousands of quarters of corn had been burnt, five thousand barrels of tar, tallow, and oil burst, smoked, flamed, and flowed out into the street in a liquid blaze. At Hartley's Wharf, in 1860, a two-days' fire burned two great blocks of warehouses crammed with grain, hops, bacon, cheese, butter, oil, lard, seeds, feathers, jute, and wool to the value of £200,000.

Those who saw the great fire of 1861 will not soon forget it. It was by far the most disastrous, in regard to the value of the property destroyed, ever known in Southwark, and had few parallels in any part of the metropolis since the great event of Charles II.'s reign. It was near the old place, St Olave's Church—Cotton's Wharf by name, although owned by Messrs Scovell. How it burst out at four in the afternoon on the longest day; how it spread to eight large warehouses in two hours; how the firemen in vain attempted to stop it; how it leaped across an opening, and caught another stack of warehouses—this was known half over London before bedtime. And then Mr Braidwood, the able and courageous man who had formed the Fire Brigade thirty years before, and had managed it ever since: how deep was the regret when the news spread abroad that a tottering wall had fallen upon him and killed him! And what a night followed! London Bridge was choked with spectators all night; the avenues by the side of the steam-packet piers, Billingsgate, and the Custom-house, on the other side of the river, were equally thronged; and a heat and smoke, accompanied by that strange mixture of odours which we have already noticed, almost insufferable, were wafted across the river. The Dépôt Wharf caught, then Chamberlain's Wharf, and then Messrs Irons' granary. Then, several schooners laden with oil, tar, and tallow

were seized hold of by the flames; and in a few minutes the Thames was literally on fire along a space a quarter of a mile long by a hundred yards broad, hemming in and greatly imperiling some boatmen who ventured thither to see what they could pick up. The wind saved old St Olave's Church from ignition; but the same wind carried destruction successively to Kay's Wharf, Daisy's Wharf, Ellis's Wharf, and Humphrey's Wharf. By three o'clock on Sunday morning, the firemen, who fought on bravely though deprived of their chief, were able to mark out the probable limit beyond which the flames would not extend; and they were right. But, oh, the time that it took to consume all that those valuable warehouses contained! There were thousands of casks of tallow; and the inflammable substance, melting out from the casks, flowed into cellars, lanes, and open quadrangles, where some of it was speedily licked up by the flames, while the rest was deluged with water from the powerful steam fire-engines. After seven days of burning, a new explosion and a new burst of flame shewed how far the conflagration was from being ended. There was a depth of two feet of melted palm-oil and tallow, covering the whole floor of nine vaults, each a hundred feet long by twenty wide; and this immense quantity all went to feed the flames. Before the last heap of ruin was cold, there had been consumed 23,000 bales of cotton, 300 tons of olive-oil, 30,000 packages of tea, 2000 packages of bacon, 900 tons of sugar, 400 cases of castor-oil, 9000 casks of tallow (this was the terrible item), and stores of other merchandise almost incredible in quantity. The total loss did not fall far short of £2,000,000. And yet all has been rebuilt—larger, higher, stronger, handsomer, and fuller than ever.

After this wonderful fire, all else would seem insignificant; yet there have been many great ones since. There was the fire at Davis's Wharf, Horsleydown, in the same year (1861). There was the fire at Dockhead in 1863, which enclosed in its embrace vast stores of jute, corn, flour, and saltpetre. A strong wind not only fanned many hundred tons of saltpetre into flame, but wafted the sparks and lurid smoke from it in a fearful way. Under other circumstances, such a thing would be a splendid display of fireworks, for there was a combination of brilliant flames, loud explosions, and volumes of smoke. As newspaper readers very well know, this present year, 1865, has been a busy one for the firemen in the Plutonic region extending from London Bridge to Rotherhithe Wall. The fire at Beal's Wharf in October last was only one among many, but it was the greatest of the year. The building was eight or nine stories in height, and had been built in 1856 with every regard to fireproof construction. Yet did the flames dance along from one range of stores to another, until merchandise had been consumed to the value of one hundred and eighty thousand pounds. The upper floors contained thousands of chests of tea, while the lower stories and the vaults were crammed with seeds and colonial produce. There is said to have been a million pounds of tea burned or injured; and the destruction of coriander-seed, caraway-seed, liquorice, Malacca and partridge canes, and other commodities was such as to occasion a rise in the market-price of those articles. There was a warehouse adjoining containing merchandise to the value of a quarter of a million sterling; and it was only by a brave battle against

flame and smoke that Captain Shaw and his men could prevent the extension of the fire thither.

One of the most noticeable features in connection with these great fires is the power which the insurance companies manifest of bearing up against the consequences. A loss varying from one hundred thousand to two millions of pounds suddenly occurs, and those on whom the blow mainly falls scarcely stagger under it. They make what they can of the salvage or damaged wreck of buildings and merchandise, and give cheques on their bankers for the remainder. The truth is, that the companies rather like these things once now and then. A rush of new insurers always comes immediately after a great fire, largely increasing the receipt of steady annual premiums, and more than compensating for the sudden outlay in reference to the fire that produced the rush. But a great deal depends upon the proviso 'once now and then.' This Tooley Street is a source of anxiety to the companies. They do not like to charge premiums so very high as to discourage insurance; and yet they are liable any day to a series of catastrophes so simultaneous and overwhelming as possibly to bring down even the 'Sun' and the 'Phoenix.' The surveyors of the several companies, it is understood, possess ground-plans of all these vast ranges of granaries, warehouses, wharfs, and quays, with the structures of iron, brick, stone, and wood; and no doubt the premium of insurance is made to depend on the local characteristics in each case.

A BLUECOAT BOY'S STORY.

IN the Christmas Number of *Chambers's Journal*, I read a story of the Lotteries, which brings to my mind a curious personal experience of those old times; for I am an old man myself, and lived in them. Nothing which 'Sir Joshua' is made to say in reprobation of the gambling and reckless spirit which the institution of state lotteries engendered among all classes, too strongly describes the actual harm they effected. When such enormous prizes as forty thousand pounds were to be got, and the end of the Drawing came near, the Town grew almost frantic with excitement. I dare say the business was managed fairly; but it was certainly strange how those enormous prizes did always remain until almost the very last, as though they had been in solid gold, and their very weight had kept them down in the wheel. I cannot cite a single instance of the chief prize being drawn during the first day. In 1798, the last drawn blank was entitled by the conditions of the lottery to twenty thousand pounds, and during the closing-day, tickets could scarcely be got at any price, while even the night before they fetched one hundred and twenty guineas. Once only, thirty years before that, were tickets ever sold at less than the original price (thirteen pounds) paid for them to government.

So thoroughly national had the passion for this sort of gambling long since become, that in 1769 it was held by the government to be a very bad sign of disaffection in the American colonists that they, who had been used to take no less than one-eighth of the whole, declined to purchase any lottery-tickets; and their refusal did unquestionably arise

from their dislike to the mother-country. Even pious folks were bitten by this spirit of gambling; and I remember a lady of great respectability and benevolence, whose husband had made her a present of a lottery-ticket, actually causing prayers to be offered up in a church in Holborn for her good-luck. It is to be hoped that when the clergyman read out from his pulpit, 'The petitions of this congregation are desired for the success of a person engaged in a new undertaking'—which was the form of words he used—that he did not know what they were to pray for.

Delivered up, indeed, as people were to this evil Spirit of speculation, they wished to secure themselves as much as possible from the consequences of their own folly; nothing, therefore, was more common than to insure a lottery-ticket, and there were a dozen offices of repute and respectability where this could be done. Out of this custom the curious circumstance arose which I have taken up my pen to tell. I dare say that even my younger readers are aware how the public drawing of lotteries was conducted; they have probably seen prints of the great Wheel of Fortune, and of the two Bluecoat boys, one of whom pulled out the numbers, and the other, at the other wheel, the corresponding blanks or prizes. I was a Bluecoat boy at that time myself, and although I never was employed in this particular office—and a very shameful thing it surely was to make Youth the pander to this shameful national vice*—I had an acquaintance of the name of Thornhill who was. He was a nice-looking young fellow enough, but had not much brains, and what he had were almost turned by the notoriety of his appointment. He thought himself quite a great man because he had been chosen to draw in the lottery, and enjoyed the publicity of the situation immensely. It was no great task to put your hand in a wheel and bring out a number, which it was his part of the matter to do—though to bring out the prizes, which was the other boy's work, was exciting enough, since it commanded the deepest attention from all present, and evoked sometimes quite a tempest of feeling—but Thornhill thought otherwise, and magnified both his office and himself. It was said that I envied him, because he had obtained the situation (which had its little perquisites) instead of myself, but I did nothing of the kind; at all events, nobody envied him what came of it. He was returning home one afternoon at the close of his first day's Drawing, when he was accosted by a person of gentlemanly appearance, who informed him that he was a friend of his father's, and mentioned certain circumstances which induced the boy to believe that such was the case. As he also asked him to dinner, and gave him a very good one, I dare say he did not need much persuasion to credit the assertion; but

* This was the more singular, as at Oxford and Cambridge—notwithstanding that the smaller lotteries were entitled 'little goes'—the government would not allow any office for the sale of tickets to exist.

anyhow, they soon got to be friends. Over their wine they began talking of the lottery, upon which poor Thornie, as we used to call him, was very eloquent, I have no doubt, and did not lack encouragement upon the part of his entertainer.

'I suppose,' said his host, 'they look very sharp after you at that wheel, so that it would be impossible to take two tickets out at a time?'

'Well, it would be difficult, but not impossible; and besides, what would be the good of it?'

'Very true, my boy,' said the gentleman. 'No improper use could, of course, be made of it; but still I would very much like to see a lottery-ticket that is now in that great wheel, and before it is drawn. I will give you ten pounds if you will put such a one into my hand to-morrow evening, and I solemnly promise you shall have it back within twenty-four hours.'

'It would not be stealing?' returned Thornhill hesitatingly, to whom ten pounds seemed a Prize in itself.

'Certainly not,' replied the other, 'for its absence cannot possibly hurt anybody, and you have only to put it back just as you pulled it out. Who will ever know anything about it except our two selves?'

The next afternoon, having been persuaded by these arguments, and by the ten golden reasons which this liberal gentleman handed over to him, Thornhill pulled out from the wheel two tickets instead of one, and managed, unobserved, to place the second in his sleeve while the clerk was calling out the number of the other. The ticket secreted was 21,481—as you may read in the *Annual Register*, for the thing became a public matter afterwards—and this he presented, according to agreement, to the friend of his father. This occurred on a Wednesday night, and on the ensuing evening, he received it back again.

'Now,' said his host, 'you have not quite earned your money yet; but what I require you to do is not more difficult than what you have already done. I shall be in the gallery to-morrow while the Drawing is going on, and when I nod at you—thus—but not before, replace this ticket in the wheel, only be sure you do not leave go of it, but draw it forth exactly as if you had just taken it out in the usual way. That is all that I have to ask, and you shall receive five guineas more for your trouble.'

On the Friday morning, Thornhill kept his eye upon his friend in the gallery, and when he gave the sign agreed upon, after the drawing had gone on for an hour or so, out came No. 21,481, which, I believe, was a blank. It really seemed as if no harm could possibly have been done to anybody, or any object gained, by the transaction. But for all that, I well remember how wretchedly ill poor Thornie looked throughout the previous day, and how silent he was concerning his own part in the proceedings, about which he was usually very boastful, telling us how the ladies in the gallery had smiled upon him, and bade him bring them luck, and how the Lord Mayor himself had patted his curly head. He knew that he had done something very wrong, even if no mischief should actually come of it, and, as he afterwards confessed, he was racked by the idea, that the friend of his family might not return him the ticket, in which case, exposure and disgrace were certain; and they came about, although not quite in that way.

Upon the Thursday, when the ticket was not in

the wheel, the man who had given the bribe went about to all the offices insuring the ticket against being drawn on the next day; and it was probably only his greediness which betrayed this promising scheme of fraud, and prevented it from being carried out again and again. The fellow had insured in one office no less than six times over, and his pertinacity so excited the suspicions of the office-keepers, that when the ticket was drawn, as I have stated, both Thornhill and himself were arrested, and the former was easily induced to reveal all the circumstances. Neither he nor his tempter was punished judicially, for as it happened, the particular offence had not been contemplated by the law. But I shall never forget poor Thornie's face when he was publicly expelled from our school, nor the face of his widowed mother, who had come to intercede with the authorities, in vain, on behalf of her only son.

THE MONTH:

SCIENCE AND ARTS.

A GREAT scheme of metropolitan improvements has been promulgated by the Metropolitan Board of Works, and if they can only get leave to carry it out, the benefit and adornment to London will be such as few Londoners could have even hoped for ten years ago. Middle Row, Holborn, that long-demonstrated obstruction, is doomed at last; and on the east, west, north, and south of our great city, the leading thoroughfares are to be improved. Park Lane, another long-standing grievance, is to be widened to a width of seventy feet through its whole extent, if parliament will agree to give up a narrow strip of Hyde Park for part of the distance. The new street from Blackfriars to the Mansion House is to be commenced; and leave is to be asked to open two others: one from Charing Cross traversing the site of Northumberland House down to the Thames Embankment; another from the corner of Wellington Street, Strand, down to the Embankment at the foot of Cecil Street. These are grand projects; and if the new House of Commons sanction the opening of these thoroughfares, they will deserve the thanks of their constituents. Other improvements will be made along the line of the Embankment: some of the small wharfs and shabby buildings will be abolished; a magnificent crescent is to be built between Charing Cross and Waterloo Bridge, and here and there, where the width is great enough, belts and clumps of trees are to be planted. When all this shall have been accomplished, a voyage down the Thames from Vauxhall to London Bridge will afford a really fine spectacle. But let us hope that when the Board of Works shall have finished the streets, they (the streets) shall not be liable to excavation and disturbance, by any unscrupulous Company whatsoever, as our streets are at present.

After reading this, it is particularly gratifying to have an assurance that our other great metropolitan authority—the City Corporation—are going to take measures for improving and rendering safe the street-traffic of the City. It is quite time that the

reproach of that terrible fact, that more people are killed every week in the streets of London than on all the railways, should be removed. Like the Board of Works, the Corporation will have to get leave from parliament; but that accomplished, they will not allow slow and heavy vehicles to enter busy streets during the busiest hours, and brewers and wagoners will no longer have the power to block a whole thoroughfare just for their own convenience. Regulations will be enforced as to the competency of drivers, the stopping of vehicles, and the freaks of cabs. Besides which, light bridges are to be built across or tunnels made beneath the most crowded streets, for the convenience of pedestrians. It has, however, so long been the rule to deny consideration to bipeds in the City, and reserve it all for the four-footed creatures, that we can hardly believe the safety-crossings comprehended in the Corporation scheme will ever be constructed. But that something of the kind is required in a city through which sixty thousand vehicles pass every working-day, who shall deny?

Among other metropolitan matters worth a word of notice, one is, that the works are in progress for the pneumatic railway which is to cross from Whitehall beneath the bed of the Thames; and that a refreshment-room has at last been opened in the British Museum. Visitors who have suffered from headache through want of a lunch while wandering about the galleries of that bewildering establishment, will appreciate the advantage now conceded, especially as it is promised that the refreshments shall be good, and moderate in price. Another matter is, that a school is to be founded somewhere in the City, at which a good commercial education shall be obtainable for L.4 a year. A fund of L.100,000 is to be raised for the purpose, towards which some twenty persons have already promised L.1000 each. At this school, reading, writing, and arithmetic are to be prime subjects of instruction, because it is found in practice that in these most of the youths who are put forward for places in the City are lamentably deficient. In fact, it is an increasing complaint among commercial men, that they cannot get young clerks able to write a fair hand or spell correctly.

The chemical toys known as 'Pharaoh's Serpents' have been so widely taken up, that we may do good service by mentioning what was said concerning them at a recent meeting of the Manchester Literary and Philosophical Society, namely, that all mercury vapour is more or less poisonous, and that injurious effects have followed from the burning of the Serpents in close rooms. Professor Roscoe stated that, in his opinion, the inhalation of even the smallest quantity of mercury vapour should be carefully avoided. But a few months ago, two young German chemists were poisoned, while working in a laboratory in London, by absorption through the lungs or skin of the vapour of a mercury compound which they were engaged in preparing. One of the two died at the

end of three days in a state of mania, and the other has become a hopeless idiot. Hence it will be understood that mercury vapour is not a thing to be trifled with.

Two instruments have recently been invented which are likely to become useful in physiological investigations. One, an improved Hemodymometer, by Mr W. H. Griffiths of Dublin, is intended to measure the rate at which blood flows through the blood-vessels—a question often of high importance in vital statistics. We remember that an attempt was once made to ascertain the rate by injection into an artery at one side of a horse's neck, and noting the time that elapsed before it appeared at an incision on the opposite side. An account of Mr Griffiths' improvement has been read before the Royal Irish Academy, and will be published in their *Proceedings*. The other instrument is the contrivance of Professor Donders of Utrecht: it records the beats of the pulse, of the heart, and the respiratory movements simultaneously in four parallel columns, so that they may be seen and compared at a glance. As yet, we have no detailed description of the instrument, but we understand that it operates by means of electricity.

There is talk at Swansea of utilising the smoke which has so long poisoned the atmosphere of that copper-smelting town. Two methods are said to have been proposed. In one of them, the smoke will be made to pass through various processes, until at last it becomes condensed into sulphuric acid. What a happy prospect this for the health of the inhabitants, and the vigour and beauty of vegetation! especially as Swansea has become the smelting-place for copper from all parts of the kingdom, not to say from all parts of the world. Chili—the victim of dishonest Spain—sent us last year 47,000 tons of this valuable metal.

A small item of news has reached us from Australia, which is worth record as marking a beginning of manufacture which may have important results. The first piece of cloth ever woven in Victoria has been produced at Hamilton; and the first paper-mill (with machinery) has been set up on the river Yarra. Perhaps the colony is ambitious enough to hope to, some day, supply the 'old country' with cloth and paper.

Messrs Jackson and Ott of the United States have patented a method of extracting gold from the ore, which is described as a highly advantageous improvement over the process usually practised. That process, as most readers know, consists in amalgamation, or the use of quicksilver to separate the gold; but it is one open to serious objections, one of which is its great cost. Some years ago, Professor Plattner, a German, discovered that he could extract the gold by means of chlorine; the results of which were immediately important, for great hills of waste at the mines in Silesia and Hungary were treated by his process with considerable profit. The chlorine searched out minute particles of gold in the long-accumulated rubbish, that could not have been profitably extracted by any other means. Plattner saw that

his process was susceptible of improvements, but died before he could accomplish them. The improvements have now been effected by the above-named operators: by a process of desulphurising the ore, they save one half in the amount of gas required; and by substituting hypo-chlorous acid for the chlorine gas, they can treat different kinds of ore with even greater economy than by Plattner's process. The final extraction of the gold is effected either by centrifugal power, or by a hydraulic press and water; and the advantages of the new process appear to be, that the cost of the substances used therein, and the loss in quantity, are not so great as with quicksilver; that the expense of fuel for distillation is not required; that as pure gold is precipitated, no refining is needed; and that it is not at all injurious to the health of the workmen.

Professor Bourlot of Colmar, in his meteorological studies, thinks he has discovered the causes of certain atmospheric phenomena. In his view, the causes are internal—that is, taking it for granted that the central mass of the globe is fluid fire, the vapour therefrom acting against the inner surface of the earth's crust by which it is enclosed, will, by exciting powerful electric currents, produce sudden changes above the surface. Another effect of the internal pressure will be continual changes of level on the outer surface; so much so, that, from Professor Bourlot's point of view, there is no such thing as firm land—*terra firma*—be it continent or island. He thinks it may be possible to prove the existence of the plutonian sea; but until that be done, he will find it difficult to establish his theory of interior tempests and their effects. •

At a recent meeting of the Horological Institute, the chairman, in opening a discussion on the comparative merits of English and foreign watches, remarked that excellence of finish and knowledge of principles, as regards watchwork, are less appreciated in this country, even by the educated classes, than they ought to be. Those classes, he continued, 'require their special attention to be directed to this matter in order that their tastes may be cultivated to such a degree that they may derive pleasure from high mechanical correctness.' He noticed further a deficiency of education among those who are to be our watchmakers in the future, and expressed his wish 'that apprentices of a more educated class were taken into the trade, who could understand the principles of watchwork, instead of errand-boys with no previous culture, being bound too often for the master's special advantage, without reference to the boy's understanding of his art.' From this it would appear that want of knowledge, and consequently of appreciation of excellence, pervades all classes alike, which is perhaps one reason why so many persons suffer themselves to be imposed on by the advertising quacks of the watch-trade. The education that is to alter this state of things for the better must be necessarily slow.

Let us add to the foregoing, that in the first seven months of the past year (January—July) there were imported into England, free of duty, 129,082 clocks, and 86,114 watches.

MY WOLD FIELD.

I scorn the man who only sees
What nature shews his eyes,
Who cannot, spurning rocks and trees,
On nobler pinions rise!

His vacant mind, made once divine,
Grows base 'mong purest pleasures,
Or starves in plenty, as will pine
The miser with his treasures.

'Tis true yon field is bleak and drear—
My Wold Field gently swelling—
You call it tame! to me 'tis dear;
Nay, more, 'tis Fancy's dwelling!

'Tis wide as Thought's domain; the breeze
Sweeps o'er it, health bestowing,
Ruffling Spring's tender grass, like seas
That heave, soft zephyrs blowing.

Pale sunshine floats in glittering sheets
By day o'er bent and thistle;
The lamb in daisies couched there bleats,
Larks lost in cloudlets whistle.

All night, the moonbeams far and wide
Fleck its low hills, small valleys;
The beck that streams past or beside
With blue cress-flowers dallies.

Sly jackdaws hop, or sea-mews wheel
Amongst the purple shadows
That on my leas are born, and steal
Athwart my neighbours' meadows.

And e'en in autumn's roughest day,
What time the clouds are flying,
Hues o'er my thymy hills will play
With the cloud-splendours vying.

Here see I Alpine glories piled
At sunset in the west;
With tropic loveliness beguiled,
At noontide here I rest.

Imagination aye befriends
The man she loves, who woos
Her fickle moods; and Fancy lends
Rich charms to humblest views.

Contented souls great joys will find
That ne'er to others come;
And though no crags may mock the wind,
Still beauty blesses home.

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A BOY'S FIRST FIGHT.

I WAS a biggish boy, of seventeen, and I wore a red jacket, and was skylarking, one summer's morning, with my companions in the yard of the farm where we were quartered. Some of us were busily hemming in a pretty little bit of an ensign, on a pony, and trying to drive him into the abomination-pond in the centre of the yard, when a man looked over the gate, and said quietly: 'There—leave off—there's better fun for you; the French are coming on.'

We had heard for the last week that about one hundred thousand of them were assembling within a few miles of us, and we were living on, just as unconcernedly as most people do live on in this world, in the midst of the hundred thousand unseen dangers which beset every path of life. Our child's play was over, man's work was before us. We assembled, we marched; but not up the lane which led to our daily drill-ground; our heads were put the opposite way; whither bound, we knew not, nor, I believe, did our leaders. The general of our division had, some days before, found out a goodly château, with a most convenient common near it, where he could exercise his men; and thither he went, taking us at least twenty miles from the place where we were supposed to be, and close to the French frontier. We had now to rejoin the army without a moment's delay, if we could, which was doubtful, for nothing definite was known as to the movements which might be taking place on either side.

The first sign of war I saw was a beacon by the roadside, which had been fired, and partly burned down. There was no one near it. The hounds had been there, but there was no trace of them. After a tolerably long day's march, we were halted to rest on a nice bit of roadside common. Everybody threw himself on the turf, to make the most of the few minutes; and all was quiet—strangely quiet.

What's the matter? What are they listening to? What are those old hands laying their ears to the ground for?

Don't you hear the firing?

No. Listen.

There! No doubt about it.

Oh! I can hear it quite plain. Musketry, and heavy guns, too! It's a general action; they are at it, and we here!

You have seen hounds in cover, when first they catch the scent—a mere suspicion, not yet to be confirmed by the tongue—how their bristles will rise, and their whole frame quiver. So it was with the men; they were transfigured. Those who a minute before were only trying to snatch forty winks, had started to their feet, were gathering in little knots, speculating eagerly on what was to come; but there was no noise beyond a busy angry hum.

The march was resumed, and continued steadily till dusk, when we halted just outside of a town, and hoped for rations. Instead thereof, there came rushing by a raw Irish regiment, shouting like madmen. The contempt with which our old soldiers looked down upon this noisy demonstration was quite beyond words.

On we went, in darkness, rain, hunger, and thirst; on, on, until long after midnight, when the rain had become a deluge, we halted in a wretched hamlet, and were told to expect about three hours' rest, but no food. I got into a stable, threw myself on some straw, my head on a saddle, and subsided into a sort of half-dreamy repose; but others came in, and we began to discuss our prospects, under our breath, lest the men should hear, for it was believed that the French were between us and our army, and that our chance of rejoining it was a bad one. We were four in that stall, and gloomy enough. Two have long been in their graves, the third is a jolly old general, and as to me—never mind.

Day broke—the march was taken up. One of the men near me had got at drink somehow, and shewed it. His own comrades attacked him angrily. He pleaded killing weather, fatigue, emptiness; it was but little; it could never else have got into his head, &c.; but they would listen to no excuses. Drink, they said, was all very well

at proper times—a capital thing, no doubt; but before the enemy, never! He was a disgrace to the regiment.

The weather improved, and we woke up into better humour. Coming to the brow of a little hill, there appeared a single figure coming down the opposite slope towards us. A soldier—Belgian uniform—arm in a sling. ‘He has been in the fray—now we shall know something.’ But he could not make himself understood, seemed to have had quite enough of fighting, and was evidently making for his home. His wound was looked on as a sham, and himself as a deserter. He was hooted out of sight—nothing loath. About mid-day we halted in a pleasant meadow, and hopes were held out of rations. The officers of my company sent off one to a little town in sight, to get something eatable. And now up came a lad, in high spirits at having carried his point, at any rate. He had been on leave at Brussels when the alarm came, and at once determined to make his way to his regiment. He had been walking all night, and having started, as he was, in dancing-shoes, had soon worn them clean out. He had seen no actual fighting, and could only say that it had been heavy, and the result doubtful. He told us Major —, a staff-officer, who had been much with us, and was universally liked, had lost a leg. ‘Poor fellow: what a horseman he was! His hunting is over!’ This was realising the matter to us—bringing it home to our bosoms. It was the first blow; but there was not much time to think of it. Our caterer returned with a large loaf like a life-buoy—a common shape then—smoking hot, and a bottle of Curaçoa, both which were disposed of in an instant. There were rations at hand, we were told; but time was too precious to wait for them, and we went on our way.

Presently there was a startling sound. Our suspicious imaginations made it a fire of musketry close at hand. It was only a long, rattling peal of thunder, the first of a long series of heavy storms.

Another alarm! On a rising-ground, some way off, came into view a strong body of men. Were they friends or enemies? If the latter, they were too many for us. All right—they were allies—the risk of being cut off was at an end—we were up with the army. But where had we been wandering ever since yesterday morning? I never knew. I have in after-times often asked men who should have known, but never got an answer.

Once more we halted; the wagons with the meat actually came up; but it was announced that the French were close upon us, and there was not time to cook it. The meat was put back into the wagons, and the retreat—for such it doubtless was—went on. And now the plot began to thicken. On all sides were seen troops of various nations, hurrying on in the same direction as ourselves. The road became choked. Once, in a regular jam with some ammunition-wagons, a violent thunder-squall came on, and I began to speculate on the possible effects of a flash of lightning. We had to wait some little time, and I lay down in the long rye by the roadside. I was violently heated, and thirsty, and refreshed myself by sucking the ears of corn, which were so drenched by the heavy rain, that each was a sort of wet sponge.

The foreigners began to give out, and lie down by the roadside, in constantly increasing numbers. Most conspicuous among them were some huge

then usually worn. They made no attempt to conceal their alarm, and I began to doubt how the feeling that our allies were good for nothing might affect our men. It was satisfactory, however, to see that they seemed to look upon it as unannounced fun. The passage of any staff-officer was eagerly watched, in the hope of picking up information. I overheard one say, in answer to some inquiries about our retreat: ‘Oh, we shan’t have to go much further. He is going to make a stand at a place called, I believe, Waterloo, or some such name.’

From the crowded state of the road, checks were now become very frequent. On one occasion, hearing an odd kind of noise close to me, I looked up, and saw a wagon of wounded men. It was utterly unexpected, and I only hope I did not shew how it shocked me. Two figures I see now. One had been shot in the mouth; the whole face had swelled till the features were undistinguishable. It was one cake of blood, and where the mouth had been was a hole, from which came sounds that were not human. In contrast to him sat a very fine-looking man in a greatcoat, which concealed his hurt. His face was deadly pale, and wore an expression of deadly suffering; but he maintained absolute silence.

We passed through the town of Braine-le-Comte, which looked entirely deserted by the inhabitants. It was occupied by some foreign troops, who, we understood, were to stay and meet the advance of the French. One company got under arms at a sort of guard-house, in compliment to us, as we passed. They looked, officers and men, dismal—forn without the hope. I could not help admiring the endurance of our men. They had started about nine or ten on the morning of the 16th; had been marching through drenching rain and violent storms until now, the afternoon of the 17th, with very trifling halts, and no rations. They had breakfasted before starting, and had little or no opportunity of picking up any food by the way (I had only my share of the hot bread and Curaçoa); and here they were, going on without apparent fatigue, and without a murmur. Well, all things come to an end. We turned off the road, upon a rising-ground, which shewed other regiments forming line, as we did. The position was reached, the march was over. As I was looking round, to see what was coming next, I was accosted by an old Peninsular captain with a grim smile: ‘Well, —, here’s the butcher’s shop. How do you like it?’ But the real butcher’s shop came; we got the meat, and some spirits, and fed at last. I contrived to get a capital bundle of straw, and lay down (thatching myself with it, for the thunder-showers were constant) on a slope, from which I could see all that was passing. Before me spread one wide level, mostly in corn, with no enclosures or woods to break the view. Across it, at the distance of more than a mile, ran long lines of British cavalry, formed to cover our retreat. Beyond, in the distance, I could make out the French line. The guns I could not distinguish, until they opened fire; then the smoke, settling in a little thunder-cloud above each battery, mapped them out. I could see the lines shifting, wavering, advancing, retreating, but was too far off to make out anything more than that a skirmish on a grand scale was going on—then our side seemed to gain ground—and then the squall seemed over. There is a horseman coming from the fight, at speed, right

officers, throws the reins on his horse's neck, and bursts out a-laughing. His horse is in a lather, but himself in the highest spirits. This is the Duke of —, a captain in our regiment, but serving on the head-quarter staff; and he is laughing because he has just seen the Life Guards ride over the French. (He did not tell us, what we heard afterwards, that some of our light cavalry had first failed to do so.) What is that astounding rattle on the right? And what are all our fellows clapping their hands and shouting for, as if it were the best fun in the world? It is the whole baggage-train of the British army in a panic, fleeing for their lives along the paved road, bound for Brussels. And it is no joke at all. It is only fright now; but all through the night will be plunder and destruction—robbery and murder—women and children upset into the canals and drowned. The loss of life was great; the conduct of very many infamous. It was a shocking and disgraceful business; but it was hushed up. Victory, like Charity, covered the multitude of sins; and in the ocean of our losses, this drop was of no account. Again we stood to our arms, and moved off, I carefully carrying my precious truss of straw under my arm. The two armies were in motion—in presence—in full view. The prattle of skirmishers began, grew angry, died away. The sun, just before setting, came forth from his frowning host of storm-clouds, threw one wild gleam of light over the awful scene, and disappeared. 'Are we going to work now?' I asked the little fellow by my side (a boy in years, in service a veteran).

'Not to-night, I think; it's too late.'

'What a beautiful sight!—isn't it?' I could not help saying.

With a grave, sad smile of superior experience, he replied: 'Wait till to-morrow night; tell me then how beautiful you think it.'

We kept changing our ground, and at every move I lost some of my straw. Blundering through the dark and wet, the last of it went before we came to our final position. Very quickly the opposite ridge was lighted up by the fires of the French army, making themselves happy for the night. What a range of them; and how I envied them! We had nothing of the sort. The fitful fire of outposts—every now and then like a small battle—burned out. The last sounds I heard were the constant rush of the rain, and the constant wail of some poor baby near me. I had not so much as a great-coat, but I slept what the French call 'the sleep of the just;' or what, according to the penny-a-liners is quite as good, the sleep of the man who is going to be hanged to-morrow. On waking in the morning, I found I could not have turned once the whole night, for the side next the ground was perfectly dry and warm. But that seemed all there was of me; the upper side, on which the rain had been beating, had no feeling at all. The general effect was helplessness. (Some months after, I saw at Ramsgate a young man in a wheel-chair, and was told he had been paralysed from exposure to wet, the night before Waterloo.) The next thing was a bit of rough paths, the women taking leave of their (irregular) husbands. Few words were spoken—a few tears were shed; a good deal of real strong feeling seemed suppressed on both sides, and they were gone.

I was trying to shake myself up and be alive, when my kind captain came by. 'You look very ill,' he said; 'there will be nothing doing just yet

a while; go down to that cottage. I have just come from it. You will find a fire there. Make yourself comfortable. You'll know by the firing when it's time to come back.' I went, and found a miserable hut—four bare walls and a mud floor. Crouching in the opposite corners of the hearth, over some smouldering embers, were an old man and a little boy, both crying bitterly. I sat down between them, made up the fire, found a crock of water and a few potatoes, and set to work to roast them—and myself. I made a hearty breakfast. Not one word passed between us. They crying, I eating and drinking, and rubbing my hands over the embers. But all was silent, except the musketry, which more than once drove me to the door. I ought to go back; but, hang it! said I to myself, this is too luxurious a fireside to leave yet. At last came a burst of fire that allowed no further doubt, and away I ran, back to my company, was complimented on my good looks and my early return; for they said: 'Oh, this is nothing yet. You'd better come into the hut.' Our servants had by this time made a gipsy hut of boughs, with plenty of dry straw in it: where they could have got either, I have no notion; but they were handy lads. Four of us tumbled in, and pigged together. I dropped asleep instantly, and knew nothing more, till I was roused by their jumping up, and followed their example. Our general's aide-de-camp was walking his horse by; he turned his head towards us, and said very coolly: 'Enemigo!' The one word of Spanish, and the knowing smile, told plainly that old times were come again.

Now for it then!

Without signal or word of command, the men just walked to the piles of arms, and formed their ranks.

Here comes the old quarter-master, radiant; he has got something good for us. Yes, a little very precious oil for the musket-locks; and the men seemed fully to appreciate the value of it—to feel that each man's life might depend on his piece not missing fire. Each proceeded to uncover and oil his lock; for I think there were none who had not contrived some protection against the rain; very many had stripped off their woollen socks for the purpose. We got the word to 'load;' the ramrods rang, and a thousand rare soldiers stood ready for anything.

A short move brought us into our place; we formed close column. The men stood at ease, officers fell out, and lounged about, chatting as at an ordinary parade. I noticed our adjutant, an old Peninsula man, lying down on his face, as if asleep; but I could make out that he was saying his prayers.

We were just behind the ridge which formed our position, so that we could see nothing. A pause. It seemed a long one; even those chatterboxes, the skirmishers, were silent.

Bang! went an English gun, on the ridge just before us; and, as if it were a spell that had raised legions of devils, gun followed gun, until all individual explosions were swallowed up in one wild roar, under which might be made out the sharp treble of the musketry. Clouds of smoke began to gather, and out of them, from time to time, darted a long shrill French scream. The Americans in this last war appear to pride themselves on what they call 'yelling,' to have reduced it to a system, and to look on it as an important branch of the art of war. But the English of that

day did their bloody work, for the most part, in silence. The first cannon-shots sailed over us sky-high; but they soon began to fall unpleasantly near. If you sit by the open window of a railway carriage, and if, quite unexpectedly, an express-train passes, you will hear something like a cannon-shot close to you. The first thing struck in our ranks was a horse. *Prince Regent* had cost over a hundred guineas only a few days before. It was only a graze. As far as I could see, it did not draw blood or break the skin; but it broke a bone: there he stood, with one leg hanging loose. The next was a worse case. Our sergeant-major was expecting his ensign's commission, and another sergeant was acting as his second, and daily looking for his promotion. The rush of a shot! near! nearer! Smack among us! a little bustle—one man down. It is the poor sergeant, his leg crushed. In a few minutes his life-blood was on the field, and he at rest.

Soon men began to drop faster: the enemy had got our range. The clever old soldier in command just moved us about twenty yards to the right. Such a change was repeated at intervals. I did not see any of the other regiments in the brigade doing so. Their losses were heavier than ours; and I have always attributed the difference to this simple but sensible dodge.

The wetness of the ground was much in our favour under this fire. Shells would sink so deep that they exploded either not at all or harmlessly, throwing up great fountains of mud. But there were marvellous escapes. I saw one fall at the foot of an officer, who, instead of getting out of the way, stood as if petrified; but it never burst. Another went into the ground just behind a man who was lying down; he rolled lazily over on his side, and began to scrape with his hand the hole it had made, as if trying to find it. That, too, did not burst. And just by me a shell struck a man's knapsack, exploded, and scattered it in all directions—tore it to smithereens without hurting the wearer, who stood gaping as if he could not understand why all his comrades were laughing at him.

Here comes our second in command, good Sir Rowland Hill, on a great fat coach-horse, and looking as if no less a creature could carry him. But the composure with which he and his staff walked by, while the shot was dropping all around them, was perfect. The storm was so heavy in front of us (Hougomont) that we began to think it high time something should come of it, and to feel, rather than acknowledge, some anxiety on the subject. A group came slowly towards us from that quarter—six men carrying something in a blanket. We must have lost some officer of rank (it was General Cooke); for in those days men were not allowed, except in special cases, to leave the ranks to attend on the wounded while fighting was going on; nor were surgeons allowed to be under fire.

The next sufferer got along without help; it was a poor horse wandering slowly to the rear, with his head hanging down, almost as if he were grazing. I thought at first there was nothing the matter with him, but as he came nearer, I saw he had only half a head: a cannon-shot had carried away all the lower part. One of the men was ordered to take a musket, and put him out of his misery.

There is a yell, worthy of America, a long way off. What can that be? Far out of the reach of shot, was an immense patch of yellow, from

which these fierce sounds proceeded: it was a body of 'braves Belges' shouting to keep up their spirits.

At last up rode an aide-de-camp to our column; he was a very young one indeed, and in a very great fuss.

'Are the — loaded?'

A chuckle from the ranks was the only answer. He muttered some hasty order, and was going off as fast as he came.

'Stop, stop! young gentleman,' says the colonel; 'don't be in such a hurry. Let us hear distinctly what you have got to say.'

It was an order to advance; and right gladly we obeyed it; for idleness, a curse at any time, is at such times the hardest trial men can have. The first sight of the battle-field was rather a disappointment to me, though I don't quite know what I expected. Along the ridge, groups of figures were busy in the smoke. There were our guns. At intervals were masses of men, doing nothing. Small bodies of cavalry were riding about, and occasionally attacking one another. Altogether, it rather put me in mind of some of the stage directions in Shakspeare's battles: 'Alarums, Excursions—Chambers go off.' One little episode I almost hesitate to describe, because it does not sound at all like what it is—true to the letter. I saw it distinctly; it took place at a very small distance from me. Out of the smoke two small parties of cavalry—not above ten or a dozen in each—rushed into collision, as if unawares; pistol-shots were rapidly exchanged, saddles as rapidly emptied; away went the horses back into the smoke in various directions, not one rider left; and the whole was enacted in less time than you have taken to read it.

We took up the ground which had been occupied by the Black Brunswickers, and still was occupied by a large number of them, poor fellows! Very honestly had they been fighting; very thick they lay. Close to me was the body of an officer, quite dead. As it was a leisure moment, and I had never had a fair view of a dead man before, I determined to take a good steady look at him, and felt much the better for it. He was not disfigured—quite placid, but as yellow as any duck in the market.

We now formed, not one, but two squares, because we were so strong—above one thousand bayonets. The French cavalry had by this time got possession of the field, but could never hold it; they came and went. Every now and then, they would drive our artillerymen from their guns; I saw at one time seventeen guns in a row, abandoned. The gunners, as well as all general and staff officers, would take shelter in the squares, just as you pop into a shop in a shower, and beg leave to wait till the rain is over; and the squares became crowded with inconvenient guests. I remember one couple in particular, because the horse trod on my toes. He was a hot chestnut, but now sadly nervous—could not stand still for an instant. The rider was a curious contrast. His natural temper was one of the most irritable I ever knew; but a scene like this steadied him, and he sat like a statue. By the by, I did not in one single instance see a horse in the rampagious attitudes which battle-painters are so fond of. No ha! ha! no mocking at fear. They are not the animals they were in Job's days, or has gunpowder made the difference? They do sniff the

battle, poor brutes, and realise the danger. Some, indeed, shewed no unusual symptoms. Here and there (rarely) was a case of frantic fright. More frequently, it was quiet quaking, shivering from head to foot.

And now our turn came: the cuirassiers were going to try us. Very calmly our colonel gave his directions, quite in a conversational tone: 'Now, mind, men—no firing till I give the word, and I shan't do that till they are within thirty yards.' On they came at a trot—the ground was too deep for any faster pace—officers in front, cheering them on, as the French soldier expects his officer to do. It was mere murder. I do not think the distance could have been thirty yards, when a clear gentlemanly voice said: 'Ready! Present!' A flash and a crack from the face of the square. A heap of them were down. 'The rest they run away,' as the nursery rhyme has it. The cavalry tried us no more. A large part of that wonderfully fine body of troops was disheartened and wasted in such hopeless attacks: it was one of the great mistakes of that great day.

In our turn, we advanced, still in square. We went over the ridge, and a little way down the slope; but the enemy were too many; we were in a perfect cloud of skirmishers, and a mark they could not miss: nearly surrounded by them. It was an ugly moment. There was a call for the Rifles, who were near us, to go at them, and gallantly the green-coats dashed into the skirmish. The two lines were almost hand to hand, without the slightest shelter. The Rifles dropped so fast, that I thought they were done; but the French dropped faster, and were driven off after a short struggle, too deadly to last. It gave us relief; but we had to walk back—we did not run—to our old ground.

Soon after, the square was reduced, and we formed line just behind the ridge. I was tall enough to see over it; and here began a long, long, weary stand. For want of something better to do, I got watching a French gun, exactly opposite to me. The flash came in very regular time, and then the shot would whiz right over my head, and drop in the bottom of the valley behind, among our allies. I was trying for an epithet, but the less said the better. Time after time, savage screams of 'Vive Napoléon!' would break out, announcing a fresh attack. Very fierce they were, long, destructive, and only not successful. They took the name of their god of battle in vain. A cannon-shot struck the ensign who carried one of the colours, smashed his raised arm and the colour-staff, and went through his heart. Without a word, he fell forward on the colour. A sergeant stepped up in his place; down he went instantly. Another succeeded, only to share the same sudden fate. There was a moment's hesitation before the next for duty took the deadly post; but the storm was over, and all through it the other ensign stood unharmed beside the dead.

Looking round to watch the flight of one of the shots going to the rear, I was aware of 'the Duke' quite close to me, and entirely alone, walking his horse slowly along in rear of the regiment, shot falling all around him; his expression of countenance was, if you please, immovable determination, but I am bound to confess it was the opposite of pleasing.

I had asked my brother-subaltern rather early in the day: 'Is this what you call much of a fight!'

'No,' he said; 'nothing very extraordinary.' Some time after, I repeated the question, and got a similar answer; but rather, I fancied, in a short tone; so I thought I had better not ask any more. But now he came up, and whispered in my ear: 'Well, I never did see anything like this.' So I felt satisfied. Presently, a sergeant came round to him (our post was in rear of the ranks), and said: 'Please, Mr —, come and take command of the company. Your brother's down, sir.' Without a word—without a change of feature—the young Stoic went and did it.

The persecution our poor captain underwent was singular. A grazing-shot on the head knocked him down, stunned. Trying to get up on his knees, his back towards the enemy, a musket-ball struck the sole of his foot, and made a bad wound. Staggering off as he best could, he leaned, for a moment's rest, against an abandoned gun; a cannon-shot instantly shattered the carriage of it, throwing him down with no further hurt.

As soon as the fighting was over, his two brothers, both officers in the regiment, started in search of him; for the greater part of that night, they rambled over the ground we had been working on, in vain. They used to say it was too horrid a scene to talk about. At last, hopeless and worn out, they took shelter in a hut, where was only a French officer, shockingly wounded. They did what they could for him—got him a drink of water—and dropped asleep by his side. When they woke in the morning, he was dead. They had to rejoin the ranks and march with us; nobody knew anything about their brother. He did well, however; and yet lives, a prosperous gentleman.

We know the lull that will occur in a gale of wind, until one really begins to hope it is over; but there comes a sigh, a sob, a breeze, gust upon gust, and the roar returns as if the spirit of the storm were only bent on making up for lost time. There was more than one lull of this kind; but at no time would the noise make conversation inaudible, and any sound at all unusual would attract notice.

A slight but general groan from the ranks made me turn my head. I saw the colonel sinking back on his horse, and the men catching him. The groan was from them—a token of their affectionate regard almost unprecedented—the only demonstration of feeling I remember that day. The calm indifference of those 'red men' was like what we read of the Indians, but for a moment it was overcome. And he was a disciplinarian, too; the best I ever knew.

Well, things were undeniably looking bad—and growing from bad to worse. There were symptoms of exhaustion and discouragement, and not on the enemy's side. My neighbour touched my arm, and without a word, pointed to the right; there were men running, and they were English.

Right in our front the fire blazed up afresh, and the screams of 'Vive l'Empereur!' growing more and more distinct, told of a coming attack. Our line was formed four deep, and (how, I do not exactly remember) we became aware that at last we were going to be sent forward—that the time was come for Greek to meet Greek. We woke up as from a dull and dismal dream, to real life and action. We had as yet done nothing, except that little brush with the cavalry. For how many

hours had we been suffering! Our losses, comparatively, had not been heavy; but the full and hideous effect of every shot that struck was displayed before us, and we had to stand and watch it, hopelessly. It was as bad as sipping your medicine, and that medicine the bitterness of death. But now the load was off us, the nightmare at an end. All the feelings so long pent up were loosened, and working into fury. At last we were free to shew what we too could do. But as yet there was no visible change; we still stood behind that ridge, not seeing the approaching column, and unseen by them. Our commanding officer, with two or three of the mounted staff, was on the brow, watching the enemy. Now he is coming back to us; now he puts us in motion. As we topped the rise, we had to break and pass between our guns, which ceased firing, the gunners cheering us as we went by—their sleeves tucked up, their hands and faces devilishly black; and hot, reeking hot they looked. They are passed, and here are the enemy, coming on at a run, and uproarious. The sudden apparition of our formidable line moving down upon them, so firm, so steady, in such awful silence, unmistakably staggered them. Their voices hushed; they came to a stand; they delivered a weak spattering fire, which, though so close, did little harm. Then came our volley, and then a pause, for one tremendous moment, till the smoke should lift and shew us the effect.

They are down—broken, crushed, fleeing all who can! British phlegm, British discipline could keep quiet no longer; out rung a cheer, which none there, French or English, would forget while they lived. Every bugler in the regiment sounded the 'Advance'—kept sounding it over and over again. Forward over the wreck we stalked.

From that moment, our advance, in spite of momentary checks, was never stopped till we drew up at the finish—at La Belle Alliance—in the fore-front of the whole British battle.

The horrors of our progress were not unmingled with ludicrous incidents. Here was the first piece of plunder I ever saw. One of the men, as he ran on, stooped, twitched a knapsack off a dead Frenchman's back, and throwing his firelock into the hollow of one arm, proceeded to rummage it with the other. Out flew letters, letters—nothing else. The more angrily he shook it, the more the papers fluttered. A nice prize—a knapsackful of *billets-doux*! The laugh was against him, and he flung it away with a curse.

We were now coming up to a second line, which seemed disposed to make a stand behind a little bank, on which, to all appearances, had grown yesterday a hedge—now levelled. As we came close, the enemy's hearts failed them—they broke and fled. A few, who could not make up their minds in time, were bayoneted. Forward, forward, over man and horse, and wreck of all sorts cumbering the ground! Since I spoke of things looking so ill, a very short time had elapsed, but the change was as sudden and complete as a shifting scene in a pantomime. We were still leading, but the whole British army was coming on at our back. So forward were we that some of our own shells began to fall among us. A messenger was sent back to the offending artillery; but the commanding officer was indignant at the supposition that he was capable of making such bad practice.

Suddenly we found ourselves on the brink of a deep hollow road, with steep clay-banks, very slippery from the rain. It was choked with French, huddled together like sheep in a pen; French in dismay, crying for quarter. We slid down; our men snatched the French muskets, broke the stocks against the ground, flung away the barrels, left the disarmed crowd to be dealt with by our people in the rear—there were awkward stories of some of these defenceless men having been massacred by our allies—scrambled up the other bank, formed as good a fighting-line as ever, and forward, forward! There was a sudden cry of 'Cavalry!' a little uneasiness at being caught by them in line. But the word was passed: 'Remember you are four deep; it's as good as a square.' (We had been trained for any such sudden emergency. Any individual officer, in case of disorder, was to give the word: 'Form rallying square,' and collect in that form any stragglers near him; and I know one case in which that was now done.) But the men steadied in a moment. Out of the smoke rushed a mob of horsemen upon us. It was an English cavalry regiment, driven by and mixed up with a French one. Right on us they came; in self-defence, we gave them our fire: it was deadly. French and English broke and vanished in the smoke as quickly as they had come into view. I heard of a British cavalry officer killed in our ranks, unable to make the men understand that he was not a Frenchman. The disaster was no fault of ours.

Forward again. We were now getting near some French guns, which opened upon us, and down went a lot of men. A chattering in my ears, the like of which I had never heard, made me call out: 'What's that?' An old sergeant, touching his cap, with a grim smile at the youngster's ignorance, replied: 'Grape, sir.' It was no small satisfaction to see the gunners cutting the traces of the teams and riding off. Every moment came fresh signs that the end was at hand. On the rising-ground about Mont St Jean, some of our batteries, which had been silent, broke out again fast and furious; and out came the sun, just as he had done on the previous evening. The sky was just as wild and stormy. But how gloomy had he looked then—how bright and smiling now to me! and how to the unfortunate French? Then did I call to mind the saying of my brother-subaltern as to yesterday's sunset scene; and I asked myself: Well, is it beautiful now? No. It was highly satisfactory—it was triumphant, glorious, &c., as much as you please; but beautiful it was not. In sober truth and plain English, a very ugly sight it was.

A bugler near me was taking a hearty pull at his canteen. 'Have you any to spare?' 'Yes, sir.' It was water, and that was the drink of my life. I remember none so refreshing. I offered him money, which he would not hear of, and he was right—it was beyond price.

Our brave old quarter-master was just come up. I heard him behind me calling to the men: 'Now, my boys, I've brought you some rum; you'll have it directly.' This was even more welcome than the oil which he had produced as a morning whet.

We were still heading the pursuit. Resistance was over; but amid that scattered and terrified crowd might be seen four battalions marching off the lost field in close and soldier-like array. All honour to such unshrinking gallantry; but being

on the losing side, I take it they never got much.

We were now at La Belle Alliance, on the crest of the French position; daylight was fading; we halted. 'Let the men fall out;' and down they dropped, exhausted. Firing had ceased, except a few pops from some skirmishers of the 95th, who, determined to have the last word, had passed us, and gone down the slope after the fleeing French. It must have been prudence bought by sore experience that, at such a moment, could make some of our old officers say, as I heard them say, gravely shaking their heads: 'Oh, this is not right! Don't you remember in the Peninsula, at — and —, how the beggars came back when we made sure they were done? They'll be upon us again in the dark; the men should be kept together, and ready.'

But there was no need; they never came back. The fight was over, and we were the Victors.

THE SEASONS.

WE are some of us too fond of bemoaning the monotony of our existence or occupation. This is a wearisome bad habit, for if we would believe and see it, we really move through a series which is marvellously corrective of ennui. The earth spins round at a rate so prodigious that it seems to sleep upon its pole; but there is, in fact, so constant a change about and within us, that if we keep our eyes and minds open, we shall not lack a perpetual supply of entertaining and useful instruction. I do not mean that dreary sort of instruction which would make the world into a lecture-room, and set us improving every scene and event with a conceited importunate strain after statistical information and the like; but rather that which is imperceptibly wholesome, and which many miss, from a dogged assumption that there is nothing new under the sun, and that therefore the less they observe the things about them, the more they enjoy life. The worst kind of man of the world eschews any lively interest in it whatever. He is never surprised, never carried out of himself, and therefore, in whatever society he may mix, is never without dull company.

Let us begin with Winter, which not only has its special charms of outer beauty and social life, but is the pregnant time of the whole year. There is much in common among spring, summer, and autumn. They are more or less outdoor seasons, for though with us the frost sometimes steals soon upon the dying leaf, and hangs on far into the spring, yet by winter proper, I understand the period when the tree is naked and the grass stationary. Growth seems to stop. Nature furls her sails, and lies at anchor under bare poles. Then we see the masts and rigging of creation. We appreciate the fundamental beauties of shape and proportion. Then radical ugliness betrays itself. I think if I had to choose a house in the country, I would see it in winter. If the surroundings were well moulded and arranged, I might decide with confidence, for a beautiful form is the best foundation for a becoming dress. Foliage and flowers may hide an ill-made figure; they cannot, at least not when put on by Mother Nature, spoil a good one; therefore would I choose my homestead when it was stripped bare; I would have a sort of medical examination of my prospect, as the surgeon has of a recruit. Then it might clothe itself in uniform as soon as it pleased.

But though Nature is stripped in winter, it chooses that time for freaks in fancy dresses. Having put off its ordinary clothes for a while, it tries on the diamonds of the hoar-frost, and the drapery of the snow. We wake some morning to see every naked twig decked in abundant jewels, soon flung upon the ground when disturbed by the rough day, but brilliant for an hour. What a sense of change and fresh power must come over the water, too, when it is frozen! Once the slave of the winds, now it refuses to rise up and dance, let the storm be ever so imperious. It sees the reed upon its surface bend and writhe, with hardened impunity. It shuts its doors to the vulgar ducks and geese which claimed it as their own, and now stagger about in surprised exclusion. It enjoys an escape from all its familiar duties, and a capability of resistance which must be grateful to a compliant nature. The weary waves sleep in peace under their roof. And if the winter brings its peculiar rest and change to the ripple, the flower, and the leaf, so does it relieve man by social recreation. Indoor nations are the most domestic. The circle of each home is the stronger and clearer, and therefore all the home virtues exert themselves without waste when a family feels its own four walls about it. People who are for ever out of doors, sitting on benches in front of a café, or creeping about in groups to listen to a band, or anywise continually mixing with their neighbours in gregarious civilisation, lose the freshness of home-life. Now, Christmas corrects this loose sociability in many Europeans, specially, I believe, Englishmen. Winter is the home season. Even the interchange of hospitalities then brings out more sharply the charms and resources of each house. The evenings are long, the lamp is lit early. In summer, people fidget for a change, and want to go to London, or the seaside, or abroad; but winter ties them to their own hearth—they sit round the fire. All the pursuits and peculiarities which are suited to close intercourse come uppermost then. While summer is the time for lovers, winter is the time for families. There is no sitting about in the garden, no sauntering in the wood and lane, no lying in the shade. However vigorously some outdoor sports may then occupy the short day, people are at home as they are never else throughout the year.

So also is Nature. Then she withdraws into her recesses, and fashions within doors the leaf, the blade, and the blossom, which come out when the summer shines. Nature looks dead in winter only because her life is gathered into its home. She is no more dead than a country-house, round which the wind whistles or the snow falls, but where the children romp in the nursery, and the old folks sit over the fire. Mother Nature calls her family together within her strongholds, presently to spread themselves out upon the face of the earth. She marks the preparation for fresh life by a severe discarding of much that is feeble and worn. Whatever has small promise of her future within it, she puts on one side, or drops. The old and the sickly are cut down; health and strength are tried. In screwing up the wires of her instrument, many snap, and are rejected. We are braced, but we are strained by winter.

How different are the first sensations of the Spring! Then the veil is drawn aside, the doors are set open, and we become mystically conscious of contact with that which is distant and unseen. The bird which comes twittering in from foreign

sunshine, and the crocns which thrusts its bright head out of the dirty earth, seem to suggest resources beyond and beneath us, full of promise and strange revelation. Then we feel creeping over us that spirit of lassitude and day-dreaminess, which tries so sorely those who *must* go on turning the same dull crank. Then the familiar work looks like the old winter-clothes, dingy and out of time. Don't you recollect Dickens's description of the school which went droning on through the bright summer morning, and how the boys, who were sneering their slates and copy-books, could not help looking out of the open door at the waving branches and the hay? So, when the spring comes, and the soft green shews on the larch, and the outlines of all the other trees are marked by the swelling of their buds; and the Londoner hears the thrush in Kensington Gardens; and the grass in the Parks is sprinkled with rough Bohemians asleep on their backs or faces, like dead men after a battle—how we resent the office or the machine which inopportunely claims our toil; how the power of endurance seems to be laid aside with the greatcoat, and we long to defy authorities who keep our nose to the grindstone. This fit of rebellion, however, does not last long; we must keep pace with the busy summer. Meanwhile, it has an outlet at Easter and Whitsuntide, when even the poorest woman buys a new ribbon, at least for her child, and Sunday clothes blossom as the daisy; when excursion-trains are laden with the over-boiling of great towns, and relieve the spirit of resistance to the winter's drudgery.

But the spring-holiday is a short one. All Nature's work presses on so fast that we can only run out for a gulp of fresh air, and look forward to the autumn, when the harvest of the year has been gathered in, and we can lay down our tools for a while before we begin the old winter-work, with a renewed rejoicing in bright fires and strung nerves. For in spring and summer, we must spend the vigour with which we have been touched by the frost, and use the long quickening, ripening days with zeal.

Thus year after year we have our strength called out afresh, and see the past set aside, and a new face put upon the world. The furrows are filled up with smiles; the bald chapped skin grows rich and soft; old things fade away, and yet all remains the same.

We have many of these springs in a life, needed as much for the mind as for the body. When the spirit is chilled consciously for the first time in a man's experience, he may think, like an ignorant native of the tropics set down in a northern winter, that he is frozen up for life; but by the time he has made up his mind that he must give it up, and shrink into himself, lo! the days begin to grow longer, and the sunshine feels warmer, until, little by little, the flower of promise comes timidly out of its prison, and a generation of fresh living things proclaim the winter gone. So the spirit has its spring again and again. We are delivered from that which threatened to nip us up altogether, and when we have felt this a few times, we always look through a dreary season to a brighter. We know it must come, and that if the sun is a few miles further off for a while, we shall catch it up again, and be warmed through once more by the great fire of life.

That fire blazes up in Summer. Then is the

soft tints of spring, as if they had no mind for the mere prettiness of growth. The blossom has to be passed onwards to the fruit, the corn of a thousand cities has to be raised out of the earth, and so the strong sun gets up early and goes to bed late. The husbandman fights with the weeds which struggle for their share of the general life, until at last the summer's work comes to a crisis at the ingathering of the apple, the grape, and the ear.

Then there is a pause. Nature assumes the charm of ripe life. As one whose mature beauty shews when the chief struggles of manhood are being met, if not mostly past, so the tints of Autumn come out with a richness and tenderness such as the year has never shewn before, and the taste of nature's growth is sweet and sound; then, too, there are the loveliest skies. Autumn leaves are matched in autumn sunsets. It is the season of colour.

And it is the time of holiday. The sportsman in the stubble, the family at the sea-side, and the tourist with his knapsack, break loose from the pressure of the long summer-work. The wheat is stacked; the courts are closed; the colleges are empty; the clubs are silent. We get our wheels out of the ruts, and ramble away from the dull road of life, till the shortening September nights bring us back once more to the fireside, and we begin again the round of Winter, Spring, Summer, and Autumn, with, let us hope, a doubt which of the seasons we like best, since each has its proper charm and work.

M I R K A B B E Y.

CHAPTER IX.—IN THE LIBRARY.

OF all the pleasant rooms—and they were many—that were to be found at Mirk Abbey, the Library was by far the most charming. An architect might have said that the rest of the house had been somewhat sacrificed to it; a bookworm might have wished it gloomier and more retired; but for a lover of literature who was also a judge of beauty, it was well-nigh perfect. It was upon the first floor, and occupied the space of at least three reception-rooms. Long as it was, its excessive breadth might have been objected to, but that the effect of this was diminished to exactly the right proportions by huge double bookcases, which jutted out at right angles from the walls; thus the place was broken up, as it were, into a number of little studies, closed in upon three sides, but open, of course, towards what in a church would be called the aisle. This aisle, still a broad space, was set alternately with flower-vases and statues of white marble, though none of these were so tall as to hide from one standing at the door the view of the huge painted window at the southern end. In summer-time, this window was swung back, and all the garden scents and drowsy sounds—the level sweep of the scythe upon the lawn, and the murmur of the bees in the limes—were suffered to enter in. In winter, being closed, what light there was came glowing through the pictured panes, or through small windows far above the level of the eye, so that, in that well-warmed room, you could

And yet this stately apartment was seldom used in either season. Letty would sometimes take a godly book from that part of the place marked in dull gold *Devotional*, but always carried it away to read in her own chamber; and Sir Richard now and then would refresh himself in the topographical department by taking down the *History of Wexhamshire*, where all the Family Seats were duly pictured, and the linked sweetness of the genealogy of the owners long drawn out; but the Lisgards were not a reading race. Moreover, when they did read, it was chiefly out of modern books temporarily supplied by Mr Mudie, or works most glorious to behold as to their bindings, and without which no lady's drawing-room can be said to be complete, but which happily are rarely seen in libraries. My Lady herself had a goodly store of books in her own boudoir, including most of the French and English classics, all presented to her at divers times by her late husband, and all read, if not for her own pleasure, then for his; she therefore visited the Library more rarely than any one except Walter, who would as soon have thought of visiting the laundry. The last time she had gone thither was just after Miss Aynton's first arrival, when she had taken that young lady to see some curious missals there deposited, containing certain initial letters which Rose was desirous of copying.

She enters it now alone upon her return from that interview with Arthur Haldane at the Watersmeet—on a very different errand. She is no longer the kind if somewhat stately hostess, doing her young guest a pleasure, and at the same time perhaps taking a pardonable pride in shewing her the gem of the Abbey—its Library—for the first time. All pride, all stateliness, seem to have departed from that anxious face; her figure, however, is erect as of old, and her step as firm, as she closes the door of the vast room behind her, and walks towards its southern end. She looks neither to left nor right, for she is in search of none of those volumes which line the Library on either side. The place for which she is bound is in a far corner next the window, but very indirectly lighted by it; a small 'study,' where, if such a thing as dust were permitted to accumulate at the Abbey at all, it would certainly lie; and where it did lie; a spot unvisited for years, ever since it had been determined that Sir Richard's profession should be the Law, when certain books were taken from it, and carried up to town to stock his chambers; for over this little literary den was written Legal. Truly, as the phrase goes, 'it was not a place for a lady,' that dusky little chamber, lined with its bulky, calf-bound volumes, mostly in series, and often as not connected with one another by that emblem of their contents, a spider's web. What could my Lady have come hither to cull from such unpromising books? Is it possible that, unmindful of the proverb, that he who is his own lawyer has got a fool for his client, she can be in search of legal advice gratis? It is plain that she is in doubt, alas, even where to find the information of which she is in search. Her soft white hand wanders from tome to tome, and drags down one after another from its dusty shelf, until she has peopled the sunbeams anew with notes; but her large gray eyes find nothing to arrest them as they wander over the arid pages, although they grow weary with their task.

At last, however, they seem to have been more

fortunate. For the first time, my Lady takes her seat beside the slanting desk, and with her head supported by her hands, like one who is in need of all her wits, she reads on patiently enough. She cons the matter over twice or thrice, then sighs, and putting a thin slip of paper in the book to mark the place, returns it to its shelf, and pursues her search as before. Out of several score of volumes, four only seem to have served her purpose, and even from them it is evident that she has gleaned no comfort, but rather confirmation of some fear. Her face is more hopeless than it was a while ago; her sigh—and she sighs deep and often—has despair in it, as well as sorrow. From her wearied eyes, as she gazes upon the opened caseiment—through which comes a dreamy music in the flutter of the young leaves on a neighbouring elm, and the silver leap of the fountain on the lawn—tear follows tear, although she knows it not, and glides down the new-made furrows in her cheeks.

The luncheon gong was beaten an hour ago, and then was taken out into the garden for her especial behoof, and beaten again; but my Lady heard it not. She has neither eyes nor ears for the Present at all. She is thinking of some Future more dark and terrible than death itself, a day of dishonour and disgrace, that is creeping slowly but surely upon her and hers. The young leaves babble of it already, and the fountain with its talking water, and every whispering breath of April wind; and now she listens to them; and now she tries in vain to think and think; and now she listens to them perforce again. They are comforters these mysterious voices, and do but pretend to prattle of her woes, in order that they may woo her to oblivion; for presently the tired arms can no more bear the burden of that piteous face, but sink down on the desk, and on those soft and rounded cushions droops the careworn head; and the eyelids that have scarce shut throughout the livelong night, nor through many a night before, are closed in slumber. The bee-music, the falling water, and the lullaby of the April leaves, through Nature's kindly hands, have given my Lady a nepenthe draught; and, thanks to it, she has forgotten her woes; nay, more, it has substituted for them joys borrowed from the unreturning Past, which, while we tarry in Dreamland, are as real as any.

My Lady is once more a fisherman's daughter, upon the banks of Blea. The river that flows beside her father's door is almost as salt as the sea itself, and twice a day the sea itself comes up and fills the creeks, and sets afloat the boats and colliers that lie sideways on the oozy beach. When it retires, she longs to be taken with it, for ere that tide can reach the open sea, it must needs pass by the port of Bleamouth, where her lover Ralph dwells. Young as she is, she has been wooed by others, and they better matches than this roving sailor, who, although he has saved a little money, does not know, says her father, how to keep it; and when that is gone, how will he keep himself save by going to sea again; much more then, how will he keep wife Lucy and a household? But these wise sayings are naught in Lucy's ears, in which love whispers always its smooth prophecies, and Ralph's rich laugh dispels the old man's forebodings, or plays upon them as though they were the very strings of mirth.

As handsome and stout-hearted a lad he is as

ever was fitted to make his own way through the world; able enough to thrust to left and right all jostling compeers, and by no means one to lack or to let those dear to him lack, while bread is to be got by sweat of brow. A smile comes o'er my Lady's face, and makes it young again, the while she dreams; for now she sees his signals in the coming boat, and now himself, and now he leaps ashore, and clasps her with his stalwart arm, and now her fingers play with the dark locks that curl above his tanned and manly brow. 'Tis more than half a lifetime back—but she knows not that—and the colour comes again to the wan cheek as though it were a maiden's, and once more love awakens in her widowed heart. He speaks; but ere his tongue can shape the words, a sense of doubt begins to perplex and pain her. She is a girl, and yet a woman in the vale of years; a fisher's daughter though a lady bred, with all the circumstances of rank and wealth about her; the voice is her lover's voice, and yet sounds strangely like another's; she is on the borderland 'twixt waking and sleeping, where, as in a dissolving view, the coming and the passing pictures interlace and exchange features, and the Dream and the Reality struggle together for life. Some one is speaking, however, that is certain, and the voice, as no woman can doubt, is tremulous and loved-land.

'And yet Rose—for I may call you Rose, may I not?—beautiful as these pictures are, I do not think they are more exquisite than those which you have painted yourself.'

'You flatter me, Sir Richard,' returned a second voice, with which my Lady was no better acquainted than with the first; for although she could not but be aware of who the speakers were, since they addressed one another by their names, she did not recognise her own son's speech, so changed it was from its ordinary polite but icy tones; while Rose Aynton's, upon the other hand, generally so quiet and submissive, were tinged with a mocking bitterness. If Sir Richard Lisgard was really about to lay his fortune at the feet of this penniless girl, it seemed strange indeed that she should reply to him in so unnatural a key. That the delicious joy that might well be at her heart should not be altogether repressible, was to be expected, and that her tongue should falter in endeavouring to conceal her triumph; but there was that in the young girl's accents different from anything that could be thus explained. Instead of trembling and hesitation in her speech, there was sheer scorn. Perhaps my Lady should have come forth at once from where she sat an involuntary eavesdropper; but it must be allowed that the temptation to remain was very great. Moreover, there were reasons why she could not explain her own presence in that particular portion of the Library; and again, should she disclose herself, the young people would feel no less uncomfortable than though they should even discover at last that their interview had not been so solitary as they imagined, for how did she know what had occurred while she was sleeping, and how should she persuade Miss Rose, even if her word was sufficient for Richard, that she *had* been sleeping during that critical period? True, if it was certain that the offer about to be made would be accepted, as indeed there was every likelihood that it would be, it was highly expedient—for various reasons known to my Lady—that she should step forward, and prevent matters from going

further; but so strange did the girl's voice strike upon her experienced ear, that Lady Lisgard waited in hopes of she scarce knew what—some almost miracle that might make her personal interposition unnecessary. At the same time her curiosity became so excessive during the protracted pause that followed Rose's 'You flatter me,' that she ventured to peer round the corner of the recess wherein she sat, which was now far more in shade than when she had entered it at noon.

They were standing not very far from her—those two unconscious young people—in front of a huge portfolio, which leant against a statue of Cupid and Psyche. The old, old tale of love which the sculpture typified was evidently being anew repeated by one at least of the living pair. Sir Richard, who had been turning over the pictures, kept his hand mechanically on one of them, but his eyes were fixed with a winning softness which even his mother had never seen in them before, upon his fair companion. Through one of the small western windows, the last gleam of the dying sun had found its way, and rested upon his crisp brown curls; his manly face glowed in a golden haze, while in his eyes there beamed a light that no sun can give, and mellowed than the rays of moon or star.

'I do not flatter you, sweet Rose,' he said; 'I love you.' She too had one hand upon the picture, and but for it, it seemed for a moment as though she would have fallen, so deadly pale she grew the while he spoke. Her eyelids quivered, and then slowly sank like two white rose-leaves on her cheek; while her unoccupied hand fell from her pale lips, and hung down by her side quite motionless.

'She cannot give him nay,' thought Lady Lisgard; 'the girl is overcome with her great joy.'

'Why do you not speak, dear Rose?' continued Sir Richard; 'or may I take your silence for consent, and thus set loving seal?—'

He moved towards her, and round her dainty waist had placed his arm, when she sprang from him like a frightened fawn, who, although so seeming tame that it will hover nigh, and even follow one, darts off in terror when we strive to caress it.

'No, Sir Richard, no,' cried she; 'I cannot marry you—I dare not; and I will not. You are much too proud and arrogant for me.'

'But not to you, Rose,' pleaded the young man earnestly. 'You shall be my mistress, I your servant always. If I have ever been proud to you, I pray you to forgive it. I do beseech your pardon. It seemed at first that I was right to be so. You do not understand how one like me, so?—'

'So well born and so rich,' interrupted the young girl quietly, looking up into his face with steady gaze. 'Yes, I understand that well, Sir Richard; and I, on the other hand, a dependent girl, so inferior to the sort of bride that you had a right to look for; it was well to keep me at a respectful distance.'

'No, not so, Rose,' cried the other hastily; 'I swear that you are inferior to no woman whom I have ever seen. But I did not wish—I thought, at first, that it would not be for your happiness'

'—And your first thought was right, Sir Richard,' broke in the other bitterly. 'When you said to yourself, I will not encourage this young girl to think it possible that she should ever be the

mistress of Mirk Abbey, you were wise. You did right to hold yourself aloof, to behave with studied stiffness and formality, to let me know that though I might worship your exalted station, and admire your handsome face'—

'Rose! Rose!'

'Ay, it is Rose now, but it was Miss Aynton then,' continued she, beating her foot upon the floor. 'You determined, I say, within yourself that I should never so forget our relative positions as to misconstrue any attentions you might please to pay me; you held yourself so high, and stooped so condescendingly when you did stoop, that, upon my part at least, you resolved to nip the young beginnings of love, if such there should be, in their very bud. And, Sir Richard Lisgard, you succeeded.'

She rose to her full height, and pointed at him with her white hand contemptuously; her swan-like bosom moved, with rapid ebb and flow, in angry scorn; her curling lips gave wormwood to her words. And yet, although he felt her biting speech, the young man thought he had never seen her half so beautiful, half so worthy to be his wife.

'It is you who are proud now, Rose,' returned he, speaking with effort. 'I did not think that I could ever have heard such words from a woman's lips, and yet have sought to woo her. It is your turn to play the tyrant; but though, by Heaven, you look every inch a queen'—

'I thank you, sir,' interrupted the girl coldly; 'but you need say no more. There is no necessity to offer me that one more chance which your generosity suggests to you. However incomprehensible and audacious coming from these humble lips may such an answer sound, Sir Richard Lisgard is refused.'

'Rose, dear Rose,' cried the young man passionately; 'if this be punishment, do not push it, I pray you, further than I can bear. There is something in your face in such ill accordance with your speech, that I cannot yet despair. Is it not possible, sweet girl, that at some future time—not now, but when you have seen how humble and devoted I can be, that you may teach your heart to love me?'

'No.' A full and rounded word, without a flaw of doubt to mar its clearness; a sentence irreversible; a judgment against which he felt there could be no appeal.

'But look you, Rose,' continued the baronet huskily; 'it is said that the true love grows after marriage. Suppose I am content to wed you on that chance, as in very truth I am. Look you, the scene is fair you behold through yonder window, and all that you see is mine. The Abbey, too, is mine, or will be so at my mother's death.' [A shadow of pain flits across my Lady's face, to hear her son speak thus so lightly of that loss, to please a girl whom he has not known six months, and who does not even love him.] 'I have broad acres, girl, fields, farms—a goodly rent-roll. My wife—the Lady Lisgard—will have more than enough of wealth to maintain her high position. Rose! have you no ambition?'

Miss Aynton here again grew strangely agitated; once more her cheeks grew pale, and her limbs trembled beneath her.

'Wretched girl! can she indeed be going to sell herself?' thought my Lady.

'There is nothing,' pursued the wooer, perceiving his advantage, 'which will be out of your reach.

You will mix with those same persons to whose society you have been already accustomed, but in a very different relation towards them; you will be their equal in station, and they will be compelled to acknowledge that superiority in all other respects which they have refused to see in you while a mere dependent on your aunt's caprice. You will be enabled, I do not say to repay scorn for scorn—for your sweet nature is incapable of such revenge—but to extend to those who have wounded you forgiveness; to return each kindness fiftyfold.'

'Sir Richard Lisgard,' replied the young girl, speaking slowly, but with great distinctness, 'my answer has been given you already. It is true that your last arguments moved me, but not for the reason you imagine. I can marry you neither for love nor for money. You pique yourself, I think, on being a gentleman; being so, you will cease to press me further. I am conscious of the honour you have done me in this matter, and I thank you; but I decline your offer.'

The young man bowed, but without speaking. His features, which had softened to an extraordinary degree throughout their interview, began to assume a look even haughtier than before; his pride was all the greater since he had forced himself to stoop in vain.

'I have only one thing, then, to request, Miss Aynton,' said he after a long silence. 'I trust that you will not permit what has just occurred to curtail your stay at Mirk. It is understood that you are to remain here until after the celebration of—of my majority.' He could scarcely get the word out, poor fellow: he had looked forward so to her loving sympathy upon that proud occasion, which now seemed emptied of all its happy auguries.

'Do not fear, Sir Richard,' returned the girl with pity; 'no one shall know that the heir of Mirk has met with this disappointment. I will remain here, since you wish it. Your behaviour towards me needs no alteration to conceal the fact that you have ever been my lover.'

He had once more so reinstated himself in his proof-armour of pride, that the young baronet was not even aware that this last shaft had any barb.

'I thank you, Miss Aynton,' said he frigidly; 'if at any time it should be within my power to do you or yours a service, please to command me to the uttermost.'

He bowed, and strode away; she heard him close the door, neither softly nor in anger, and then his measured step upon the carpetless oaken stair without.

'I have not broken his heart, that's certain,' muttered Rose Aynton, with a crooked smile; 'the lover was lost in the patron soon indeed.'

CHAPTER X.—MISS ROSE AYNTON 'COMES OUT.'

For some minutes there was a total silence in the vast apartment, very oppressive to at least one of the two persons present. 'How long did this proud girl intend to remain and keep her a prisoner?' thought my Lady. She was rejoiced that Miss Aynton had refused her son, but at the same time angry with her for having done so. Rose must surely have had some motive for it far deeper than the mere revenging herself upon him for fancied slights. And yet Letty, who was in the girl's confidence, seemed certain that she had no accepted lover—no

previous engagement, such as alone seemed a sufficient reason for rejecting so advantageous a proposal. Perhaps she was even now repenting with tears the determination which had earned for her so dearly-bought a triumph. My Lady ventured to look forth once more. Yes, the poor girl was doubtless crying bitterly. Her face was hidden in her hands, but there was a convulsive movement of the round white shoulders that told its tale of inward grief. 'Poor thing, poor thing!' My Lady's kind heart yearned towards her now that she was sorry for her treatment of her son. Perhaps—not knowing Sir Richard as his mother knew him—she might even now make some hopeless endeavour to win him back to her. If she succeeded, that would be the worst thing that could possibly happen; and if she failed—as was almost certain—then she would have to suffer all this pain over again. Was it not my Lady's duty, then, to do her best to spare this unhappy motherless girl such bitter disappointment and humiliation, and to comfort her all she could under her present trouble? At all events, after some such manner Lady Lisgard reasoned. She did not stop to think of herself at all—the imputation of eavesdropping to which she must necessarily expose herself—but stepped forth at once from the recess, and walked quietly to where Rose was standing. Her footsteps made no noise upon the thick matting that was laid down the centre of the polished floor. As she approached the unconscious girl, she was compelled to acknowledge to herself, for the first time, how strikingly attractive a young woman Miss Aynton was. She had certainly not the beauty of my Lady's own daughter Letty, nor was she so tall, or perhaps so graceful; but her figure, although it was one likely to get coarse in time, was really perfect; her head, exquisitely set on well-shaped shoulders, was small, but bore such a profusion of black-brown hair as would have furnished half a dozen ordinary young ladies with *chignons*; her hands and arms were plump and white. Her eyes—Lady Lisgard thought that she had never seen such wondrous eyes as those which flashed upon her now in sudden recognition, then terror, then rage—not a trace of tears in them, and all the white face cold and still, not puckered up with woe, as she had expected to see it.

'So you have been a spectator, Lady Lisgard, of the late love-scene, have you?' said Rose Aynton in a low and suppressed tone. 'That was very generous and like a gentlewoman—in one's hostess, too.'

'Hush, Rose; do not say things that you may afterwards be sorry for. I will tell you how it happened.'

'Nay, do not trouble yourself, my Lady; I can guess. You knew Sir Richard had made an appointment with me here, and you wished to hear with what rapturous gratitude the penniless girl would consent to be his bride. I hope you did hear, madam, since you took such trouble.'

'Yes, Rose; I did hear. Your cruel words shall not rob you of my sympathy. I am sorry for my son, of course; but I am sorry for you also. I had been worried, vexed by many things of which it is not necessary to tell you; I came hither for solitude, and wearied out by many a sleepless night—nights of care, girl, such as I trust you may never know—I fell asleep in yonder recess. I never heard you enter the room at all. I woke up while you were speaking, but scarcely knew whether I ought to

Richard; then, when he had gone, I thought that you repented having done so. I was moved at seeing you look so white and still. I felt for you, Rose, with all my heart, and came out, when I might as easily have remained concealed, to try to comfort you. My poor dear girl!'

'That was very kind,' returned Rose quietly. 'But if I had behaved otherwise, would you then have welcomed me as your daughter-in-law? Please to tell me that.'

'If I should say "Yes," you would not believe me, Rose. So why ask me such a question. Moreover, the matter is settled now for ever. He would be a doting lover, indeed, who would forgive such a repulse; and Richard is the last man in all the world to do so.'

'Do you think so?' answered the young girl with an incredulous smile. 'You have forgotten surely your own youth, Lady Lisgard.'

'What know you of my youth, girl?' asked my Lady hastily, her pale face flushing with emotion.

'Nay, do not be angry,' returned the other coldly. 'I meant nothing, except, that when a woman is young she is very powerful. You say that I have lost Sir Richard, and therefore you pity me. Now, I will wager by this time to-morrow that I could win him back again.'

Was this the humble and submissive girl who came to Mirk four months ago, almost from school, and whom she had treated as a mother treats her child! The conscious belle of a London season could not have spoken with a greater confidence; the most practised husband-hunter with a cooler calculation. 'Come,' continued Rose, 'if you really are so sorry for me, Lady Lisgard, and so distressed upon your son's account, have I your permission to do my best to repair this common misfortune?'

My Lady could scarce conceal a shudder at the thought how nearly had this cold-blooded scheming girl become her daughter-in-law. Whatever objections she might have had to such a match before—and they were in themselves insuperable—seemed to have grown to twice their former proportions. The girl's determination and self-confidence alarmed her, too, for that result about which she had before felt so certain. At all hazards, she was resolved to prevent an attempt at reconciliation being made.

'No, Rose; I do not wish you to try to recover the affections of Sir Richard.'

'So, so; then we have the truth at last, Lady Lisgard. You are not willing that I should be daughter-in-law of yours. You grudge me such great good-fortune as to be allied with the race of Lisgards: and yet it fell to your own lot—as I have heard—even in a more unexpected manner.'

'Miss Aynton, what I was is no affair of yours,' replied my Lady with quivering lips. 'You have only to remember what I am.'

'I do so, madam, very well. I see you held in honour by all people, and without doubt, justly. Your position is indeed to me an object of admiration, perhaps I may add, even of envy. Is it not natural that it should be so? And when your son offers to lift me from my present low estate to place me as high, why should I hesitate to take advantage of such a proposal? I have refused him, it is true; but now, being, as you say, repentant, why should I not strive to recover what I have let slip—wealth, honours, title?—'

'Rose Aynton,' returned my Lady, clasping the

broken tones, 'I warn you, do not do it. Even if you succeed, you may not win all you dream of. Strive not, I charge you, for your own sake, to undo what has been done. I have reasons for what I say beyond any that you can guess. If you would be happy, do not endeavour to ally yourself with this family.'

'Lady Lisgard, what can you mean?' ejaculated the girl, her white face flushed at last, her wide flashing eyes no longer hard and cynical, and her every feature impatient for reply.

'I mean simply what I say. Seek not to be Richard's wife. If you want money—and I know from your own lips it is not love which prompts you—you shall have such wealth as is mine to give. I had meant it for a different purpose; but that is no matter. Only do not seek to win back my son; and when you leave us, I will bless you for your forbearance—and for your silence, Rose.'

'Yes, Lady Lisgard, I will say nothing of all this,' returned the girl thoughtfully after a short pause. 'I promise you, too, that I will never speak of love to Sir Richard further; and as for your offer of a bribe, though I do not know that I have ever shewn myself so greedy as to deserve it—I will forgive you even that.'

'Thank you, thank you, Rose,' answered my Lady eagerly. 'I dare say, in my haste and trouble, I may have said things to offend you, and if so, I am very sorry. You have doubtless your troubles too.'

'Yes, I have,' answered the girl gravely; 'and I should like to be alone with them for a little, Lady Lisgard, unless you have anything else to ask of me.'

'Nothing, Rose—nothing; you have granted all I wished. You will be as undisturbed here as in your own apartment; nay, even more so; for Letty will not think of coming here to seek you out. Nobody ever comes into the Library.'

My Lady leaned forward as she spoke, and kissed the girl's smooth brow, cold as a tablet of alabaster, then softly left the room.

Rose Aynton stood for a full minute, listening, eager and motionless as Echo herself, before she stepped to the door, and turned the key.

'No more spying, my Lady!' ejaculated she; 'my hostess has her secrets, it seems, as well as I. It would be well if I could discover hers before she found out mine. What could she mean by cautioning me, for my own sake, not to ally myself with the Lisgards? She is not a fool to think to frighten me with a mere gipsy's warning—threatening much, but meaning nothing. What reasons can those be against my becoming her daughter-in-law, which are "beyond any that I can guess?" If I could only get this proud dame beneath my thumb, then, indeed, I might recompense myself somewhat for having missed Sir Richard. To think that I should have lost a prize like that through mere humility of mind! "Yet even if you succeed," said she, "you may not win all you dream of." Those were her very words. "Haste and trouble" alone could never have suggested them to her, although they may have made her indiscreet enough to utter them. What has put my Lady in such low spirits of late, and kept her so moped up within the Abbey walls? How came she alone here in this place, whither, as she says, "No one ever comes?" She must have been hidden in yonder recess in the far corner, or we must needs have seen her, when my love-sick swain and I were walking up and down.'

Swift and noiseless, like some beautiful wild beast upon the trail, Rose Aynton crossed the room, and scanned, with a cruel look in her dark eyes, the little study over which was printed *Legal*.

'I never heard that my Lady was given to law,' muttered she derisively. 'True, she said that she had been sent to sleep, a thing which any one of these folios one might think would compass. But why did she come hither to read at all? There must have been something of interest to attract her. The books on this side do not seem to have been touched for ages; but here—yes, some one has been to these quite lately, for the dust has been disturbed, and here, if I mistake not, is the dainty print of my Lady's fingers. We are getting warm, as the children say at Hide-and-Seek. What have we here? A slip of paper for a marker, torn cross-wise from an envelope with *Lad* upon it. It was surely imprudent of my Lady to use her own address for such a purpose. *Wills!* Ah, she has been studying the art of making wills, I dare say. Considering Sir Richard is already so well off—and since I am not to be his wife—it is to be hoped she will leave her money to son Walter; and some, too, to poor dear Letty, for she is one who will never learn to help herself in this world. It is well for her that she has not to live by her wits. If she had been in my position, she would have been a governess. Yes, it's all about Wills this book. And why should not my Lady make a will, being of ripe age, and yet not old enough to sniff that smell of the charnel-house, which renders the operation so unpleasant a duty to the aged. I am afraid—unless, indeed, I could find the will itself—that I have but discovered a mare's nest after all. However, here are more book-markers; come, let us combine our information. *Succession!* That's only the same story. *Illegitimacy!* Great Heaven, but this is more than I had bargained for!'

The girl stepped swiftly to the open window, and pushed the heavy folds of hair behind her ears. 'I feel my blood all rushing to my brain, and roaring "Ruin!"' murmured she. 'If this sudden fear has any real foundation, then indeed am I hoist with my own petard. No wonder she warned me against alliance with her race, if what I here suspect is true. They will need well-born suitors themselves, she meant, to make up for what is lacking in their blood, and mayhap money too. The will of old Sir Robert may be disputed. The Succession—but no, I had forgotten—there is no one to succeed save her two sons, for they have not a relative beyond themselves in the world, these Lisgards; but the title—that would be lost, of course. That's what she hinted when she said I might not gain the thing I counted on, even though I won Sir Richard. He cannot know of it; he could not be so proud if he had the least suspicion of any blot in his own scutcheon. How he would wither if one said to him: "Thou Bastard!" And yet I gravely doubt whether this discreet madam, his mother, has not one day tripped. "What know you of my youth, girl?" cried she a while ago, white, as I thought, with anger; but it was fear, it seems. She comes here alone to find out for herself by study what secret course to follow, or what hidden dangers to avoid, having no counsellor in whom she can confide. That seems so far certain, or she would surely ask her son himself, being a lawyer, or that wise Mr Arthur Haldane, whom I so honestly dislike, for their advice. It may be all this bodes as

ill for Walter as for his brother; it may be that it bodes the younger the best of fortune, and the elder the worst. That would be a brave day, indeed, for some one, on which the proud young baronet should sink to plain Mr Richard, and the poor captain rise to be Sir Walter Lisgard! And, again, there may be nothing in all this, after all. Time will doubtless shew, and it shall be my task to hurry Time's footsteps towards the discovery.'

EDIBLE REPTILES.

MAN, whether civilised or savage, has an instinctive repugnance to reptiles of every kind and degree, and yet there is not one of the four families into which naturalists divide the race that does not minister to his sustenance in some measure. Ugly and repulsive as the saurian, ophidian, batrachian, and chelonian tribes may be, they each contribute something to the dietary of humanity.

The crocodile, worshipped in one part of Egypt, was eaten in another. Herodotus informs us the people of Apollonopolis were compelled by law to eat crocodiles, to revenge the death of a princess who fell a victim to saurian appetite. The inhabitants of Elephantina did from choice what the Apollonopolians did from compulsion, and modern Egyptians follow their example when they have a chance, not being deterred by the risk of perpetrating cannibalism at second-hand. Crocodile-flesh is publicly sold in the meat-markets of Sennaar, and Pallegoix declares he saw half a hundred crocodiles hanging up for sale (as sheep hang in our butchers' shops) in a market-place in Siam. Burekhardt compares crocodile-meat to veal, but it has a dirty lue and faint fishy odour, of which veal is innocent, and, unless the musk-glands are removed previous to cooking, the dish is intolerable. Sherard Osborne tried an alligator-cutlet, and, although he did not find it absolutely uneatable, he confesses it was not over-nice; the best that could be said of it being, that it was equal to a very bad veal-cutlet. Winwood Reade likens alligator to something between pork and cod, with the addition of a flavour of musk. Nienhoff's taste was of a different order, or he was luckier in the specimens upon which he experimented, for he avers, that boiled or fried in butter, cayman-meat is quite equal to rabbit. Both crocodile and alligator eggs are held in estimation. The Siamese consider the first an especial dainty; while the natives of Madagascar are particularly partial to the latter, and lay up a store of them, first removing the shell, and then boiling the eggs, and drying them in the sun. The Mandingoes prefer crocodile-eggs when the young reptile within has attained to the length of a man's finger. M. Linaut was tempted, by the evident enjoyment of his African friends, to take his share of a fricassee of crocodile-eggs; but the combination of rancid oil and musk proved too much for an appetite not to the manner born. Ancient physicians prescribed boiled crocodile for sciatica, lumbago, and chronic coughs; crocodile-blood for ophthalmia; and crocodile-fat in cases of fever.

The iguana, with its scaly, black-spotted, green

coat is, as far as externals go, more repulsive even than crocodile or cayman; but, living chiefly upon fruits, flowers, and leaves, its flesh is as white as that of the chicken, and equally palatable. Catesby lauds it to the skies, as at once delicate, delicious, and digestible. The iguana affords a valuable supply of food to the people of the Bahamas. The reptiles are hunted down with dogs, their mouths sewn up, to prevent them using their teeth, and so carried alive to market. Those retained for home-consumption are killed, salted, and barrelled. Iguana is generally served up boiled, with a calabash full of clarified iguana-fat, into which the meat is dipped as it is eaten. The Singhalese know the iguana as the *tallygoya*, and keep dogs for the purpose of catching it; with them, it is valued not only as an article of food, but also as a remedial agent. They apply the fat as an external remedy for cutaneous diseases, and hold the tongue, plucked from the living reptile, and swallowed whole, a certain cure for consumption. The eggs of the iguana are in as high favour as its flesh; they are said to resemble hens' eggs in taste, but are entirely filled with yolk, and never become hard in cooking. The horned iguana of St Domingo is appreciated by West Indian lovers of good living, its flesh resembling that of the roebuck. A very different verdict is passed, by one who ought to have been a good judge, upon the iguanas of New Holland. They are thus described by Dampier: 'Of the same shape and size with other guanans, but differing from them in three remarkable particulars; for these had a larger and uglier head, and had no tail, and at the rump, instead of the tail there, they had a stump of a tail, which appeared like another head, but not really such, being without mouth or eyes; the legs also seemed all four to be fore-legs, and to be made as if to go indifferently head or tail foremost. They were speckled black and yellow like toads, and had scales or knobs on their backs like those of crocodiles. Their livers are spotted black and yellow, and the body when opened hath an unsavoury smell. The guanans I have observed to be very good meat, and I have often eaten of them with pleasure; but though I have eaten of snakes, crocodiles, alligators, and many creatures that look frightfully enough, and there are but few I should be afraid to eat of, if pressed by hunger, yet I think my stomach would scarce have served to venture upon these New Holland guanans, both the looks and the smell of them being so offensive.'

The common green lizard is eaten by many African tribes; and the flesh of the gray lizard was once in great European repute for various medicinal purposes. This species was at one time so abundant in the environs of Vienna, that Laurenti tried to induce the poor of that capital to become lizard-eaters, telling them that lizard-meat, either baked or fried, was not only wholesome, but productive of appetite. His philanthropic endeavour failed, perhaps because the hungry Viennese wanted something to allay rather than increase their appetites.

Marco Polo tells us that the hunters of Carazan

obtained a very high price for the serpents they happened to kill, the people of Cathay counting serpent-meat as the most delicate of food. Brazilians eat a green and yellow snake called the *haninana*; Bushmen and Bakalahari relish the African python; negroes can make a hearty meal on rattlesnake; and the anacondas and other boas supply the natives of the countries favoured by their presence with wholesome and nourishing food. The lazy folks of King George's Sound reverse Mrs Glasse's maxim, and cook their snakes before they catch them, by setting fire to the grass around their encampments, picking up the broiled reptiles from the ashes at their leisure. The adder is considered savoury meat by the Sardinians, and forms a welcome ingredient in their broths and soups; nor are the Sardinians alone in their taste, for the adder is eaten, as a matter of course, in many of the provinces of France.

The doctors of old had great faith in the virtue of frog's flesh, as at once restorative, diluent, ana-leptic, and antiscorbutic, and invaluable in cases of consumption and affections of the chest. Pliny says frogs boiled in vinegar are an excellent remedy for the toothache. Dioscorides recommended them to be cooked in salt and oil as an antidote to serpent-poison; and another ancient physician cured a fistula, or said he did, by administering a frog's heart every morning as a pill. Thanks to our caricaturists and song-writers, frog-eating and France are indissolubly connected together, as if none but our gallant neighbours indulged in batrachian dainties, while, in truth, they only share the propensity with Belgians, Germans, and Italians. Andrew Borde, recording the manners and customs of European nations in the time of Henry VIII., mentions with disgust that the people of Lombardy eat frogs, 'guts and all,' while he says nothing about the French doing the like. In fact, it was not till the middle of the sixteenth century that the frog obtained a place at continental dinner-tables. Even now, French epicures confine themselves to dishes composed of the hind-quarters of the little reptile, dressed in wine, or served with white sauce; but the Germans, less wasteful, make use of every part except the skin and intestines. The particular species in favour for culinary purposes is that known as the *Rana esculenta*, or green frog, although the red frog, more familiar to English eyes, is eaten in some places, and thought in no way inferior to his more popular relative. The frog is in the best condition for the table in autumn, just when he takes to the water for the winter, but is most eaten in spring, from the simple reason that he is easier caught at that season. He is captured in several ways: sometimes by means of lines baited with scarlet-cloth, sometimes a net is used, sometimes a rake, or he is pursued at night with torches. A hundred years ago, a shrewd native of Auvergne made a fortune by forming a frog-preserve, from which he supplied the capital. Similar nurseries help to satisfy the modern demand for this peculiar luxury, but that demand is gradually decreasing, although, at certain times of the year, plenty of frogs may be seen in both French and Italian markets.

Dr Livingstone speaks eulogistically of a large African frog called the *matlametlo*, of which his children partook with eagerness and delight. This monster frog measures nearly half a foot, with a breadth of four and a half inches, and when cooked, looks very much like a chicken. After a thunder-

shower, the pools, even in the driest parts of the African desert, are alive with *matlametloes*; and the natives, not unnaturally, believe that they are born of the thunder-cloud, and descend to earth with the rain. During the season of drought, the *matlametlo* takes up his abode in a hole of his own making at the root of certain bushes, and as he seldom emerges from his retreat, a large variety of spider spins his web across the orifice, and provides the tenant gratuitously with a screen; but the gift often proves a fatal one, serving to guide the hungry Bushman to the reptile's hiding-place. The *matlametlo* would make a worthy companion-dish to the bull-frog, which is considered equal to fowl in the Antilles.

Among the various temptations to extravagance exhibited in the Siamese market-places, nothing astonished Turpin more than a number of hideous ball-shaped toads, spitted ready for the cook. Judging from the abundant supply, there would seem to be a general demand for the *houhan*—a name given to this edible toad in imitation of its cry, which is so loud that two of them are sufficient 'to disturb a whole country.' The common toad is habitually eaten by Africans, to whom nothing comes amiss in the shape of food, and there is small doubt that it is often substituted for the frog in countries where frog-eating prevails.

The green sea-turtle is the only reptile that ever finds its way to an Englishman's table, and although the stout bucaners, who made every sea familiar with Old England's flag, had long before borne witness to its merits, the turtle, a hundred years ago, was still a rarity here; at least, we may fairly infer so from the *Gentleman's Magazine* of 1753 thinking the arrival of a turtle sent by Lord Anson to the gentlemen of White's Chocolate House an event worthy of record. There are several species of sea-turtle, but the green turtle is at once the commonest and best. The London market receives its chief supply from Jamaica; but Ascension Island, the Antilles, and the Alligator Islands are the favourite resorts of these much-prized reptiles, who travel hundreds of miles in order to deposit their eggs, shoals of them arriving at those favoured places regularly every year between April and September. From long practice, the people of the Bahamas are adepts at turtle-catching, and Catesby gives us a very amusing account of the way they go to work. 'In April, they go in little boats to Cuba and other neighbouring islands, where, in the evening, and especially in moonlight nights, they watch the going and returning of the turtles to and from their nests, at which time they turn them on their backs, where they leave them, and proceed on, turning all they meet, for they cannot get on their feet again when once turned. Some are so large that it requires three men to turn one of them. The way by which the turtle are most commonly taken is by striking them with a small iron peg of two inches long, put in a socket at the end of a staff twelve feet long. Two men usually set out for this work in a little light boat or canoe, one to row and gently steer the boat, while the other stands at the head of it with his striker. The turtle are sometimes discovered by their swimming with their head and back out of the water, but are oftentimes discovered lying at the bottom, a fathom or more deep. If a turtle perceives he is discovered, he starts up to make his escape; the men in the boat pursuing him, endeavouring to keep sight of him, which they often

lose, and recover again by the turtle putting his nose out of the water to breathe.' Tired out, the turtle at length sinks, to fall a victim to the striker, and be hauled into the boat. Sometimes they are taken by divers, who bring them up from the bottom by main force.

Turtles' eggs figure among the exports of Sarawak. The Malays watch the turtles at work depositing their eggs on the broad sandy flats in Sarawak Bay, and mark the places with little flags. In Siam, the eggs are in equal favour, and one variety of river-turtle is reserved for the royal service, the rivers being carefully watched at night by soldiers, who brand the turtles with the royal mark as fast as they can catch them, and send the eggs to the king's palace. One of the great turtles of the Amazon is a fair load for a strong Indian; and so abundant were they in Brazil when Condamine visited that country in 1740, that he says they sufficed for the sustenance of the people. They are still plentiful. During his two years' stay at Ega, Mr Bates became so surfeited with turtle, that the very smell of it became intolerable to him, and he turned in disgust from the cloying food, although he had nothing else wherewith to appease his hunger. Every house at Ega has its curral or turtle-pond, which is stocked for the winter, when the waters of the Amazon are low.

The Brazilians have several ways of cooking turtle. Steaks cut from the breast and roasted, make an excellent dish; the lean parts are roasted on spits, and sausages are made of the stomach, while the entrails serve as the basis of soup. The most usual method of preparation, however, is the simple one of boiling the turtle in his own shell, or in kettles full of the juice of the mandioca root. Newly-hatched turtles, with the remains of the yolk still inside them, are reckoned especially delicious, and numbers of immature turtles are sacrificed to this taste, while an immense quantity of eggs are annually destroyed for the manufacture of oil. Thanks to this extravagance, and the increase of communication with Europe, turtle has risen wonderfully in price, nine shillings being the market-value now of turtle that in 1850 could have been bought for exactly as many pence.

Next in quality to the green turtle comes the hawkbill or imbricated turtle, which supplies the world with tortoise-shell; then the logger-head; and lastly, the trunk-turtle, of which the flesh and shell are so soft that the finger may easily be pushed into them. When Dampier visited the Galapagos Islands, he was struck by the abundant supply of what he calls land-turtles, of monstrous size; and Lacaille, the astronomer, was astonished, many years afterwards, by seeing the coast apparently paved with shell—which shell proved, on examination, to belong to troops of living tortoises of great size and weight, probably of the species known as the Indian tortoise. The Greek tortoise is eaten in Southern Europe, the Greeks themselves drinking its blood, cooking its eggs, and satisfying their Lenten appetites with its flesh, which, for the time being, is allowed to reckon as fish. The speckled tortoise makes its appearance in German markets, for which the Prussian peasants fatten it on bread and lettuce-leaves; and the mud tortoise, or *La Bourbeuse*, is thought to make a very nice dish in Provence and Languedoc, not the least of its merits being

TWILIGHT.

THE last bright wave of day hath ebb'd
From off the western strand,
And now, with balmyest repose,
Blessing the darkened land,
Twilight and Peace from heaven descend
Together hand in hand.

The reaper's long day's work is done
Among the glowing grain;
The chestnut boughs have swept the sides
Of the last loaded wain;
Only the cricket's shrill voice sings
Along the leafy lane.

A soft obscurity lies round
Meadow, and road, and stream;
Under entangled blue-bell stems,
Moveth the glow-worm's beam;
And white across the dusky path,
The dog-rose petals gleam.

Anon the great dor-beetle snails,
With musical deep boom,
From where the hornbeam branches make
A cool and odorous gloom,
Into the jasmine's pendent mass
Of silvery star-bloom.

All silently the cerous buds
Their gentle eyes unclose;
No whisper stirs the lightest leaf
Of the old yellow rose,
That round the mossy garden-wall
Long scented garlands throws.

Flowers grassy-couch'd in wood and dell
Know that the night is nigh,
For the first fairy bells of dew
Have rung their lullaby;
Faintly from out the distant brake
I hear the fern-owl cry;

And aromatic breathings come
From the far thymy lea,
Bringing the sweet and memories
Of summer eves to me,
That, in the freshness of their joy,
Ah, never more shall be!

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UNDER THE BLACK AND YELLOW.

IN TWO PARTS.—PART I.

WE were posting up Italy, after a winter spent at Rome. Summer had set in somewhat earlier than usual, and the weather was sultry in all but the mountain districts; indeed, the heat had already driven away most of the English sojourners in the land, and it was owing to a whim of my pupil's that we had lingered to the last. Robert Hawthorne was in every sense a fine young fellow—generous, brave, and frank; but he was terribly impulsive and headstrong, and I, Philip Simpson, M.A., had no trifling responsibility in filling the office of his travelling-tutor.

Old Mr Hawthorne had enjoined me not to draw the curb too tight, to humour the young man instead of thwarting him, and to gain his goodwill if I could—remarking, with perfect truth, that his grandson was 'more easy to lead than to drive.' There was money enough and to spare, for Robert was sole heir and favourite with the old squire, who was rich, so that my pupil's allowance was, if anything, rather too liberal, while my own salary was higher than I had a right to expect. Still, a travelling-tutor's life is not always to be envied. With Robert Hawthorne, to be sure, I was exempt from the vexations to which many in the same position are exposed. My charge was uniformly kind and courteous, which, as I had opportunities of seeing, some of the wilder youths in Rome that winter were not in the habit of being with reference to their 'bear-leaders.' But I carried about a load of care of which my pupil knew nothing. Robert had good abilities and a noble disposition, but there was a dash of recklessness in his nature; he was hardly to be restrained from following any idle fancy that might cross his mind; and he was hasty in his likes and dislikes, his hatred and his love.

With such a character as his, everything depended on his falling into good hands, and passing the plastic time of youth among associations likely to develop the native worth of his heart; while there was no small risk that he would go utterly astray,

if his company were evil. And I had some doubts as to whether I, Philip Simpson, were fit for my post. My own knowledge of the world was perforce of a restricted kind. An 'exhibitioner' at school, and the winner of a small scholarship at Oxford, I had left the university with a head well stored with Latin and Greek, but with a very limited experience of the ways of the broad outer life that lay beyond college walls. A few months spent in the quiet country parish, where I read for orders, a few more months as temporary curate of a suburban district, and the better part of a year devoted to the tuition and guardianship of Robert Hawthorne, made up my uneventful history.

I do not think I should have accepted the difficult duty I had undertaken, in spite of the emoluments attached to it, but for dear Jane's sake. Jane was the younger daughter of the old clergyman—as poor a vicar as any in Wiltshire—with whom I had read, and in whose parish I had earned my 'title' by doing a curate's work without pay, and we two were engaged to be married. But when? A benefice was a necessary preliminary to the union of two penniless young persons like ourselves, and when Mr Hawthorne offered me the post of tutor to the heir of Hawthorne Hall, it had been by the advice of Jane's father that I had accepted the office. The old squire, as the vicar shrewdly remarked, was patron of three livings, and it must be my own fault if I did not some day come in for the reversion of one of them. Thus it fell out that Robert and I were rattling along the dusty Italian roads in the second week in June. We travelled in a carriage which Robert had purchased for about twenty-eight pounds, the autumn before, in Turin—a clattering, jingling thing, but of great powers of endurance. In it we had travelled up and down the peninsula, from Piedmont to Naples, and it had stood the bumps and shocks of many a rugged mountain-road among the Apennines. Young Hawthorne had an abhorrence of *vetturini* and their customs, and could not endure to 'sell himself,' as he said—bargaining beforehand for transport, food, and lodging, as

more economical voyagers were apt to do. He could not endure to be tied down to a certain route, fixed hours of departure, and certain halting-places, and was averse to any arrangement which curtailed his freedom of action; and so we travelled post, in spite of my remonstrances on the score of expense. One compromise we had, we retained no courier in our employ, and the duty of paying postilions and ordering relays fell to my share for the most part. Very fortunately, as it afterwards turned out, I had a natural talent for the acquirement of foreign tongues, and during the winter spent at Rome, I had not been too proud to take regular lessons in French and Italian, in both of which languages I was now able to converse with tolerable fluency.

'Ah, brigand, swindler, thief on four legs, presto, get along with you, avanti, unsainted brutes, horses of the Evil One, whoop, scherzo, push along!' yelled the wild mountain-born drivers, as soon as we were clear of the enbattled gate of Modena, where the white-coated Austrian soldiery clustered as thick as bees, and where we had been detained on all manner of trivial pretexts, connected with our passports, for nearly two hours. And with a mighty cracking of whips, and rocking and swaying of the carriage, we went at furious speed along the broad road, raising clouds of hot white dust, and scattering the lazy herds of slowly-marching buffaloes to the left and right. This disorderly haste, as if by a mad rush we could hope to catch up the time which the vexatious police had caused us to fritter away at the gate, set me speculating on the probable result to springs and axles; but Robert laughed and enjoyed it highly, animating the postilions by a British view-halloo as we flew along. We were jolted and jerked hither and thither for a few minutes, and then the random gallop relaxed into a moderate trot, and I drew my breath more freely.

It was fearfully hot; and as we got further and further from the steep Modena mountains, and deeper into the flat Lombard plains, the little breeze there was died away, and left us gasping in the still dead air, laden with dust, through which the afternoon sun glowed red and dim over the irrigated lands. No more welcome shade from the leafy chestnut-trees, but endless flats of maize and rice, wheat, and pollard vines, the bull-frogs croaking a hoarse answer to the shrill cicadas, on the low trees and shrubs beside the canals; black vicious-eyed buffaloes toiling at the water-wheels, and the straight endless Æmilian Road running towards the north.

At the distance of a single stage from Parma, some little delay occurred. The horses—Robert would travel with four horses, though the carriage was light, and the luggage not over-weighty—were put to; the postilions, who had put on their gayest jackets, heavy with red worsted tags and fringe, in honour of the English milords, were in the saddle; and we had been bowed out of the yard by the obsequious postmaster, when some part of the harness gave way, and with many imprecations, the younger postboy dismounted to rectify the mishap.

Just then, with ringing of bells and heavy whip-cracking, a carriage thundered up, and we heard the call for fresh horses answered by a declaration that none were to be had. The deputy-postmaster was polite, but could do nothing; while the new arrival—an Italian gentleman with white hair, and

an intelligent face—vainly remonstrated. It was of great consequence to him, he said, to reach Milan without delay. The postmaster shrugged his shoulders: 'A thousand excuses, signor; it is impossible. All the teams are out. The illustrious Inglesi yonder have got the last; I could not give so much as a single hoof more to any traveller, were the Holy Father himself to need such accommodation.'

The old man-servant who accompanied the newcomer—who, by the way, had arrived in a hired *post-calessa*, and not in a carriage of his own—now lifted up his hands and eyes, taking all the saints to witness that Borgo di Volto was a den of thieves, and his master and himself the most luckless of men. 'But ah! noble sir, was it not your own fault?' he exclaimed in tones of affectionate reproach, curious to my English ears. 'Would you not depart on Friday, and the thirteenth of the month? and did not the Cavaliere Luigi Bianchi, the most famous *jettatore* in Naples, wish you a good journey as we drove away from the city? Be sure that man has cast the evil eye upon'—

'Pshaw! such follies are only fit for children,' the master answered reprovingly. 'The essential is, that I am detained from my poor friend's bedside, while death is hovering over him. Go and see if you can hire horses, mules, anything, to reach Parma before sunset.'

By this time our harness was mended, and our postilions were cracking their long-lashed whips, but Robert's voice called to them to stop so abruptly that the horses were flung upon their haunches.

'Stop, stop! Here you, Beppo, Toni, what's your name? Open the door—so; I'll give him a lift.'

And approaching the stranger, my pupil lifted his hat, declaring that it would give him infinite pleasure if he could be useful in any way; adding, that there was plenty of room inside our carriage, and that we were bound for Milan. After many compliments had passed, chiefly paid by the Italian, for Robert's command of the language was far from great, the stranger accepted the offer. His light luggage was strapped on the roof, his old servant mounted the box, and he took his place inside, after which we started. We found our new acquaintance agreeable enough, a well-read, sensible gentleman, who spoke of England and British liberties with warm sympathy and respect. He was a landed proprietor from Lombardy, had lately been in Naples, on a visit to some relatives belonging to the southern branch of the family, and was now hurrying up to Milan to the bedside of a dying friend. He kept us company as far as Milan itself, and there we parted with expressions of mutual regard.

'I do not know, gentlemen, whether we shall ever meet again, however much I may wish to renew an intimacy so flattering and agreeable to myself,' were the old gentleman's last words; 'but should you visit Brescia, any one will shew you where I reside—a league off it; and it would be indeed gratifying to me to receive such guests under my roof, while I would try to make the Italian *villeggiatura* bearable to you, and my children would most gladly welcome you.'

He then begged us to 'conserve his card,' paid his parting salutations, and followed Giacomo and the baggage out of the gateway of the huge *Ville de Milan Hôtel*, where the above conversation had occurred.

We never thought to see him again, and yet we felt sure that the invitation was no empty compliment, but was honestly meant to be accepted; and had we intended to explore that part of the province, we should have been glad of the chance of seeing, what so few Englishmen ever see, the domestic life of a well-to-do Italian family.

On the card was the name of the Marchese G. dei Frescobaldi. 'So, the old gentleman is a marquis, is he?' said Robert laughing. 'Wonderful thick volumes the Italian peerages must be, if civilisation has gone so far in these regions as to produce a Debrett. However, he's a good old boy, and we'll drink his health after dinner, Mr Simpson.'

So we did, and forgot him. The next fortnight was spent on the borders of the Lake of Como, sketching crags and lateen-rigged boats, lemon groves, and brown-complexioned fishermen in red caps and chocolate-coloured jackets. When I speak of sketching as an employment, I allude only to Robert's occupation. I was no draughtsman, whereas my pupil had no slight talents as an artist, coupled with a violent but desultory passion for beauty of form and tint. At Rome, he had formed numerous acquaintances in the art-colony of bearded and long-haired students, and was constantly to be found in galleries and studios, surrounded by the oddest and simplest of the unshorn enthusiasts, English and German, that the place contained, raving about colours and curves, statues and paintings, in a way that I confess myself unable to understand. He was always in raptures about something: here a bit of Roman ruin, there a triptich of the thirteenth century; elsewhere a rugged pinnacle of black basalt or splintered rock, specked by wild-flowers, and festooned with clinging vine-leaves.

Thus we made constant expeditions about Como and its environs, until Robert was tempted by the glowing description which a wandering tourist gave him of the Lake of Garda, whither we went next; and, on a bright hot July day, found ourselves in the town of Brescia.

'Is that all you have to shew us? No better paintings than those?' asked my pupil of the droning cicerone, who had piloted our course from church to church, and from convent to town-hall, making the most of the few lions of Brescia.

'*Scusi caro*,' replied the man with a shrug, and a deprecatory bow; 'we are poor. We have often been robbed. Brescia has been frequently pillaged by the savage Germans and greedy Switzers. Our pictures have suffered like our city.'

'Then there is really nothing more worth seeing?' asked Robert as he dropped a scudo into the man's ready hand.

'Ah, yes, there was,' the cicerone said, bowing low in acknowledgment of his fee; 'there were some beautiful grand old pictures at a villa half an hour's drive from the north gate of the *citta*; pictures that any dealer would cover with gold, could he purchase them—ah, and bless his kind saints that had given him such a bargain! Pictures indeed! Pictures by Titian, by Michael Angelo, by Raphael, by Virgil. What do I know!' Here the guide crossed himself at the name of the Mantuan enchanter. 'Only the *illustrissimo* to whom they belong does not like to admit strangers to his mansion.'

'He must be a rich man to keep so much capital locked up in the form of painted canvas, if the

paintings be as valuable as you lead us to suppose,' said I inquiringly.

Another shrug and bow.

'Noble excellencies! we poor Italians love our art. It is all we have left. We prize that little. The proprietor of the pictures of which I have permitted myself to speak, is not wealthy; but he values these paintings, which have been in his family for centuries, more than lands and money. By Bacchus! they say the rich Cardinal Fuaribuoni offered immense sums for one of the worst of the Titians, to the present Frescobaldi.'

'Frescobaldi! not the Marchese Giulio dei Frescobaldi?' cried we with one accord. And the cicerone assured us that the precious pictures were in very truth the property of our late travelling-companion. Thus it fell out that we, who had completely forgotten the marchese and his invitation, found ourselves, before another sun had set, absolutely domesticated beneath the old Italian gentleman's hospitable roof. On our presenting ourselves at the villa, the former invitation was so heartily renewed that we could not easily have rejected it, even had Robert been less desirous to see and copy the treasured paintings, which proved fairly worthy of the high-flown praise which the cicerone had bestowed upon them.

The villa was a large building, of a dull pink colour, as to the outside, painted over with gaudy frescoes, which were sorely dimmed by time. It had a flat roof, with a heavy marble balustrade, and on a terrace before it stood a triple row of costly marble statues, mingled with rose-trees and other flowering shrubs. A battlemented wall of gray stone, broken and weed-grown, surrounded the stables, the offices, and a large court-yard; and there was a great garden, now tangled and overgrown, orange-trees, flowers, and weeds, canes and pot-herbs, confusedly mingled. Most of the fountains were mossy and broken, and had ceased to play; but one little humble *jet d'eau* sent up its silvery shoot of water into the summer air from the midst of an actual thicket of rose-trees run wild. Everything told of decay.

Within, there were many signs of ancient splendour, but few of present comfort. Many stately rooms, the dim gilding of whose cornices gave proof of bygone luxury, were unfurnished, and only strewn with dusty heaps of lumber, about which spiders spun their broad webs in perfect security.

Still, there was no lack of more habitable chambers. The few servants of the impoverished family waited on us with an intelligent kindness that was new to our experience, and the welcome we met with would have made up for worse quarters. The family consisted of the old marchese, his two sons, and his daughter. The marchese was a widower, and it happened that when we became his guests, his sons were absent on a short visit to Milan. A beautiful dark-eyed girl, with an unusually thoughtful face, and a mind better stored than is common among Italian ladies, was Assunta Frescobaldi. It once or twice occurred to me that perhaps I had acted unwisely in exposing my pupil to the risk of a hopeless attachment in that quarter. I knew Mr Hawthorne's prejudices too well not to feel assured that he would never consent to acknowledge a foreigner—no matter how good or fair—as his grandson's wife, and the future mistress of Hawthorne Hall, and I began to fear that I had been imprudent in accepting the marchese's invitation.

To my great joy, however, Robert did not appear to be as much fascinated by Assunta's beauty as I had expected. Perhaps his mania for art, for it was a mania, preserved him fancy free, and the hours he spent in the well-stocked picture-gallery, now copying, now gazing with an admiration which never wearied on the gems treasured there, prevented the contingency I dreaded. I began to feel quite at ease, and to enjoy the novelty of everything around me.

It must not be supposed that I was a mere drone, negligent of my duties as Robert's tutor. On the contrary, I made a point of keeping my charge to a certain routine of daily study, and honestly did my best to prepare him for what, in his case, was to be a late entry at the university. But I had hard work with him. He had wonderful quickness in learning, and would sometimes get through the allotted task with breathless rapidity, leaving me lost in wonder at the species of intellectual jugglery by which he had attained a result so apparently satisfactory. At another time, I could not get him to open a book. All my persuasions failed, and even the threat of writing to his grandfather fell perfectly flat. He would laugh good-humouredly—his temper, like his health, being excellent—and merely tell me that I was quite in the right, but that he was in an idle mood for the time being, or more disposed to paint or lounge, than delve among Greek roots, and that 'the governor' knew but too well already what a graceless scamp his grandson was. On the fourth day, the two sons, Antonio and Luigi, one bearing the title of count, the other and younger being styled the Cavaliere dei Frescobaldi, came home. They were both fine specimens of the Lombard stock, but of different types. Antonio, tall, dark, and slender, with a pale forehead and a slight stoop, was a thorough scholar; while Luigi, who had the auburn hair and blue eyes occasionally seen in old Italian portraits, had all the fire and frankness of the soldier. He had, indeed, served with distinction the year before in the Piedmontese army, and had only resigned his sword when his regiment was disbanded, after the fatal battle of Novara.

A great intimacy now arose between these young men and my pupil, since there was much on both sides that was brilliant and attractive, and it was not often that the dull country-house had so gay and dashing a guest beneath its roof as Robert Hawthorne, who had very winning manners, and who delighted the impulsive Italians by the deep and sincere love for art which he possessed in common with themselves. One more bond of union, stronger yet, there was, and that was Robert's sympathy—natural to an English free-man—with suffering Italy.

Our entertainers were, heart and soul, members of the great liberal party, if party be a fit name to bestow on the immense majority of a nation pining for national life. The old marchese was well known as one of those Lombard nobles whose dogged patriotism had proved too much alike for priestly persuasion or imperial cajolery, while the sons had done good service, in the field and the study, with sword and pen, for the sacred cause of their chained and bleeding fatherland.

Speaking now, after the event, and looking back upon the past with a light which nothing but experience can give, I own that I was wrong to feel the security which I did as to the probable results of my pupil's intimacy with the family whose

guests we were. But as it was, once convinced that Robert was not likely to fall in love with Assunta Frescobaldi, I felt no apprehensions as to any other contingency. I was soon to be undeceived.

One night found me restless and feverish, and unable to rest. Everything vexed my ear—the distant barking of a village cur; the splash of the fountain among the roses beneath my window; the sullen croak of the bull-frogs in the marsh, audible to a great distance through the hushed air; even the menacing hum of the mosquito, that hovered around my close-drawn curtains of transparent web: all these things chafed me in my present mood. I read for a while, then extinguished my candle and tried to sleep, but was at last compelled to give up all hopes of repose. So I went to the window, opened it, and stood looking out over the garden, dim in the pale starlight.

What was that? a step? Yes, the distinct tread of a human foot, not walking freely, but with cautious action; and presently appeared a figure nuffled in a cloak, and with a broad hat, such as the peasants wore, slouched over the eyes. Still, I felt convinced that the intruder was no peasant; his tread and gait were those of a proud man compelled to put an unwelcome restraint upon himself. He halted under the boughs of an orange-tree, where the gold green fruit hung in thick clusters over his head, and gave a short shrill whistle, which was speedily answered. Then two other men, also in dark mantles and slouched hats, appeared, moving from the house towards the first-comer, and the three met and talked earnestly, and with much of the gesticulation inseparable from an Italian conversation, but in guarded tones. I had no wish to play the eavesdropper, and I quitted the window. When I returned to it, the colloquy was over, and the party breaking up. The man I had first seen vanished among the fruit-trees, the others turned towards the house. In the dusk, one of them stumbled over the root of a tree, and uttered an impatient exclamation, by which I recognised Luigi, the cavalieri, the younger of the two brothers. The next moment, both had disappeared. Five minutes afterwards, a low rustling sound caught my ear. I looked, and lo! from a thicket of fragrant shrubs was warily protruded a human head, the eyes belonging to which took a heedful survey of the garden. Satisfied that the coast was clear, the concealed person came stealthily crawling out, and with frequent pauses. He stood for a moment on the lawn, and I had time to see that he was a short, bull-necked man, with very wide shoulders and bowed legs, who forcibly reminded me of a certain Giuseppe, one of the house-servants. He was silent and watchful for a moment, then gave a chuckle of ignoble joy, and rubbed his large hands together.

'Per Ercole, a good night's work.'

That was all he said, and he vanished as soon as the words were spoken; but for some instants the snapping of dry twigs told of the course he was pursuing.

'Well,' said I, as I returned to my bed, 'this is a queer imbroglio of an affair. If Messrs Antonio and Luigi choose to have mysterious midnight interviews with strangers, that is no business of mine; but if that fellow were really Giuseppe, he was evidently playing the spy on their proceedings, and by his tone and manner, I suspect, meant no good. I'll give the young men a hint in the

morning; and if any conspiracies are afloat, our visit had better come to a close.'

I fell asleep soon after this. When morning came, it happened that I could find no chance of speaking to the young men upon the subject of my nocturnal observations. I had no wish to spread alarms which might prove unfounded, and I waited, but waited in vain, for an opportunity of hinting to Antonio or his soldier-brother, that their conversation had been overheard by unfriendly ears.

After all, my information did not seem important enough to merit the name of a warning, and, for anything I knew, the conference might have referred to matters of no dangerous import. I yielded, therefore, to the force of circumstances, and resolved to put off my revelations until I should return from my wonted 'constitutional.' To that constitutional, my constant habit since the days when, as a raw freshman, I rambled about the outskirts of Oxford, I clung with true British pertinacity. In vain did the marchese talk of sunstroke and fever; in vain did Luigi laughingly quote the Neapolitan proverb which declares that nobody goes out in the noonday heat save mad dog and Englishman. I was not to be cheated out of my stroll. Accordingly I took my umbrella as a precaution against sun, not rain, and went forth at the usual hour. When I came back, from the brow of a little eminence where the myrtle-bushes and wild figs formed a thicket whose shade was grateful on so sultry a day, my eyes suddenly caught the gleam of steel—an unaccustomed sight among those peaceful vineyards and orange-groves. I looked again. Yes! along the high-road, half a mile away, slowly moved, through a cloud of dust, the glancing points of many bayonets. As yet a stone-wall hid the soldiers, but they soon emerged, a small column of the white-uniformed Austrians, escorting two carts, on which were bound several dark-clad figures, that I easily guessed to be those of prisoners—some poor Italians, no doubt, in trouble for smuggling or desertion. I went on, but some impulse often made me turn my head to watch the glitter of arms and the hot haze of dust, wending slowly but surely along towards the town of Brescia.

I pushed open the garden-gate, and wound my way under the arched boughs of the loaded orange-trees. The sunbeams fell through the interlaced branches in broken fragments, and gave a richer glow to the ripening globes overhead. I could have fancied myself Aladdin in the magic garden, among the jewelled fruit. My feet made little or no sound upon the matted weeds that carpeted the path.

'What is that?—A soldier here?'

A soldier it was—an Austrian sentinel. I saw his white coat and shouldered musket through the green leaves, as he paced to and fro before the door, humming some scrap of a wild Croatian air as his regular tread sounded on the marble. I came to a dead stop directly. The presence of such a porter at my host's door boded no good to those within. True, I had transgressed no law, was in no way amenable to punishment for any political offence, and yet I hesitated to advance. In a despotic country, men soon learn to look with mistrust upon the tools of power.

What had occurred? In vain I tried to quiet my nerves. I felt that misfortune had fallen upon the house where we had been so cordially welcome.

As I stood motionless, I felt a light touch on my arm. Assunta was beside me, pale, her beautiful face stained with tears, but with courage and resolution in her bright eyes. She glided up to me like a ghost, and I winced when she touched me. 'Come,' she whispered—'come; we cannot safely speak so near that sentinel. In the grotto, we shall be beyond earshot.' Almost mechanically, I obeyed. There was an air of unreality—to an English mind, at least—about the whole affair; but for the moment I was content to be passive, and I followed my fair guide, vainly puzzling my brains as to the enigma that her words implied.

GRAPHS, GLYPHS, AND TYPOS.

ON a recent occasion, the members of the Society of Arts witnessed a curious and interesting process—the engraving of a picture during the reading of a paper on the subject. At half-past eight, a prepared block was ready, with a picture drawn on a smooth flat surface; and at nine o'clock, the same picture was in an engraved state, the surface of the block scooped away between the lines forming the design. It was pretty, it was clever; and men were at once set thinking whether it was likely to be artistically tasteful and commercially useful.

There is, in truth, an immense activity just now in devising new modes of producing prints, either to hang up in frames as decorations to rooms, or to insert among the text as illustrations for books—irrespective of the numerous productions in the forms of maps, charts, plans, sections, elevations, diagrams, patterns, devices, monograms, and so forth. In the old days, there were only a few modes of producing prints, still practised more or less. The copper-plate engraver, to take one example, scrapes and cuts away the surface of a smooth plate, in such a way that the lines which he cuts shall represent the picture; the printer inks the depressed lines, wipes away the ink from the surface or uncut portions, and takes impressions on paper by means of a press. The steel-plate engraver proceeds in like manner, except in using a harder material that will yield a greater number of impressions. The aquatint engraver, whose work is a kind of imitation of india-ink drawings, applies a resinous ground to a copper-plate, and traces his picture with a blunt point, making it form all the lines in succession; he also 'stops out' or draws certain parts of the picture with a paint or varnish; then dilute nitric acid, poured on the plate, eats away the surface of the metal in all parts which are not protected by the blunt-point markings or by the varnish. The mezzotint engraver, by means of a sort of toothed chisel, gashes a copper-plate all over with very minute and close holes; then draws his design on it, and scrapes away or burnishes down those parts of the plate which are to form the lights of his picture, the blacks being represented by the unscraped portions, and the half-tints by a partial scraping and burnishing. The etcher applies acid to a resinous or wax ground on a copper-plate, like the aquatinter; but an etching-needle is used instead of a blunt point to draw the picture, and the artistic details of the process differ in many ways. The wood-engraver, having before him a smooth block of boxwood, on which a picture has been drawn with pencil, cuts away the wood between the pencil-strokes; then, when the pencilled lines are inked (without the ink being allowed to

go into the cavities or chiselings), impressions can be taken from them. The lithographer draws his picture with a kind of soapy pencil or paint upon a smooth stone, fixes the lines by the chemical action of dilute acid, damps the stone all over, and prints from it by a press—the oily ink being unable to touch or remain upon those parts of the damp stone which are not occupied by the design.

Now, those insatiable men, the publishers, will not be satisfied with these several modes of producing prints; they want something more. The productions of the copper or steel plate engraver, the etcher, the aquatinter, the mezzotinter, and the lithographer, cannot be printed from at the ordinary press, whether hand or machine. Those of the wood-engraver can; and it is on this account that wood-engravings are so largely employed as book illustrations: seeing that a wood-block can be combined with type in the same page, and printed from in just the same way. There can also be stereotypes and electrotypes of wood-engravings taken with as much facility as those from metal types; inasmuch that none but an artist, or a person somewhat accustomed to such matters, can tell whether an impression is printed from a wood-block or from a stereotype or electrotype cast of the block. The book-printers and publishers all call out for surface-printing, where the ink touches the surface portions, and avoids the hollows; in no other way is it possible to print a large number of copies in a short space of time or at a small expense. Hence it is that most of the new competitors for public favour in these ways are methods of surface-printing.

Oh, the *graphs* and *glyphs*, the *glyptos* and *typos*, the *stereos* and *electros*, the *lithos* and *photos*—who can count them all! There is *Electrotype*, a cast from a wood-engraving, or rather from a mould of the wood-engraving. There is *Electrotint*, produced by painting and galvanising without either etching or engraving. There is *Chromo-lithography*, by several impressions in coloured inks from an equal number of lithographic stones. There is *Oil-colour printing*, diversified in many curious ways. There is *Lithotint*, in which the drawing is made on the stone with a brush dipped in liquid ink instead of with pen or pencil. There is *Litho-typography*, a mode of taking an impression from type upon a stone, and then filling up the design by the ordinary lithographic method. There is (or at least was, for we hope that such a terrible name is dead, and gone, and buried) *Paniconography*, a mode of combining the effects of many different kinds of engraving with facilities for the all-important surface-printing. There is *Stylography*, a way of obtaining electrotypes from a peculiar kind of etched plate. There is *Anastatic Printing*, which so frightened people a few years ago, as seeming to afford dangerous facilities for forgery, piracy, and all kinds of sin and wickedness. A piece of printed paper is moistened with dilute acid, and pressed on a plate of zinc; the printed part 'sets off,' as printers call it, on the zinc, while the acid eats into the zinc at the other parts; and there is thus formed an irregular surface, which can be printed from by the ordinary press, producing rather a close fac-simile of the original. There is *Photography*, concerning which everybody knows something; and arising out of this are the members of a very large family, rejoicing in the names of *Talbotype*, *Hillotype*, *Heliography*, *Calotype*, *Chrysotype*, *Chromatype*, *Amphitype*, *Cyanotype*, *Ferrottype*,

and others, likely to be known only to photographers. There is *Galvanoplastic*, in which a gutta-percha mould is obtained from any engraved surface, and an electrotype made from the mould. There is *Galvanography*, in which an artist paints a design on a plate of silvered copper, obtains an electrotype from it, and prints from this electrotype. There is *Galvanography*, in which the picture is etched on the varnished surface of a zinc-plate; a peculiar ink is applied in several layers, which adheres to all parts except the etched lines; and an electrotype is taken from the irregular surface thus produced. There is *Chemotype*, in which a design, etched on a varnished zinc-plate, is eaten in with aquafortis, and a plate for printing obtained by a peculiar method of applying a layer of molten fusible metal. There is the *Nature's Own Printing*, in which a plant, weed, fern, or any small flat natural object is rolled heavily between a copper-plate and a lead-plate; the fibres and projecting lines of the object make impressions on the lead-plate sufficiently deep to print from. There is *Autotypography*, in which the design, drawn on a sheet of gelatine, is transferred by pressure to a soft metal-plate, somewhat in the same manner as nature-printing. There is *Electro-block printing*, in which impressions are obtained from a wood-block on thin sheets of india-rubber; by the give-and-take qualities of this very elastic substance, the print can be made either larger or smaller than the original, and the device is transferred from it to stone or zinc by pressure.

The man who would learn all about these multitudinous graphs, and glyphs, and typos, would have to go through a history of failures, or rather of a lottery in which the prizes have been very few compared with the blanks. Much brain and much money have been spent in these novelties; and yet the publishers of books and illustrated periodicals hold back from adopting them, except to a very limited extent indeed. Twenty years ago, there were bright hopes entertained of Mr Palmer's *Glyphography*. One particular number of the *Mirror*, a weekly periodical which did its good work at a time when such publications were scarce, contained a full account of the process, illustrated by eight sketches engraved in the manner to which the above Greek name was applied. In the first place, a plate of copper was prepared, such as is usually employed by a copper-plate engraver. One surface of this was stained black. On the stained plate was applied a thin smooth uniform layer of white composition, very similar in appearance and consistency to wax. This was the prepared ground, on which the artist was to work. He traced his design on the white surface to any degree of minuteness that he thought necessary; and then proceeded to etch or engrave. He selected his cutting-tool—a mere needle-point, an etching-needle, a minute chisel or gouge, a bevelled edge at an angle of forty-five degrees, a pentagonal point—any or all of these, as seemed best. With these small instruments, he cut through the white composition in the lines of the device, until the metal was laid bare: the blackened surface of the metal presenting a contrast that guided the eye. There was thus produced an engraved plate or block, with the lines of the design in *intaglio*, and the interspaces in *relievo*, the former shewing on the blackened metal, and the latter on the white composition. It would not have sufficed to obtain an electrotype or

a stereotype from the plate in this state, because the relief was not high enough; but Mr Palmer had a method of heightening or increasing the relief, by employing some chemical liquid which had a peculiar relation to the white composition. The plate thus heightened served as a matrix for an electrolyte, which, of course, had all the projections and depressions reversed; and this electrolyte was in the proper form for printing, with or without type, at the ordinary press or machine. The results were pretty, and we do not know why the method did not work out the revolution which the inventor fondly hoped.

It remains to be seen whether the new *Graphotype* will be commercially more successful than the *glyphograph* and other members of this ingenious but somewhat unfortunate family. Wood-cuts are still the pictorial pabulum of the illustrated newspapers and periodicals, and of nineteen-twentieths—perhaps ninety-nine hundredths—of the illustrated books. The printing may be done from the block itself, or from a stereotype or an electrolyte obtained from it; but in either case, the block is fairly and honestly engraved by a wood-engraver, cleverly or clumsily, as the case may be; he cuts away with sharp tools the wood between the lines which the artist has drawn on the boxwood surface. Now, it is to do away with this cutting or engraving process, more or less completely, that the *graphotype* has been devised. The process is unquestionably a remarkable and ingenious one. It really staggers an observer to see a small hard dry brush used as a substitute for the delicate cutting-tools of the wood-engraver. The brusher need not be an engraver; and he does his work in a very much shorter time than the wood-engraver requires for cutting his block. If he does not brush away all the poetry of the artistic draughtsman, so much the better for the process.

How it all came about is this: Mr De Witt Clinton Hitchcock, a draughtsman and wood-engraver, while making a drawing on boxwood, found it necessary to alter a portion of his design by erasing it, and re-whitening the exposed surface of the wood. The white for this purpose was obtained from an enamelled visiting-card, by means of a wet brush. The card had been printed from an engraved copper-plate; and after the enamel had been removed, it was observed that the ink lines remained just as distinct as before; they had not been disturbed, and now stood up in bold relief. The appearance of the card suggested a new mode of producing a relief printing-plate, by simply brushing away the portions of surface between the lines of the design. Mr Hitchcock proceeded to test this notion by experiment. First of all, he obtained that very homely and school-boy commodity, a 'lump of chalk,' and cut from it, by means of a saw, a block or slab about an inch thick. When this had been brought to a smooth surface by scraping, he drew a design upon it with a quill pen dipped in an ink formed of liquid glass (silicate of potash), coloured with indigo. Then he took a tooth-brush, and rubbed down a little of the chalk in all the minute white spaces between the lines of the device; these lines, being hardened into a sort of marble by the chemical action of the silicate, remained unaffected by the brushing. The experimenter was delighted to find that he had really got a picture in relief. But then, how to print from such a block? Chalk being too soft to bear the pressure of the usual kinds of printing apparatus,

Mr Hitchcock saturated the whole block with liquid glass, and in half an hour it was hard enough to yield impressions on paper by the process known to printers as burnishing. We are told that this, the veritable first experiment in the matter, was all completed in four hours, including the seven processes of sawing the chalk, surfacing it, making the ink, drawing the design, brushing it into relief, petrifying the block, and taking an impression on paper. This first attempt having turned out well, the inventor sought for a substance finer and more uniform in quality of grain than common chalk. He procured French-white (used by unwise ladies as a cosmetic), pulverised and finely sifted it, and formed it into blocks about a foot square by an inch in thickness, by means of a powerful hydraulic press. The texture of these blocks was found to be beautifully equable and regular. They were hardened and condensed by exposure to a heat of 700° F., which expelled all the moisture. When a drawing had been made upon such a block with the liquid glass, the interstices were brushed away to a depth sufficient for all ordinary printing; and upon being afterwards petrified by saturation, it yielded several impressions by the ordinary hand printing-press. So far the second experiment turned out well. Then came the third question—how to render the block hard enough to bear the printing-machine, and to yield the thousands or tens of thousands of impressions which could alone make the venture a commercially profitable one? This, Mr Hitchcock decided, could not be done with the block itself, but might be done from an electrolyte or a stereotype obtained from it. After many trials, he arrived at the conclusion that stereotype would be rather the better of the two, as enabling the artist to put in a few finishing-touches here and there. All this, however, took many months of labour and invention, and involved many discouragements.

Such were the birth, parentage, and education of the new art of *graphotype*, or printing from a drawing. Of the respective parts which Mr Hitchcock and Mr Fitzcook have taken in the matter, of the patent and specification, of the trade arrangements and so forth, we need not here speak. In fact, many brains have aided: Mr Day has improved the silica-ink, to prevent it from spreading; and Mr Roper has improved some of the working details. In the form ultimately adopted, the finely-pounded French-chalk is sifted upon a well-prepared zinc-plate of the size of the intended picture. When sufficient in quantity, the white is covered by a highly-polished steel-plate, and compressed, by the enormous force of a hundred and twenty tons, into a thin layer upon the zinc, the thickness of the two together being about equal to that of an ordinary stereotype-plate. The surface is made smooth and glossy by the pressure of the steel-plate, and is sized before the drawing is made. The ink is a varnish of glue and lamp-black, and is applied with a fine camel or sable-hair pencil. As this ink dries almost instantly, the brushing may begin at once; the wider and deeper interstices being brushed out with a small fitch-hair brush, and the finer with a piece of silk velvet, padded as a flat cushion, and attached to a disk of wood as a handle. The same liquid glass is used for petrifying the block, or converting it into a kind of marble, as was tried in the earlier experiments.

It was certainly curious to see, at the Society of

Arts, a block engraved by such means. A picture was finished in the room, on a prepared block; it was brushed into the state of an engraved block in less than half an hour, with all the minute details of the design beautifully brought out. The stereotyping from this block, and the printing from the stereotypes, were after-processes. The saving of time is in *making the engraving*, which occupies only about as many minutes as a wood-engraver would require hours; and the saving of cost, said to be fifty per cent. is in the less amount of artistic labour called for, and (it is intended) in the employment of female labour in some of the processes. Whether the graphotype can ever equal the delicacy of high-class wood-engravings? whether the new art may not save the skilful engraver from some of the drudgery of common work, by leaving him to apply his artistic powers to work of a higher kind? whether the process will be applicable to as many different kinds or styles of drawing as the wood-block method? whether any new style will be found applicable, that will give it an artistic advantage over wood? whether the rapidity of the operations will adapt the art to a *daily* illustrated newspaper?—are questions on which something decisive will be very soon known.

MIRK ABBEY.

CHAPTER XI.—UP EARLY.

It has been justly observed that one half of the world does not know how the other half lives. The statement is a very safe one, and might have been made a great deal more comprehensive by the philosopher who uttered it without risking his reputation for sagacity. We do not know how our next-door neighbour lives, except in the sense of what he has for dinner, which may indeed be discovered by the curious; nay, we often know not how our own household lives, how our very sons conduct themselves when not at meal-times and under our very eyes, what pursuits they really follow, what hopes, what fears, what ambitions they in secret entertain. It is well, indeed, and should be a matter of congratulation, if we are quite cognizant of the 'goings on' of our wives and daughters. It is strange to think what a world in little lies under the roof of any great mansion, such as Mirk Abbey. How interesting would the genuine individual biographies—if one could only get at them—of such a household be, from that of the mistress of the establishment (whose troubles we are endeavouring to portray) down to that of the under kitchen-maid, concerning whom we have 'no information,' but who has doubtless her own temptations, wrongs, and troubles also, which concern her with equal nearness, although they may not be so genteel! It is probable that the true history of the second gravedigger in *Hamlet* would be to the full as interesting as what we know of that philosophic Prince himself, though his father had not been murdered by his uncle, albeit even that may have been the case, for aught we know. But, alas! the novelist has not the power which the *Devil on Two Sticks* possessed of lifting the tiles off the attics; but has generally to content himself with such glimpses as he can obtain through the keyholes of the first and second floors.

Taking advantage of even this moderate privilege, we are sometimes rewarded with phenomena. Thus, it is little less than a portent to see Captain Walter

Lisgard, who is not generally addicted to early rising, up and dressed upon a certain May morning before the clock on the great stairs has sounded three. True, he has been out of bed once or twice at such an hour on other occasions, but then it was because he had not retired to rest the night before. He has done that, however, this time, or, at all events, has exchanged his evening-dress for morning-costume. Some people do get up at the most premature hours, even in winter, and light their own fires, and retrim the midnight lamp to pursue literary or scientific labours; but if Captain Lisgard has got up to study, we will eat him. What *can* he be about? He gropes his way down the great staircase, where darkness is made visible by streaks of grayish light—which is not yet dawn—struggling through cracks and crannies; and he stumbles over the heavy rug beneath the bottom step, and swears with involuntary emphasis. Then he listens a while, to see what will come of that. The great clock on the hall-table ticks reprovingly: 'Don't, don't—shame, shame!' as he never heard it tick before; and here and there breaks forth an expostulatory creaking, as though from moral furniture, which has no such scruples in the daytime; but his ejaculation has aroused no living being.

Softly he turns the key of the front-door, softly withdraws the bolts, and would as softly have slipped out, but that there is suddenly a jar and a whir, and the opening door is held fast by an iron hand. 'Confound the chain!' exclaims the captain. 'It is as difficult to get out of this house as out of Newgate.' Then, when all is still quiet, he emerges upon the stone steps with an 'I wonder for my part how burglars are ever discovered,' and takes his way towards the village. The gates are locked at the end of the avenue, and the porter and his wife are doubtless fast asleep, as well as fair-haired Polly—dreaming perhaps of himself, thinks the captain with a half-contemptuous, half-complacent smile—but Master Walter, who is as active as a cat, climbs the stone pillar by help of the iron hinge, and 'drops' noiselessly on to the road. He passes up the humble street, where each cottage is quiet as the grave—two blessed hours intervening yet between its inmates and their toil, and makes for the *Lisgard Arms*. The inn stands on a slight elevation, so that he sees it some time before he hears it. 'Why, the place is on fire!' mutters the captain; and certainly there is some extraordinary illumination taking place in one of the apartments. A flood of light pours from it as from some Pharos, as though to beckon benighted folks whither good ale is to be found; and yet the house is always shut at eleven, in conformity with the squire's orders.

'It's that infernal idiot Derrick himself who has done it,' continues the captain. 'That's his room, I know. Just as if he could not have got up in the dark, as I did: a fellow that probably never had more than a farthing dip to light him any morning, before he went to Cariboo. I wonder, for my part, he can dress without a valet. What a stuck-up, vulgar dog it is! How I hate his pinchbeck ostentation, and still worse, his dreadful familiarity! If it could only be found out immediately after this Derby that he was a returned transport, with five-and-twenty years or so of his sentence still unexpired, how delightful it would be! I really think that he is least objectionable in the evenings, when he is drunk. There is something original in

his brute-manner of swilling; a sort of over-driven-ox style about his stagger, which would make his fortune upon any stage—where there was room enough for the magnitude of the exhibition. Certainly, one has to pay for the society of this sort of gentry, and still more for their friendship. Alas, that I should have made this fortunate savage fond of me! I wish I could feel as Valentine did with Orson, instead of being much more like the too ingenious Frankenstein, whose monster became his master. However, that has not come about yet—notwithstanding meddling Mr Arthur Haldane's warnings.—Let me see, it was arranged, I think, that I was to whistle to this animal. Master Walter drew a silver cab-call from his pocket, and executed upon it the disconsolate cry of one who in London streets between the closing of the night-houses and the rising of the sun desires a Hansom. Instantly the light from the inn began to diminish—once, twice, thrice; and then the casement became blind and rayless like the other windows. 'That beggar had four candles lit!' ejaculated the captain with irritation. 'It was a mercy that he did not bring out the village fire-engine! Here he comes with his eternal pipe, too. I daresay he had the imprudence to light that before he left the house, and Steve's red nose will smell it.'

There are some men who always look the same no matter at what hour you come upon them: fresh, and hearty, and strong, they have but to duck their heads in cold water, and straightway the fatigues of a weary day or a sleepless night are utterly obliterated. They rejoice like giants to run their courses without any sort of preparation in the way of food and sleep, such as the rest of mankind require. Against this healthy animalism we protest, by calling it rude health; and to those who are of a less powerful constitution, it is naturally an offensive spectacle. Walter Lisgard had himself by no means a delicate organisation; his complexion, though pale, was far from sickly; his limbs, though models of grace rather than of strength, were of good proportions and well knit. But he was conscious of looking heavy-eyed and haggard, and he secretly resented the robust and florid appearance of the unconscious individual who now joined him—a man at least twenty-five years his senior.

'I suppose you have been accustomed to get up at these unearthly hours at the gold-diggings, that you look so disagreeably wide-awake, Mr Derrick,' grumbled he. 'You would very much oblige me if you would but yawn.'

'Get up! Master Walter; why, I've never been to bed,' answered the bearded man with a great guffaw. 'The fact is, that I took a little more than was good for me last night, and I did not dare lie down, knowing that we had this business on hand so early.'

'Why, one would think, by the amount of light, that you had been lying in state, like some deceased king of the Cannibal Islands,' returned the other peevishly. 'Was it your habit to use two pair of candles in your bedroom in Cariboo?'

'Well, I never had a bedroom there, that you would call such, as I have told you again and again, Master Walter; but I have burned twenty candles at a time when they were selling at Antler Creek at five dollars a pound. You imagine, I suppose, that it is only you gentlemen who live at home at ease who have money to spend; but let me tell you

that is not the case. I will go bail for my part, for example, that I have paid more sovereigns away in twenty-four hours than your brother, Sir Richard, ever did in a week.'

'My dear Mr Derrick, you are boastful this morning,' said the captain quietly: 'it is my belief that you have taken a hair of the dog that bit you overnight.'

'Maybe I have, and maybe I haven't, Master Walter; but I shall burn just as many candles as I like. I have worked hard enough for my money, and, dam'me, but I'll enjoy it. Why, when I was at New Westminster, I had my horse shod with gold, sir; and if I choose, I'll do it here.'

'You would have a perfect right so to do, Mr Derrick,' returned the other gravely; 'and for my part, if your horse should cast a shoe in my neighbourhood, I should warmly applaud your expensive tastes. But you must have been really very rich, to do such things. Now, how much do you think you were worth when you were at New Westminster?'

'That's tellings, captain,' responded the other with a cunning chuckle; 'but when I was on Fraser River, me and my mate Blanquette, we made—'

'Well, now, what did you make?' urged the young man, as the other hesitated.

'Well, we made nothing for the first five days,' answered Derrick drily—'nothing at all.—How far have we got to go to reach the Measured Mile by this road?'

The two men had left the village, and were pursuing a winding chalk-road that led, but not directly, to the Downlands at the back of Mr Chifney's stables.

'It is a very circuitous route,' returned Master Walter frankly; 'and I was in hopes it might be shortened to the fancy by hearing you tell something of your own story. But, of course, I have no wish to press you to tell it against your will. You have conferred obligations upon me enough already, I am quite aware.'

This was the first sentence of conciliation, not to say of civility, that the young man had spoken, and heretofore his air had been cross or cynical; yet no sooner did he evince this little of goodwill, than the manner of the other softened at once to a degree that was very remarkable in so rough a man.

'Don't talk of obligations, lad, for I like you—ay, so well, that I wish you were son of mine; not that I am fit to be the father of such as you either; I know that well.'

'If I were your son, I am afraid you would have a good deal of trouble with me, Mr Derrick,' replied the young man laughing: 'I am not a good boy.'

'That is true, Walter Lisgard; and yet I never saw a face that took my liking as yours does—save once. I could not tell what drew me so towards you, when I first met you up at the Farm yonder; but now I know very well.'

'Then it is to the similarity between myself and some other favoured individual that I am indebted for your regard? That rather robs the compliment of its flavour?'

'Ay, my lad; but you are dear to me for your own sake also, although, indeed, I scarce know why.'

'Thank you, Mr Derrick.'

'True,' continued the other thoughtfully, without noticing his companion's flippant tone, 'you are like—ah, Heaven, how like you are to one that's dead

and gone! Indeed, I can refuse you nothing while I think upon it. It is not everybody, however, lad, to whom I would humour by telling exactly what I am worth. While a man is merely known as rich, he may have any sum, and be looked up to accordingly; but when his wealth can be reckoned to a pound, he loses credit. If *Manylaws* wins at Epsom, I shall be worth—ay, near a hundred thousand pounds.

'I suppose no one in Cariboo ever made a sum like that by gold-digging, eh?'

'I think no one, Master Walter. There was no claim so rich as my mate's and mine at Snowy Creek, and it did not yield that sum. But, by Heaven, how well I remember what it did yield. It seemed to me then that I should never run risks any more, but live on what I had in content and plenty; and yet here I am, this very morning!'

'My dear sir,' interrupted his companion gaily, 'it appears to me that you are taking gloomy views. What is life without excitement?'

'Ay, that is very well for you, lad, who have something to fall back upon, if your little schemes should miscarry. Excitement in your case is only another name for amusement; but in mine!'

'Well, in yours, Mr Derrick?'

'Do not call me Mister; call me Ralph, lad—that is, if you are not ashamed of me altogether.—You are ashamed, I see. Well, never mind.—Let me see, I was speaking of Cariboo, was I not? Well, success or failure there was a question of life and death. One might be a beggar, or one might be the king of the colony. I had known what poverty was—and that is not merely being without money, mind. I have lived among a savage people for months who had neither gold nor silver—nothing to hoard and nothing to spend save shells picked up on the sea-shore, and strung on sea-weed for a purse; and I was as poor as they; but yet it was not poverty. But I had felt the sting of that in many a crowded city, and I came to Cariboo to escape from it. If I should make my thousand pounds or so, I would buy a farm, or a share in a ship, and live a quiet respectable life to the end of my days. While making these good resolutions, my ready money—which was also all I had in the world—was melting fast. With the last ten pounds of it, I bought the half of a small claim at Snowy Creek. *Blanquette* and I sawed our own lumber and made our own sluices. It was no light work even for me, who had been used to rough it. There was twelve feet of top-stripping to be removed before we could hope to reach the pay-dirt. For the first five days, we made nothing. I would have sold my share in the whole concern for a couple of pounds, and begun life with that afresh; but on the sixth day we found fourteen ounces of gold, and I was worth fifty pounds. Then I would not have sold my chance for scarcely any sum that you could name. I would have shot any man that had jumped into our pit, spade in hand, just as I would have shot a dog. Your brother, Sir Richard, may talk about the rights of property, but he never appreciated them as I did then. On the seventh day, we found forty-five ounces; on the eighth, sixty. The find kept on increasing, till it rose to four hundred ounces daily, when we employed eight hands to clear away the tailings. The whole area of the place out of which I scooped my fortune was not eighty feet by twenty. I found for my share twelve thousand pounds in it.'

'And you brought that safe to England, did you?'

'No, lad, I did not. I spent five hundred pounds of it in champagne—we drank it out of buckets—for one item.'

'And in candles, Ralph,' asked Master Walter smiling—'how much in candles?'

'In one thing and another, dear lad, I spent four thousand pounds before we landed in England. Even what was left would have seemed affluence six months before— But there, what's the good of talking? There's the rubbing-down house, is it not? and I shall soon know whether I am going to get a second fortune, or to lose what I have.'

CHAPTER XII.—THE TRIAL.

The sun had risen, and the long waste of Down stretched far and wide on all sides; a broad and level track as smooth as any lawn, with here and there a long but gentle slope, marked the exercising-ground used by Mr Chifney's horses. This glistened in the early rays like a path of silver. But fringing it on one side lay a great patch of gorse, and this quite twinkled with green and gold from the gossamers, whose slender fibres covered it as with a veil. The air was fresh and odorous with a hundred pleasant scents, and in the distant vale the morning mists were lifting from field and farm, from tower and town, as at the command of some enchanter. Nothing was heard but the occasional 'tink, tink' of a sheep-bell from the still sleeping folds. It was a scene to charm eye and ear; but Captain Walter Lisgard of the 104th Dragoons, and Mr Derrick from Cariboo, were persons upon whom the Dawn and its concomitants were a good deal thrown away.

'You are sure this is the right place?' inquired the Colonel as they reached a long low-shuttered building, half brick half wood, where the horses were wont to be rubbed down after their gallops.

'Ay, this is it right enough,' was the reply. 'I dare say they are all inside there waiting for us. It does not do to be seen at this sort of work. Yes, here they are.'

Inside the doorway of the shed in question stood Mr Tite Chifney, in company with a gentleman of advanced years, in a white great-coat and a new broad-brimmed hat, somewhat resembling a bishop's.

'How are you, Lisgard?'

'How do you do, my Lord?' were the only salutations that passed between the members of the two parties, who had met entirely upon business.

'Come and beat the furze with me, will you, Derrick? the captain has not his gaiters on. It is well to make quite sure that we are all alone before we begin,' said the horse-trainer. The two men accordingly stepped into the gorse, and commenced walking through it in parallel lines, as though in pursuit of game. When he came to a patch of gorse a little higher and thicker than the rest, Mr Chifney struck it violently with his whip, as if for rabbits. All of a sudden, there was a violent ejaculation from Derrick; he threw himself down upon some crouching object, and then came a struggle and a choking scream. 'Hollo, don't kill the fellow,' exclaimed Chifney running up. 'See, he's black in the face, man.—Master Walter, my Lord—help, here, help!'

The two men who had been left in the rubbing-house came quickly forward, but it took the

combined strength of all three of them to release the poor wretch from the powerful grasp of the Cariboo miner.

'Damn the rogue; I'll teach him to come spying here,' cried he, nodding with his head towards a shattered telescope, upon which he had just stamped his foot. 'I'll squeeze his throat for him.'

'You seem to have done that already, sir,' said the man in the broad brim coolly; 'a very little more of it, and you would probably have had your throat squeezed for you by the hangman. Poor devil, he doesn't seem to have much beside his life belonging to him, so that it would be hard to take that.'

A wretched object, clothed in ragged black, and with wisps of straw for shoes, wet with the dew amid which he had been lying, and shivering with pain and fear, here crawled to the last speaker's feet.

'Don't let 'em murder me, my Lord. They will, if you don't interfere,' screamed the wretched 'tout,' whose mission it was to procure racing intelligence under difficulties of this sort, but who had been fairly cowed by Derrick's rage and violence. 'I swear to you that I will never tell a soul that I have seen your lordship'—

'Quiet, fool!' interrupted the other sternly, 'unless you want to have your lying tongue cut out.—It's bad enough,' whispered he to the trainer, 'that he should have seen me here; but do you think he has seen the horses?'

'That's quite certain, my Lord,' returned the trainer coolly; 'and this is a mouth as can't be shut about that matter. But he shall see nothing more of this morning's work.—Come here, you sir.'

Taking the trembling wretch by the collar, he led him to the edge of the furze, and having securely tied his arms and legs, enveloped his head in a horse-cloth which he brought out of the rubbing-house. From the same building there now emerged two horses, not in the clothes in which exercise was generally taken, but ready in all respects for racing, and ridden not by stable-boys as usual, but by regular jockeys.

'There is no question about it but the bay is the best-looking, my Lord,' said the trainer, in answer to something that had been addressed to him; 'but handsome is as handsome does. You would not thank me for praising *The King* on Epsom Downs, after he had been beaten by an outsider such as yonder horse.'

'Who rides the creature?' inquired the other sharply, and looking contemptuously towards the clumsy black, who was no other than our old friend *Menelaus*. 'Dam'ne if he don't look more fit for a hearse than a race-course.'

'Jack Withers, my Lord—a man that was with him in France, and thoroughly understands what the horse can do; and, indeed, there is no other that can ride him as should be. That's the worst of these foreign horses—they are so full of tricks. I've known that black stand stock-still in his gallops, and shoot his boy off just like a rocket. He can't abide a strange seat.'

'Of course Withers rides him in the great race,' observed the other thoughtfully.

'Certainly, my Lord, just as Tom Uxbridge here will mount *The King*. What's the good of having a trial race unless with the same jocks as is to ride them afterwards?—Starting from that white post, up the rise yonder, round the fir clump, and so

back again, is the Derby course to a yard.—Master Walter and Mr Derrick, will you be so good as to bear a hand, and help me out with the steps?'

'Ain't the gentleman in the broad brim going to use them as well as me?' observed the Colonist insolently, and keeping his hands resolutely in his pockets. 'I never engaged myself to be his body-servant, as I know on.'

There being no answer to this appeal, Captain Lisgard and the trainer once more entered the rubbing-house, and reappeared dragging with them a movable platform upon wheels, and furnished with a flight of steps after the manner of a pulpit. From the top of this, one might see the whole course from end to end, and upon it the four spectators took their station close to the starting-post.

'Now, my lads, are you both ready?' inquired the trainer of the jockeys, who were getting their fuming horses into line. 'This handkerchief will serve for a flag, and when I drop it, let there be no false starts. One, two, three—now OFF!'

As the handkerchief left his fingers, the bay and black leaped forward as with a single impulse; the next moment each had got into his stride, and was away like the wind.

'It is amazing how they keep together,' muttered his Lordship in an uneasy tone: 'I should not have thought the Frenchman had had such speed in him.'

'It is the hill which will decide the matter, my Lord,' returned the trainer in a low tone; 'the ground is rising already. There! and see, the black draws ahead.'

'Ay, the black has it!' cried Derrick with a frightful imprecation. 'I will lay fifty pounds to ten on *Manylaws*.'

'I take you, sir,' said the man in the broad-brim coolly, as with race-glass in hand he watched every movement of the horses who were now nearing the fir-clump: 'there has something happened to that big-boned animal of yours, I fear. What is it, Chifney?'

He was about to pass the glass to the trainer, but Derrick roughly tore it from his grasp, and applied it to his own eyes. 'It's one of his infernal jibs,' exclaimed he; 'and yet—Well done, Jack Withers; that's a five-pound note in your pocket.—Perhaps you'd like to look again, my Lord, for their position is a little altered.'

'The black is gaining fast,' ejaculated Captain Lisgard, his pale face aglow with excitement. 'He has recovered all he lost by that false step. What a pace they are coming down the hill! By Heaven, *The King* is beaten! Tom is using the whip.'

'Just what I expected,' murmured the trainer.

There was a thunder of hoofs, the smack of a whip again and again, a flash of colour—first black, then bay—and the trial-race was over.

'In a second and a half less time than the last Derby,' said his Lordship drily, after consulting his stop-watch.

'I think I did not bring you here for nothing, my Lord,' said the trainer confidentially.

'Certainly not, Mr Chifney,' returned the other bitterly: 'I find myself a poorer man than I had thought to be three minutes ago by fifty thousand pounds. Moreover, I have made the acquaintance of one of the greatest ruffians that I have ever met even upon a race-course. It is altogether an excellent morning's work.'

'It would have been worse for you, my Lord, if

you had not come,' answered the trainer with some stiffness; 'you would not have thanked me if you had seen this for the first time on Epsom Downs.'

'Very true—very true, Mr Chifney. But you must excuse my feeling a little annoyed by the results of this gallop. And as for this gentleman with the beard—when he has done shaking his hands with his jockey—Here are two five-pound notes for you, sir—the amount of my bet.'

'Keep it yourself, my Lord,' exclaimed Derrick, waving his hat round and round in frantic joy. 'Or stay, if you're too proud.—Here, Jack, is a five for you; and here, you poor devil in the horse-cloth, here's another for you, to heal your wind-pipe, which, I believe, I squeezed a little too hard a while ago. If the race had gone agen me, you'd never have got a shilling of compensation, so you may thank *Manylaws*.'

The trainer's hand was clapped upon the incautious gold-digger's mouth with considerable emphasis, but it arrived too late. 'The cat was out of the bag.' The tout had learned the very piece of intelligence to obtain which he had gone through so much.

Bound and bruised, and in evil plight as he was, the fellow could not help indulging in a sly chuckle, while his four enemies (for the jockeys were already in the rubbing-down house attending to their panting steeds) regarded one another with looks of blank dismay.

'You have done it now, Mr Derrick,' observed the trainer lugubriously. 'We shall never get thirty to one—no, nor ten to one—against *Mene-laws* again.—Great Heaven! why, you wouldn't kill the man!'

The gold-digger had drawn a clasp-knife, half dagger, half cutting-tool, from his pocket, and was quietly feeling the point of it with his thumb. 'I have done wrong,' said he, 'but it is a wrong which is not without remedy. No, I am not going to murder this gentleman—at least not now; but I have something of importance to tell him.—Look you here, Mr Tout. I am not a respectable person any more than yourself, in a general way; but there is probably this difference between us—I am a man of my word. What I *say*, I will do, I always do do, at all hazards. If a man robs another of his gold in the place where I come from, we shoot him: it mayn't be right, but that is the principle on which we act. You will rob me of all I have in the world if you tell what you have seen to-day; consequently, mark me, if you do tell, *I will kill you*. Of this you may be well assured. That is the only satisfaction which will be left me. You have felt my fingers, but you will in that case feel this knife. I hope I make myself well understood.—No, Master Walter, this is not your business, but a private matter between this person and myself. I want to take a good look at him, so that I may know him again anywhere; alone or in company, in England or across seas; let him be sure I shall find him out; and I want him to take a good look at me. Mine is not the face of a man who falters in his purpose, or who, having suffered a wrong, puts up with it, I think, and does not revenge himself.'

He knelt down, and set his bearded cheek quite close to the luckless tout. Each looked into the other's eyes—one inquiringly, with a half-timid, half-cunning glance; the other sternly, vengefully, like a judge and executioner in one.

'I will never tell!' quavered the miserable wretch—'s'help me, Heaven, I never will!'

'Yes, you will,' returned Derrick coolly; 'I can see that you are a babbler born; and I don't ask impossibilities. Moreover, it is but just that you should derive some advantage from my folly. In a week's time, you may tell your employer what you please. In the meanwhile, there is your five pounds. I wish to act as fairly by you as I can; but if the odds rise or fall respecting these two horses within seven days—as they can only do if the result of this trial gets wind—then I shall know where to find a sheath for this knife.' With these words he cut the rope that bound the man's arms and legs, pushed the five-pound note into his hands, and bade him be off; whereupon off he shambled.

Neither the trainer nor the man addressed as 'my Lord' had stirred or spoken a word during this interview, and Captain Lisgard had only once made a movement—as though to interrupt it. All three were well enough pleased that the gold-digger had taken the task of imposing silence into his own hands. In all likelihood, he was merely threatening the fellow; and if not, they did not wish to be accessories before the fact to—to any vengeance he might choose to inflict upon the offending tout.

'Well, gentlemen, we have now six clear days wherein to make our arrangements,' said Derrick, 'and a good deal may be done in that time. True, but for my stupid conduct, we might have had more time before us; but I have made what amends lies in my power.'

'You believe, then, that yonder rascal will keep his word, do you?' inquired the trainer incredulously.

'I think so, Mr Chifney. I shall certainly keep mine,' returned the other gravely.—'Master Walter, we had better be moving home.'

At these words, the party separated—like men who have each their work to do, and are glad to be quit of their companions, in order that they may set about it—with no more ceremony than a parting nod. The man in the broad-brim rode away upon a shooting-pony, which awaited him in the rubbing-down house. The jockeys paced slowly towards their stables, each horse now clothed and visored as though it had been merely out for early exercise; while Mr Chifney walked briskly homeward by another route.

Derrick and Captain Lisgard returned together by the way they came, and plodded on for some time in total silence.

'You will put all your money upon the black un now, I fancy, Master Walter?' observed the gold-digger at last, as they drew near the village.

'I have done that already,' replied the young man frankly. 'I was thinking rather of hedging when the odds fall.'

'Nay, do not do that, lad,' rejoined the other earnestly; 'the thing is a certainty. *The King* was the only horse that we had to fear. On the contrary, my advice is, "Put the Pot on."

'The Pot is on, with all I have to put in it, Mr Derrick. You forget that I am not an eldest son, and nobody lends money to a younger.'

'Ay, true; there's that confounded stuck-up cockcomb, Sir Richard. But look here, my lad. In this pocket-book I carry all I am worth in the world, for in Cariboo there are no banks, and a man at my time of life does not readily change his habits. Here are five hundred pounds entirely at your service. Nay, I told you that I had taken a liking to you,

and I would give them to you right-away, only I suppose you are too proud to accept them, save as a loan.'

'Mr Derrick—Ralph—you are very, very kind,' said the young man hesitatingly; 'but this is a large sum.'

'At the present prices, it is ten thousand pounds if *Manylas* wins,' replied the gold-digger, rubbing his hands; 'and if *Manylas* does not win—well, I shall not, I hope, be an importunate creditor. I do not say: "Do not thank me," lad, for I like you to smile like that. You are very, very welcome. But here we part; you to your home and friends, and I—well, I am used to be alone. I shall not see a friend's face again till I see yours. Good-bye, dear lad, good-bye.'

With a hearty hand-shake and more thanks, Master Walter strode gaily away through the still slumbering village, reclined the avenue gate, and let himself noiselessly in at the front-door. As he passed on tiptoe along a gallery, on one side of which lay his sister's apartment, and on the other that of Miss Rose Aynton's, a door opened, and an anxious voice whispered: 'What news, Walter?' 'Good news,' replied he in the same cautious tone, and glided on to his own room.

THE ZAMBESI.

DR LIVINGSTONE has returned to Africa to make further efforts for the civilisation of the natives, and to extend his researches north of Lake Nyassa, and south of Lake Tanganyika, in confirmation of the 'illustrious discoveries' of Grant and Speke. He is supported in his undertaking by the government, by the Royal Geographical Society, and by the munificence of private individuals; and the voluminous and interesting account which he has lately published of the scenes he has visited, and the discoveries he has made since 1858, lead to a sanguine expectation that he may be able to effect very important results. The tremendous downfall of the slave-power in America at the very moment when he wrote the preface to his work in April 1865; and the active interference of the Emperor of the French, together with a more wholesome condition of Portuguese public morality, of which there are pleasing indications, lend brighter colours than could have been hoped for, a little while ago, to the new expedition. The slave-trade renders all efforts vain. Its moral and physical effects, of which we, at a distance, have a very vague and insufficient idea, when we limit them to the cruel capture, the horrible middle-passage, and the bitter life of enforced servitude, are too powerful to be contended with successfully, and in its extinction lies the sole chance for African civilisation. The facts which Dr Livingstone presents, in the unattractive guise of statistics certainly, but interesting for all that, and which contrast the English and American settlements on the west coast with the Portuguese settlements on the east, would prove his position without the narrative of his own experience, which strengthens and illustrates it. We will take it for granted; we heartily rejoice in the prospect of the Portuguese being brought to sentiments not only of humanity, but of reason; of their learning, in spite of their effiteness and obstinacy, that other trades may be established

which will pay infinitely better, and that they may as well try colonisation in another sense than sending convicts only to a rich and fertile country, whose climate has a singularly pacific effect; and turn to the many-sided interest of a volume,* which gives us simple and yet wonderful details of the life of our kind, and the aspects of nature in the least known continent in the world.

The Portuguese had played a clever trick, which had long been successful, by pretending that the river Quillimane, sixty miles distant from the mouths of the Zambesi, is the principal entrance to the latter river; so that while the English cruisers were watching the false mouth, slaves were being quietly shipped by the true one. That little device has been rendered inoperative for the future by an examination made of the three branches, and the decision that the Kongone is the best entrance. The route of the party is therefore to be traced from this entrance, up which they steamed, into sight of a land entirely new to them, and wonderfully beautiful. The giant vegetation of the tropics clothed the river-banks; the towering screw-palms shot lance-like towards the sky, but were softened and beautified by rich clinging garments of many-coloured parasites; and for twenty miles the river wound through luxuriant mangrove jungle. In the grassy glades were herds of buffalo and antelopes. The loud note of the king-hunter rings through the woods, and the ibis, unaccustomed to the intrusion of steam-paddles on his family repasts, rushes away with an angry scream. So far all is beautiful, and farther, for broad fertile lands lie beyond the mangrove jungles, reaching from the Kongone Canal to Mazaro, eighty miles in length, and fifty in breadth, admirably adapted for the growth of sugar-cane, and capable of supplying all Europe with sugar. But the natives are wretched creatures, Portuguese 'colonos,' or serfs. They were much astonished at the 'steamers,' and remarked that the *Pearl* was like a village; then asked, evidently regarding her, intelligently enough, as a development of their own canoe, if she had been made out of one tree. With such little interludes as witnessing a battle between natives and Portuguese, carrying off a 'governor' out of the fight, and physicking him against his will, but with success, and the constant encountering of crocodiles and hippopotami, they come to Mazaro, and then to Shupanga, where a one-storied house stands on the prettiest site on the river. The lawn slopes down to the wide, island-dotted bosom of the Zambesi, and to the north stretch magnificent forests, and a range of blue hills. Dr Livingstone was to visit this house again in 1862, and to make his wife's grave under one of the noble trees upon the lawn. But that was far away, when they 'wooded up,' with *African ebony* and *lignum vita*, to the great distress of the engineer, who could not disembarrass his mind of the value of these woods at home, and started for Tette.

Here the Makalolo, with whom Dr Livingstone made us acquainted long ago, recognised him with great delight, and told him how thirty of their number had died of small-pox, having been bewitched by the people of Tette. The state of things in this town is deplorable, and

* *Narrative of an Expedition to the Zambesi and its Tributaries, 1858—1864.* By David and Charles Livingstone. London: John Murray.

affords a sample of African superstition in almost the lowest possible form. The people away up the country, in the valley of the Shire, are not nearly so repulsive. Belief in, and fear of, evil spirits, a religion of torment is their sole spiritual idea, and they have no notion that the Morungo, or Great Spirit, takes any interest in them. Their faith in 'medicines' is unbounded, and impervious to attack by experience. A medicine prepared by the elephant doctor will enable the hunter to attack and kill the formidable beast in safety; and the crocodile doctor dispenses a medicine which secures the purchaser from the jaws of the rapacious saurian. Hunting expeditions are unsuccessful, and crocodiles carry off women; but these little occurrences have no power to shake the influence of the medicine-men. From Tette, the party set out to examine the rapids of Kebrabasa, an undertaking which excited profound astonishment in the minds of the natives, and not very unreasonably, for the labour and fatigue involved were terrible, and the heat to be endured such as must have daunted any persons bent on a less object than the discovery of a great natural feature, combined with the exposure of the falsehood of rivals—for the Portuguese pooh-poohed the Kebrabasa Falls, describing them as two or three detached rocks jutting out into the river, and so trifling an impediment to its navigation, that they might easily be removed by blasting with gunpowder. The truth is, 'a cataract, situated on a sudden bend of the river, which is flowing in a short curve; the river above it is jammed between two mountains in a channel with perpendicular sides, and less than fifty yards wide; one or two masses of rock jut out, and then there is a sloping fall of perhaps twenty feet, at a distance of thirty yards.' On the return of the party from their exploration, they had a specimen of the intellectual quality of the native Portuguese. One of them had gone to the governor, and told him gravely that the waters had risen, and become turbid, and that the Englishmen were doing something to the river. They also discovered that they were held accountable for the drought, and this by yellow Christians, not black heathen. Dr Livingstone tried these intelligent beings with cotton-seed which he had brought to Africa, in ignorance that the cotton already introduced was equal, if not superior, to the common American, but they regarded it with indifference; their ideas could not soar beyond 'black ivory,' or slaves, elephants' tusks, and a little gold-dust.

The amazement created by the exploration of the Kebrabasa Falls by the English party, was mild in comparison with that which their determination to explore the Shire, a tributary of the Zambesi, which joins it about a hundred miles from the sea, created. The river was impassable by reason of duckweed, and the shores were peopled by savage tribes, who shot intruders with poisoned arrows. The governor remonstrated. 'Our government,' he said, 'have sent us orders to assist and protect you; but you go where we dare not follow, and how can we protect you?' No European, so far as they could learn, ever had ascended the Shire, and the Portuguese believed the Manganja to be brave, blood-thirsty savages. Nevertheless, up the Shire they went. There was a little duckweed, but not enough to interrupt any kind of craft, and that little disappeared after twenty-five miles. As they neared the villages, the natives collected,

armed with their bows, and looked dangerous. One chief, named Tingane, who contrasts, like many others, favourably in point of intelligence with the native Portuguese, came out with five hundred men, and ordered them to stop. This mighty chieftain was much impressed by the steamer, and instantly divined that these were strange people, of a kind he had never seen before. Tingane was a well-known enemy to slaving, and barrier to Portuguese access to the inland tribes: so Dr Livingstone landed, and told him they, the English, were come neither to fight nor to take slaves, but only to open a path for their fellow-countrymen to purchase cotton, or whatever else he and his might have to sell, except slaves. On this, Tingane conducted himself in a most gentlemanly manner, and summoned all his people to hear the explanation. As the English efforts at sea to prevent slavery have reached the knowledge of the natives in very remote places, they were readily and respectfully heard, and the tribe proved very amenable on the subject of cotton-cultivation, and the Bible. The party were a little disconcerted when they discovered that their interpreter was establishing a close relation between the two, by the following simple and explicit doctrine: 'The Book-Book says you are to grow cotton, and the English are to come and buy it;' besides occasionally winding up with a joke of his own invention, 'which,' Dr Livingstone gravely remarks, 'might have been ludicrous, had it not been seriously distressing,' but which most people will think *was* ludicrous, whether or not.

They went on, meeting no molestation whatever, but noticing that the natives maintained a strong guard along the shore night and day, and enjoying to the utmost the delight of pursuing the windings of more than two hundred miles of a previously unexplored river. It would be difficult to say whether the inexpressible charm of such a situation is derived most directly from its circumstances or from its associations, from the luxuriant lonely beauty of nature, unseen till then by educated eyes, or from the mental contrast produced by the high civilisation represented by the explorers. So on and on for one hundred miles in a straight line, but double the distance by the winding river, until they were stopped by magnificent cataracts, which they named the Murchison; and then, as a land-journey was not safe, until they had cultivated more familiar relations with the natives, swiftly, aided by the current, back to Tette. A strange voyage, in a very dubious steamer, called by contemptuous consent the *Athmatic*, with herds of hippopotami and shoals of crocodiles swimming about—the former always getting out of the way with ungainly alacrity; but the latter, mistaking the steamer for a swimming animal, making ferocious rushes, and going down like stones, with much ignominy, when close to the paddles.

In March 1859, they started again for their second exploration of the Shire. The natives were very friendly, and sold them rice, fowls, and corn, besides inviting them to drink beer with quite a British cordiality. Ten miles below Murchison's Cataract, they made friends with a chief named Chibisa, who is one of the most remarkable personages mentioned. His notions of his own authority were almost as stringent as those of the king of Prussia, and he carried them out with much greater intelligence and humanity. He assured Dr Livingstone that he had been an ordinary

man when his father died, and left him the chieftainship; but on succeeding to the high office, he was conscious of power passing into his head and down his back, so that he knew he was a chief, clothed with authority, and possessed of wisdom; and people then began to fear and reverence him. 'He mentioned this as one would a fact in natural history, any doubt being quite out of the question.' Tracing the course of the party from this point, it runs in a northerly direction by land to Lake Shirwa, through the country of the Manganja. They were chiefly guided by madmen, the African villages resembling the Irish in the number of insane and idiotic persons among the inhabitants; and the attitude of the tribes caused them some uneasiness; but they were never attacked. They found Lake Shirwa a body of bitter water, eighty miles broad, containing fish, leeches, crocodiles, and hippopotami, eighteen hundred feet above the sea, surrounded with most beautiful country, and bounded on the east by a chain of lofty mountains. As they penetrate the unknown land, it grows only more and more beautiful, and unlike all that we used to suppose Africa to be.

Dr Livingstone's third journey up the Shire was made for the purpose of becoming better acquainted with the people, and of reaching Lake Nyassa on foot. Its details are very interesting, abounding in natural phenomena, and affording altogether novel views of the natives. There must be wonderful variety of character and degrees of intelligence among the native tribes, for Dr Livingstone's Africans do not resemble Captain Grant's, and are much better fellows in every respect. As in all books of African travel, the brute creation comes out magnificently in this, and it is an unmitigated pleasure to read descriptions of the superb elephants, rhinoceroses, and buffaloes, and of the beautiful deer, unaccompanied by the sickening details of cruelty and slaughter which too frequently form their accompaniments.

The march to Lake Nyassa was delightful, with all its weariness. The party numbered forty-two, and was well provided with cloth and beads for purposes of barter and sale. The natives were peaceful, and ready to trade, the country wonderfully and variously beautiful. The Manganja country is profusely watered; they passed seven brooks and a spring in an hour. This in the heart of Africa! How astonished our former teachers and our old map-makers would be, if they knew this! The highlands are well wooded, and many splendid trees grow on the water-courses. There are no wild beasts of a destructive kind, and the country is admirably adapted for domestic animals. The people are very industrious; they work in iron, cotton, and basket-making, and cultivate the soil extensively. They are gentle, and punctiliously polite. They are unfortunately much given to intoxication, though not to be compared to Captain Speke's friends in that respect; and they have certain ideas of personal adornment, to which it is impossible to be reconciled. Tattooing, nose-rings, ear-rings of every kind and degree of grotesqueness—all are endurable in comparison with the *pelele*. A drawing of a young girl wearing this horrible ornament, a ring of bone or tin, three inches in diameter, inserted into the upper lip, with a thin rim of flesh all round it, is indescribably revolting, though the face is not ugly, and the expression is decidedly intelligent and gentle. It has a ludicrous effect, too, as though the girl were

adroitly holding a circular shaving-glass between her teeth.

These people have remarkably white and fine teeth, but they are carefully chipped into resemblance to those of the crocodile or the cat. Skin-diseases are prevalent among them, and many are afflicted with the leprosy of the Cape. Noticing that some of the men were marked with small-pox, Dr Livingstone asked about its origin, whether it had come from the coast or the interior. The chief, anxious to pay a compliment, and amiably tipsy, replied with much graciousness, that he was not sure, but he rather thought it must have come from the English. On the whole, we derive a pleasing impression of these harmless people, and there is something pathetic in their simple statement of their spiritual state. 'We live only a few days here, but we live again after death—we do not know where or in what condition, or with what companions, for the dead never return to tell us. Sometimes the dead do come back and appear to us in dreams; but they never speak, nor tell us where they have gone, nor how they fare.' Wiser men than the poor Manganja have avowed themselves to be but 'infants crying in the night—infants crying for the light.' It is melancholy to contrast the condition of these people as the Englishmen saw them first, and as they saw them when the devastating curse of the slaving-parties had passed over their country. The party reached Lake Nyassa in September 1859, two months before Dr Roscher, who was murdered on his return by the Arab road to the Rumona, and of whose discoveries nothing is known. After their return to Shupanga, and an expedition to the country of the Makololo, they again went to Kebrabasa, and marched across the hills into the beautiful plains of Chicova. Here their camp-life was indeed rude and adventurous, for the country abounds with lions, and the sight of a white man is utterly unknown. The heat was intense, but they journeyed slowly, and held out well, convincing themselves that the European power of endurance, even in the tropics, is greater than that of the hardiest of the meat-eating Africans. Here they had to live by hunting, and found their supplies very precarious, for it was very hard to get at the animals, and harder still to get at the natives, who screamed and ran away at sight of them.

At Zumbo they examined, with strange feelings, as may be supposed, the ruins of the ancient chapel, built by the Jesuit missionaries, now utterly deserted. Near it lies a broken church bell—sad and suggestive object in such a place. The loneliness is appalling; the natives dread the place, and will never go near it; and, apart from the ruins, there is nothing to remind one that a Christian power ever had traders there. Then on again, through a beautiful country, where numerous kinds of birds abound, notably the honey-guide, whose wondrous instinct is unfailing; and elephants and buffaloes, together with the less agreeable hyena, wander about in huge herds. The people, the Bazizulu, are brave and gentle. Striking away northward from the Zambesi, they explored the country of the Batoka, a remarkably intelligent race, who add the arts of music and a fine sort of wood-carving to various industries, who maintain a strict and virtuous social system, and have very correct ideas of military organisation. The women are remarkably well clothed; but the

men adhere to the primitive condition, and say, philosophically : ' God made us naked, and therefore we never wear any sort of clothing.' Were it not for the terrible episodes introduced by the encounters with slaving-parties, the reckless destruction of human life, the waste and desolation which follow in the train of these guilty expeditions, and the general effect of depression and hopelessness which these descriptions create, Dr Livingstone's would be the most delightful book of African travel in existence; but just as these encounters blighted and saddened him on his journey, they interrupt the pleasure with which we follow its details. Nothing, however, intervenes to spoil the eager interest with which we reach, in company with the English party, the Balotra highlands, where the exquisite and majestic beauty of the scenery is rendered thoroughly delightful by healthful invigorating breezes, and where an incessant hymn of joy is raised by the notes of countless singing-birds, who display no fear of man. Mountain and forest, rich plain and silver-winding river, are the objects offered to their gaze; and the goal towards which their faces are set is the Victoria Falls, the great wonder of the southern continent, the magnificent rival of Niagara.

Time and distance, though neither considerable, lie between them and their object, and there are explorations of beautiful country in their way, and exciting elephant-hunts, only undertaken, to their credit be it said, because they and the men with them wanted food. The fine country is quite desolate around Motunta, where they halted, and only the fruitless, gigantic wild fig-trees, and circles of stones on which corn-safes have stood, with worn grindstones, point out where the villages once stood. During their halt at Motunta, the solemn lonely magnificence of the scene was increased by the sudden lighting of the whole heavens by a meteor of amazing brilliancy, on whose path the glorious streak of light remained for many seconds. It must have shone into the hearts of these men, standing in the midst of a land where all is so contradictory, where nature and man are at such terrible odds, like a ray of heavenly hope, of divine promise and consolation. They went on, through the beautiful uninhabited country, and when they reached the village of Moachemba, the wide valley was spread out before them, and they saw the great columns of the mist which rises from the Falls, twenty miles away. It is not difficult to imagine the feelings with which their proximity to one of the most wonderful features of the wonderful world inspired them, nor the weariness and sickness of heart which stole their gladness from them, when they found that hunger and disease, rapine and superstition, possessed the land.

On the 9th August 1860, Dr Livingstone and his party embarked in canoes, and glided on for many miles over water clear as crystal, and past lovely islands densely covered with tropical vegetation. Many-coloured flowers and fruit overhung the river's bank, and among the former, the tender blue convolvulus looked down upon them, a familiar blossom, amid the gorgeous strangeness. From gliding water to dangerous rapids, down which many canoes have been hurled, and great elephants and hippopotami have been swept, and dashed to pulp, but through which their steersman guided them in perfect safety, after a time of intense

smooth water again, and they landed at Garden Island, on the lip of the Falls.

The beauty, the majesty, the meaning of nature, are only to be told by those to whom the gift of the poet has been given; perhaps they never thoroughly reveal themselves to others; and even the poet who should attempt to put in words what the Englishmen saw, when they leaned over the giddy height, and by slow degrees comprehended in their hearts, through the medium of vision, the awful and sublime spectacle before them, would need to be a bold, if he were less than an inspired, man. Dr Livingstone makes no attempt to describe the scene, or its effect upon his mind. The one defies the utmost powers of the painter, the other those of the poet. Something like terror there must have been, bewildering awe, taking a long time to calm into admiration, wonder, reverence, love, and prayer. The simplicity of the account given, its reduction to a matter of measurement, is the most satisfactory substitute for description which is unattainable. The Falls have been formed by a crack right across the river, in the hard basaltic rock which there formed the bed of the Zambesi. 'On measuring the width of this deep cleft by sextant, it was found at Garden Island, its narrowest part, to be eighty yards, and at its broadest somewhat more. Into this chasm, of twice the depth of Niagara Fall, the river, a full mile wide, rolls with a deafening roar; and this is *Moni-oo-tunya*, or the *Victoria Falls*.'

SNOWDROP.

WELCOME to earth, white snowdrop, once again;

Welcome below the budding hedge;

Welcome in woods that overlede

The rocky streamlet murmuring down the glen;

Welcome to gardens and abodes of men.

Thy maiden leaflets, touched with spots of green,

Like tiptoe-prints of timid Spring

Upon smooth snow now fallen, bring

Refreshing pleasure to the eyes, I ween,

That weary of the winter's cold white sheen.

Thou wast the first in Nature's mind to lie,

Before she wrought the gorgeous flowers

Of golden Summer's garden bowers,

Ere June disclosed to view earth's canopy

Of light and azure mixed in harmony.

As if she chose thee for the New Year's brow,

To tempt her maids to imitate,

And learn how comely simple state

Upon the virgin's slender form doth shew,

And lead to ripened woman's stately glow.

Calm-lipped, ambrosia-breathing Charit',

Whom, in the unseen homes above,

The clear-eyed angels greet as Love,

Whoe'er may guard thy sisterhood, must be

The spirit bidden to keep watch o'er thee;

For we discern those airy forms, that tend

The fragrant lives of bell and bud

On hill or dale, or green-edged flood,

By the peculiar thought which each doth send

Into our hearts, as o'er the leaves we bend.

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PIANOFORTES.

IN the days of our grandfathers, the study of music was confined to a few privileged fashionables; whereas now it has become an institution of our social life, and a pursuit of the million. It is true that, in ultra-bucolic districts, bulky and well-meaning farmers still prohibit their daughters from the bare thought of a pianoforte, sturdily affirming that charming little Dora's pretty fingers are more worthily employed in scattering grain to hungry poultry, and churning butter, than in 'making a row on them sort of things.' So little Dora aforesaid pines, pouts, coaxes, and wheedles, till yeoman nature can hold out no longer; and some fine night, after father's grog has been made with extra care, or his pipe filled with peculiar neatness, he kisses the rosy Dora, and says: 'Werry well, then, my gal; you shall have a peanner; only I wunt have it when I come home, so you must do your practising while I'm round the farm.' Months afterwards, the good man does not regret his kindness. In the evening-time, when the red glow of a wood-fire fills the room, Dora the fair, his 'little maid,' as he calls her, sits at the piano, playing, with a pretty solemnity, *Drink to me only with thine eyes*. The farmer looks into the fire, and remembers that Dora's mother, dead and gone, stole the last atom of his heart away with that old tune. In the few years of their married life, before she was taken from him, many a winter-night he sat by the fire watching her rock his little daughter on her bosom, and send her to sleep with 'rare Ben Jonson's' song. The dead wife's portrait seems to look into his soul again; the good man's eyes are full, his pipe lies unheeded, and with the slow, mournful cadence of the melody, a flood of ancient memories comes trooping over his spirit as the tears come trickling through his fingers. Dora fancies she hears a sob, turns round, and sees the old man bending over the fire. In an instant, her arms are round his neck, hiding his gray head in their pure and innocent shelter. 'O father, dear, why didn't you tell me: I will never play it again.'

'Yes, yes, my gal; I like to hear it; it makes a better man of me, though I do feel sometimes a'most broke down; but I'm sure I a'n't ashamed because I was so fond of your poor mother.'

Dora sits on her father's knee, and they both gaze into the embers. The grief is over; but upwards through the starlight night, and into the angels' keeping, fly the thoughts of two simple English hearts.

Clodhopper, rustic, unpresentable, and absurdly emotional person, society might call this soft-hearted farmer; but one gentleman of nature is worth all the living exemplifications of etiquette-books that ever existed.

Where is now the English home, metropolitan, provincial, or even colonial, destitute of the familiar pianoforte? from the soft-carpeted drawing-room down to the little back-parlour of the very small tradesman, whose young Anna Maria carries her portfolio to the select day-school in the next street, and duly pounds away at her scales for an hour in the evening, to the intense satisfaction of the paternal mind. The resting-places for the piano are various, as society in its different grades can afford to bestow that wood and metal solace. Even the lot of the 'heavy grand' is not always happy. That ponderous invention leaves its birthplace for pleasant places enough in many instances, being sometimes deposited in the saloons of the great, hung with brocade curtains, and redolent of exotic perfumes. Family pictures, and statuettes in silver, bronze, and delicate metals, are there reflected in its polished surface. O shade of Orpheus! how many flirtations does not that innocent instrument help to carry on—how many chains of roses does it not bind—how many hours of indolence does it not assist in passing away—how many family jars does it not listen to—and how many tones of passionate love, resignation, and despair!—for in this wicked world are there not marriages without affection, children without obedience, falsehood without pity, and cruelty without remorse?

There is a public as well as a private home for the 'grand,' but the usages of the two localities are

very dissimilar. Its public home is in the Hall of Music; it has regular hours of employment; its exterior is subject to the visitation of much dust, and its interior to the permeations of tobacco-smoke. It wakes to a life of late hours; and it sleeps a daily sleep in the tuneless halls with only tall, thin music-stands for companions. With the combustion of the first gas jet, it revives, and has its internal arrangements exposed to view, ready for the sentimental and comic efforts it is to support under the supervision of the gentleman with the needlessly long hair.

This specimen, be it understood, is modern, and distinct from that thin-legged, light-coloured relic to be found in ladies' schools of remote localities; vicarages where the living is small, but the family large; and in ghostly London houses, boasting a tessellated hall, with a night-porter, and a chair for him to sit in like an abutment of old Westminster Bridge, covered with black leather. The legs of these dear old 'grands' terminate in a brazen imitation of a lion's foot; their sides are adorned with ornaments suggestive of coffin handles; and the maker's name is made known by inlaid wooden letters, surrounded with a wreath of sweet-peas and convolvulus. The fingers which discoursed Mr Clemente's *Sonatas*, and the famous *Rondo* by Mr Steibelt, facetiously called *The Storm*, have lost their rosy tips, and shrunk away to ghastly bones.

Happily for society, those remarkable pianos known as 'cabinets,' which inconsiderate heads of families sometimes fancy 'good enough to practise upon,' have become obsolete. Lives there the man, woman, or child, who does not hold in utter contempt that obtrusive, ungainly, grotesque contrivance, which, like Peeping Tom of Coventry, reaches nearly to the ceiling? A most fearful sight is the amplitude of silken folds, radiating over its unmeaning face; but worse still is that abominable ornament in the middle, that will follow you wherever you go, like an impertinent eye; those fluted legs; and, unkindest cut of all, that spiteful desk, which comes down on your fingers with an unexpected slap, as the door of a mousetrap does on the tail of a captured cheese-eater.

The world once contained a 'cabinet,' and a curiosity in its way, combining the functions of a piano and cupboard. It was fitted with shelves, and the front opened like a doll's house. An accommodating machine was this, from which sweet sounds could be extracted, and in which any quantity of old boots could be stored. More than usually ugly it certainly was; but if furniture were destroyed for its ugliness, man would be left with hardly a stick to sit down upon, and homes rendered desolate as the great Sahara. The poor old 'cabinet' is often seen in the second-hand general fixture-shops of the Surrey side, rearing its gaunt, ill-used form among cheap looking-glasses, which reflect its ungainliness in a distorted manner. The worn-out 'light of other days' is there, hemmed in by cheap and insecure sofas, old leather-covered chairs, japanned tea-canisters, weights and scales, carpenters' tools, flat irons strung on a chain, and highly-coloured lithographic German burlesques upon nature. In dust and dirt, and thorough draughts, the once pampered 'cabinet' languishes—till, last and most bitter degradation—the veteran is sold for 'old mahogany.'

From antiquity, we come to that piano with the latest improvements, the property of a widow about to leave her native shore, and who traps the

unwary through an eighteenpenny advertisement in a daily paper. This bereaved 'party' closes not her ears to any reasonable offer, but opens her heart and her doors to the sympathetic stranger in search of an instrument. The one she has to dispose of is similarly constituted to those proceeding from the extensive establishment of Messrs Tinkettle, Greenwood, & Co., whose premises cover some acres of ground, and whose promises cover a large expanse of blue glazed paper; who are in possession of a whole mint of medals; and whose pianos fulfil expectations in one sense only, that is, in Messrs Tinkettle, Greenwood, & Co. being able to get rid of them. When an instrument has borne the transit from their extensive manufactory to the castle of some mistaken Englishman, its behaviour becomes most extraordinary. It is soon patent to the delicate *tympana* of the household that the new arrival is a toneless, tuneless delusion. The whole thing is a heartless mockery. That highly-polished exterior reflects only the disconsolate visage of the individual who tries to play upon it and fancy it is 'all right.' Its interior is disordered, and, with perverse obstinacy, it refuses to come 'all right,' or anywhere near such a pitch of perfection. Excuses are for a time affectionately made for its deficiencies, in the same tone that the eccentricities of wild young men are accounted for. It is not supposed to have 'settled down' yet. The piano straightway begins that sinking process, till at last it becomes as unstrung as the harps of the children of Israel. Paterfamilias, tormented by the reproaches of his wife and progeny, contemplates an action at law against those bland deceivers, Messrs Tinkettle, Greenwood, & Co. As the piano sinks into disuse, its vagaries closely resemble those of haunted houses. On quiet Sunday afternoons, when the two gray heads of the family take their eighty winks, the strings snap, and disturb the old peoples' slumbers, with a report like the flying of corks from bottles of green gooseberry-wine. The specimen of Messrs Tinkettle, Greenwood, & Co.'s mechanical skill and commercial enterprise finally cracks across the abdomen, and is for ever silent as a Japanese after the 'happy dispatch.'

We now come to another piano, whose place of abode is an artist's studio. Its surroundings are of the most varied description; and the air it breathes is strongly impregnated with tobacco-smoke. Mostly small, and very plain in appearance, it is seldom closed. Loaded with fragments of costume, plaster-casts, tobacco jars, pipes, and gloves for *le box*, as the French say, it serves as a kind of impromptu sideboard. Young Charley Camelhair, its owner, would not, at his direst need, think of parting with the little piano, for the sake of the two pretty sisters down at home who gave it to him. C. C. is sometimes rather 'hard up,' and almost inclined to accept the shelter offered by those who can ill afford it. At those times, Charley the bearded gets melancholy, so he fetches his friend old Quaver. With their modest glasses of beer, they sit down and charm away the low spirits, though by dreamy and most mournful music. Charley thinks as he hears the children playing in the London court, hard by, how the golden sun is now sinking behind the Exmoor hills; and how the ruddy light sifts through the glossy bands of his sisters' hair, as they stand among the roses in the old farm-garden. He fancies he sees the thin mist rising in the valley, and the cows loitering home across the

meadow. He fancies, too, that he hears the whisper of the distant sea, and that he sees his old father smoking his evening pipe, watching meanwhile the rosy clouds float upwards from the bosom of the English Channel. Poor Charley remembers it was on such a June evening he laid his simple, homely heart at his cousin's feet. He remembers that her hand lay cold and passive in his, and that his love was unanswered. He has to some extent outlived his grief; but with the thought of home comes the recollection of that night, and Charley is, after all, only mortal, especially when these memories cross his restless mind, and his thoughts wander back to the West Country hills.

Last, but not quite least in the scale, is the seaside lodging-house piano. This originates the announcement with 'use of piano,' a privilege which sometimes implies much abuse of it also. It is generally a middle-aged 'square,' with an air of faded respectability and better times, struggling against the disgust it seems to expect. It is never by any chance in tune, and when equinoctial gales begin to cover the distant sea with crisp wreaths of foam, the lodging-house piano's constitution seems in close sympathy with the inclement weather. As the barometer falls, so falls the piano into a state of lamentable and universal flatness, while a clammy perspiration clings to the ivory. When the season is over, and the last black box of the visitors has been carried to the railway, the lid of the sere and yellow 'square' comes down; the 'use of piano' is over, and it rests till again called upon to swell the attractions of 'genteel lodgings facing the sea.'

So, exemplary reader, do we ourselves serve a season for the enjoyment of others; so are we shelved when there is no further need of us; and so are we coaxed and persuaded into docility, to meet once more with unkindness and neglect.

MIRK ABBEY.

CHAPTER XIII.—AT SIR ROBERT'S GRAVE.

It had been observed, as I have already said, that my Lady had not left the Abbey grounds for these many weeks; but there had been one exception to that course of conduct. She had never omitted to visit, as usual, her late husband's grave, and to lay upon it a posy of spring-flowers, gathered by her own hands; but she did this now in the evening, instead of the daytime, as heretofore. It was not, however, likely that any intruder should be found there at any hour. Whoever of the household saw her walking in the direction of the little church—only a stone's throw from the servants' offices—took great care to avoid her, or to appear, if they needs must meet her, unconscious of her errand; and while she was there, no domestic used the little zigzag path among the grass-grown graves that formed the short-cut to the village. The country folk were forbidden at all times to approach the Abbey by that way, so the sacred spot was almost as private as though it had been an appendage of the Abbey itself, as it had been in the old times. Mirk lay quite out of the high-road, so that no stranger 'stretching his legs,' while the coach changed horses, ever strolled into its God's-acre to spend a profitless five minutes amid its solemn

records; nor, indeed, was there anything in the grave-ground, whatever might have been in the church, to attract such persons, in the way of monument or effigy. Yet the humble graves were all well kept; not broken or dented in, as one too often sees them in such places; nor did the head-stones lean this way and that, as though they strove to wrench up the very mounds they were set to mark; nor were the long rank grasses and the nettles permitted to overgrow the spot, and hide it from the sun. Upon every slab, however, save one, time was doing its work, covering with moss and lichen the gray surface, and filling up the letters on the stones—just as in the hearts of the survivors it was healing the sense of loss, and erasing the memory of the departed one. The sole exception was the stone which commemorated Sir Robert's death. His marble cross was without speck or flaw. It stood in the western corner, in a little plot of garden-ground of its own, and beside it was a vacant space, left there by his widow's desire, that she might herself be laid there when God's good time should come.

It is the evening of the day upon which Master Walter got up so early, and my Lady has come, as usual, to her husband's tomb. Her hand is resting on the top of it, whereon she has just hung a chaplet of fresh-gathered flowers; but her look is fixed upon the western sky, where the glory of the sunken sun yet lingers. It may be but a simple faith that associates heaven with the sky, but it is a very natural one. My Lady's soul was longing to be at rest somewhere beyond those quiet clouds which flecked that golden deep. Death is not so invariably hateful to us as the divines would paint it; it has no terrors for the Good—nay, sometimes not for the Bad either—while to the Wretched it would often be more welcome than the dawn. 'If I could only "fall asleep,"' as is said of the saints,' thought my Lady, 'here, and at this instant, how well for all would it be! Some only live for others, they say, but the best that could possibly happen to all I love would be that I should be laid in my grave. And some have died for others, as God knows I would die for any one of my dear ones, and yet it would be sin in me to die. Ah, husband, husband! thou that liest here under the flowers and the sky, I would to Heaven that I could lie down beside thee now, and never wake! I trust thou dost not know this thing that troubles me, and threatens mine and thine, or thy dear heart would be wrung with pity, although thou wert an angel and in eternal bliss. And but that the Almighty has fixed his canon against self-slaughter—Those were happy days in which I first read that!' mused she, interrupting herself, and carried involuntarily into another current of thought; 'we read it together, you and I, Robert. My new life was just beginning then; never had pupil such a kindly teacher as thou wert. I can bear to think of that; but of thy love, thy noble generous love, thy patient tenderness—Spare me, great Heaven! I did so worship this dead man, and now I live alone; and yet I would not have him here alive, to know what I know, to feel

what I feel, to dread what I dread—no, not though we should be permitted to live together for years, and die within the self-same hour, as I used to pray we might. I thank thee, merciful God, that I am bearing this heavy cross alone; give me strength to carry it, and suffer me to do so—if it please thee—to the end, alone. It is my fault, husband; all mine. When you pressed me to marry you, and I said “No,” I should have said it more firmly. We were not fit for one another.—No, no; not that! I will not say that. You made me what I am; a wife fit for yourself, I do believe; not good, like you—not wise, like you—but one who was a faithful and true helpmate, and with whom you were content. If you could make a sign to me from the earth, or in the air, this moment, I should not be afraid but that it would be one of love. If you, perchance, have come to know every thought in my heart that was in your time—or if you have read it since you died—or if you read it now—still I should not be afraid! I will endeavour to do my duty still; but ah! how foolish are they who say we always know what is our duty! O Robert, what is mine?

She wrung her hands in piteful distraction, and throwing herself down by the grave-side, whispered, as though to the deaf ear beneath: ‘The sea has given up its dead to shame me, and thy children, because of me. What is there for me to do for them except to die!’

‘Hollo, missus! what’s wrong wi’ you?’ inquired a deep hoarse voice. ‘Drunk or sober, I never could abide seeing a woman cry.’

At such a time and place, the sudden and unexpected interruption might well have sent a shudder to any woman’s heart, and it was no wonder that my Lady trembled in every limb. But she gathered herself together with a great effort, and drawing her thick crape veil over her face, arose, and steadily confronted the intruder.

‘Why, it’s my Lady herself!’ cried the new-comer derisively—the party as I’ve promised myself a good look at before I left these diggings. And, dam’me, but now I’ll have it. If I’m anyways rude, you will please to put it down to the brandy in which I have been drinking to the very good health of the big black horse. Now, don’t be so cursedly proud; your son and I—not Sir Richard, for he’s a— Well, you’re his mother, so I won’t say what I was going to about him; but Master Walter, he and I are great friends.—Now, why do you wince? He ain’t so high and mighty but that he can borrow money of your humble servant; but there—there’s no obligation in that, for I love the lad. He’s like—like a dear friend of mine, who was drowned in the sea, years and years ago. Lord, how you do tremble! Why, I’m the last man in the world to hurt a woman, bless you. My nature is altogether soft where they’re concerned; and if it were not so, there was a woman once, my Lady, drowned and dead—the same as I was speaking of—for whose sake every woman since has been in my eyes sort of sacred-like; that is, unless I was in drink.’

It was painfully evident to my Lady that the person who was speaking to her was in the unhappy condition he had just referred to, for he lurched from side to side until he had bethought him of steadying himself by the marble cross; but there was a sort of pathos in his voice, too, which was not the mere maudlin tenderness of the

drunkard. If he had not been drunk, he might not have been tender, but there was evidently genuine feeling in the man, which seemed to deepen as he went on. ‘Now, though you do not speak, I know you’re sorry for me. If I should lift your veil—there, I’m not going to do it—I am sure you would have a tear for a poor fellow who has been knocked about the world for three parts of his life, and has not made a single friend—not one, not one; and if he went back home, who would not see a face he knew—it is so long ago that he was there—and who needs a woman’s voice to comfort him if ever a man did.’

‘What’s all this to me, sir?’ asked my Lady in low and broken tones. ‘I wish to be left alone here—by this grave.’

‘What—is—all—this—to you?’ returned the man with vindictive deliberation. ‘Have you no heart, then, you proud woman, like your eldest son?’ Then once more altering his manner, he continued: ‘Now, do not be angry with me, or you may be sorry for it, but rather pity me. This grave contains what is dear to you, it seems; but you have those alive who love you also! Now, I have not even a grave. The only creature on earth who ever loved me—and I loved her too, ah how dearly, though I could not keep even then from drink—she lies buried beneath the stormy waves. I cannot come, as you can, to this tomb, and say: “Here she sleeps,” and weep over it, and be sorry for my sins, for I know not where, in all the waste of ocean, her bones may lie. So, for many years I never looked upon the sea without the sense that I was looking upon one great grave. Am I speaking truth or not?’

He stopped and clutched her by the arm, and fiercely bade her tell him if she believed his words or no.

‘I do believe you, sir,’ returned my Lady firmly. ‘Beneath your bronzed and bearded face, I see your woes at work, and I am sorry for you.’

‘Thank you, Lady; you have a pleasant and kind voice, with music in it such as I have not heard for many a day. You are sorry for me, but you know not half my woes; I have never told them to any human ear; although at times, when I have been all alone—upon the treeless prairie, not knowing whether I was on the right track or lost, or on the mountain-top in strange and savage lands, and chiefly when a solitary man on shipboard, keeping watch while others slept—then have I spoken of these things aloud, and asked of Heaven why it used me so. But now—as some black cloud will overpass a nighty plain, and never shed a drop, but presently, on coming on a little valley fenced with round green hills, will straight dissolve in rain, so I, who have been so silent for so long, am moved to speak by you. What magic is this you bear about you, woman? Let me see your face.’

‘There is no need for that, sir,’ answered my Lady, stepping back, and motioning with her arm with dignity. ‘The magic of which you speak lies only in a feeling heart and an attentive ear. If it is any comfort to you to tell your story, I will gladly listen to it.’

‘Yes, it seems to be a comfort,’ replied the other thoughtfully, ‘although I never cared to speak of it before. You see me, Lady, now, a brawling, drunken wretch—upon whose reckless soul there may be murder, to-morrow or next day, as like as not—but anyhow a broken man. I was not

always thus. When I was young, I was a hopeful and hard-working lad enough—only a little thoughtless. I was honest, too, notwithstanding that the law and I fell out; but I was fond of jovial company and good liquor, and what I got at sea—for I had a snack of my own at Bleamouth—that I spent very quickly on shore. If I had had a wife, or even a mother, I think it might have been different; but I had no relations, or at least none who were my friends. I could not bear advice, and much less interference and dictation, and so, you see, I was alone in the world—until I met with Lucy Meade— You shiver, my Lady. Am I keeping you too long in the night-air ?

Lady Lisgard shook her head, and murmured :
‘ No ; go on ! ’

‘ Tis thirty years ago this very year—that’s many thousand days, and tens of thousand leagues have I sailed since then—and yet, I swear, it seems but yesterday I crossed those water-meadows with my gun—for I was after moorfowl—and came upon her cottage on the Blea. White-walled, white-roofed—for in those parts they paint them so—it nestled under a rocky hill, crested with heather; and in front the river ran, swollen with recent rains, through a broad weedy flat, and so, between the rounded sand-hills, to the sea. Before the cottage was a porch with honeysuckles trained upon it, and one full-flowering fuchsia upon either side. Then, as I drew near, I saw her sitting in the porch mending her father’s net. Ah, Heaven, I see her now ! ’

The speaker paused and sighed; but looking out into the viewless air, as if upon some picture hung in space, he did not mark my Lady start and clasp her hands, as though some dreadful thing had come upon her suddenly, against which none could help her but only God alone.

‘ It is a story, Lady Lisgard, that you doubtless know,’ continued the man, ‘ for even among lords and ladies love will come. I asked her for a drink of water, and she brought me with ‘ it Hope, Resolve, Repentance—I know not what. From that moment forth, I lived my life anew. Then the next day, and the next, I sought the cottage; and when I had won my way with Lucy—that was her name, my Lady—did I tell you?—I pleaded my cause with the old fisherman, her father—her mother being already ours—but for a long time in vain.

‘ She was his only child, his only prop and stay, and he was proud of her, as well he might have been, for she was gentle of speech as you yourself or any lady born, and scholarly and wise beyond her humble state, and, young as she was, already had had many a suitor; but she had never loved but me. ‘ Tis like enough you cannot fancy that; but then my former self was not like this.’ He pointed to his heart with a scornful gesture, as though something loathsome had taken the place of what had wont to be there.

‘ Besides, the fairest, purest creature upon earth was she, and she took all things for pure. Not that there was much against me either, except that I loved good liquor; besides, I only drank for pleasure then, and now— But let that be. Well, we were married. We lived with the old couple at the cottage, as Lucy wished, partly for their sakes, partly, as I have often thought since then, for mine—that I might be kept out of bad company, such as there was plenty of at Bleamouth at that time—poachers, smugglers, and idlers of all sorts. But this was

done too late. I have said that the Law and I fell out: that was for poaching—and Curse the law, say I, which rich men make for the poor perforce to break. I never poached after I married, but before that time I had shot a hare or two; and once—but months ago—there had been a fray with keepers, and I had clubbed my gun, and struck my hardest, like the rest. There had been broken bones on both sides, but the matter had blown over, as I thought, when all of a sudden I received certain news that I was marked for one of the offenders, and that men were coming to take me from my Lucy’s arms to jail. I told her this, for I had kept nothing from her all along, and I knew that she had courage, or she would never have married such a man as me; but I forgot, in my selfish roughness, that it is one thing to be brave in things that concern one’s self, and another to be able to bear to see others suffer. ‘ Ah, Heaven ! ’ exclaimed she, ‘ but this will kill my father ! ’ To have his honest house entered by men in search of felons, and to see his daughter’s husband with the gyves upon him—that will be his death, I know.” The auld wife said so likewise.

‘ They were right, I think, for when we came to break the thing to him, and warn him of what might happen, although all was said to excuse what I had done, and to soften the consequences that might come of it, he raved like one distracted. “ Let him leave my cottage ! ” cried he; “ he has worked mischief enough already; he has robbed me of my daughter’s love, and now he would take from me my good name. Let him leave this honest roof ! ” ‘ But where he goes, I must go, father,’ replied Lucy, with her arms about the old man’s neck; and in the end he was brought to see that it must be so. So I changed my name to that of Derrick, which I bear now, and fled from home to a great seaport, and there, on board an emigrant-ship bound for the other side of the world, took passage not only for myself and wife, but for her parents. It was agreed that all were to begin life again in a strange land, so that I, too, might begin it once more with that fair start which I had lost in my own country. Thus the poor old man and his wife were torn from the comfortable home that had sheltered them for half a century, and forced in their old age to cross the seas. No, not to cross them: would to Heaven they might have been suffered so to do ! It was ordained that I, who had thus far caused their wretchedness, should also be the means of their death. A most terrible storm overtook us at midnight, while yet in sight of lights on English land, and in the midst of it our vessel sprung a leak. I knew that I had a brave woman for my wife, but then I found she was a heroine; I knew my Lucy was good as she was fair, but then she proved herself an angel. There were men on board who screamed and wailed like children. She never uttered a cry or shed a tear. She felt that she was going to heaven with all she loved (for she always thought the best of every one), and therefore death had no terrors for her. But I—I felt myself a murderer. I did what I could to save the two old people, and got them into the only boat that left the ship; but it had not parted from us twice its length, before it capsized before our eyes.

Lucy had refused to leave me, and when the vessel began to sink, I lashed her to a spar, and then myself; and so for a little time we floated. But the great waves drenched us through and

through, and dashed upon us so that we had hardly time to breathe. The spar was not large enough for both our weights, which sank it too low in the water; and so I secretly unloosed the cords that fastened me, and clambered to my Lucy's side, and kissed her cold wet cheek, and whispered: "Farewell, Lucy."

Here the speaker paused, and covered his rough face. My Lady, too, was deeply moved. For near a minute, neither spoke. Then the man resumed: "I slipped into the sea, and struck out aimlessly enough, but with the instinct of a swimmer. Fool that I was to wish to live!" Again he paused; but this time, to mutter an execration.

"And did not all your care and unselfish love suffice to save her?" asked the listener tenderly.

"No, Lady. She was drowned. I never expected otherwise in such a sea. The whole ship's company were lost, except myself. When nearly spent, I came upon a huge piece of the wreck, and held on to it till daylight, when I found myself at sea. I would to God that it had not been so! I was nearer Heaven at that time than I have ever been since, and I ought to have perished then, when all which made life precious had already gone: it would have been far better to have died with her, than to live without her. But I did live. After two days and three nights of hunger and thirst, a vessel picked me up, a sodden mass of rags, half-dead, and half-mad. They nursed me and made me well—it was a cruel kindness—and after many days, I was able to tell them what had happened. "Ay, then," said they, "the pilot was right who came to us off Falmouth. It was the *North Star* that went to pieces in the storm; you are the sole survivor, man, of all on board. Nothing came on shore that night, or could have come on such a coast as that, save spars and corpses."

There was silence for a minute's space: the strong man's chest laboured in vain to give him breath for utterance; in vain his horny hand dashed the big tears from his brown cheeks; they still rained on.

"Alas, poor man!" said my Lady, in a broken and pitiful voice, "I feel for you from my very soul. And when you found your three-weeks' bride was dead—I think you said you had married her but three weeks—what then became of you?"

"What matters?" asked the man half-angrily. "It mattered nothing even to myself. The vessel took me—it was all one to me whither she was bound—to New South Wales. And in the New World I did indeed begin a new life—but it was a far worse one than in the old. I was reckless, hopeless already, and I was not long in becoming godless. When that is said, a man's history is the same, wherever he lives, whatever he does, and however he ends."

He stamped his foot upon the ground, as though he would keep down some rising demon, and his voice once more resumed the hoarseness it had exchanged for something almost plaintive throughout his story.

"Ralph, Ralph," began my Lady reprovingly, and touching his rough sailor's sleeve with her gloved hand—

"And how the devil should you know my name is Ralph?" interrupted the other in blank amazement.

"My maid, Mary Forest, told me it was Ralph," returned my Lady calmly.

"Did she? Well, that's no reason why you should call me by it. However, since you seem to feel so unexpected an interest in your humble servant, I will make bold to ask a favour of you." His manner was rough and defiant as ever now, like that of a sturdy vagrant soliciting alms of a defenceless woman.

"You are angry with yourself," said my Lady quietly, "for having given way to feelings which do you honour; that is a base sort of regret indeed. You try to persuade yourself that I have affected a sympathy which I did not feel, but you do not succeed. I cannot but be interested in one who, with all his faults, has certainly in the hour of death and danger behaved nobly, and who must, I feel assured, have the seeds of good in him yet, despite his wild and despairing talk."

"No, woman, I have not," returned the man with vehemence. "Dismiss that from your mind at once. Ralph Derrick is no hypocrite, whatever he is, and he tells you now that he is a lost man, in the sense which such as you understand it. I don't know why I have spoken to you as I have done just now—some springs of feeling that I had deemed were quite dried up flowed at your voice as they have not done these thirty years—but don't imagine that I am soft-hearted. I am not a bad fellow when I'm sober, and not put out; but then I'm seldom sober, and I'm very easily put out. Your son, Sir Richard, has put me out, for one. I should be sorry for him if he and I had much to do with one another.—But there, you need not turn so pale; for, for your sake—and for Master Walter's sake, who has got my Lucy's eyes, and look, and voice, God bless him—Sir Richard is safe from me; albeit I have let fly a bullet before now at men who have wronged me less than he has done—an insolent young devil! It was a man like him, one of your landowners, forsooth, whose persecution drove me from my native shore, and drowned my wife and the old couple." "Damn all such tyrants, says Ralph Derrick."

It was difficult to associate the depressed and solemn speaker of a few minutes back with this passionate and lawless man, his huge fingers opening and shutting in nervous excitement, his eyeballs suffused with blood, and each hair of his vast beard, as it seemed, bristling with vengeful fury.

"You were saying that you wished to ask a favour of me, Mr Derrick?" interposed my Lady quietly. "What is it I can do for you?"

"Well, you can do this," returned he roughly: "you can cease to set your waiting-maid, Mary, against me, as you have hitherto done. I am not a bad match for her, as she knows, in point of money; and if she finds herself able to put up with little starts of temper, and not to grudge me a drop of drink at times, why, what is that to you?"

"Have you told her, may I ask, of what you have been telling me, Mr Derrick?"

"Yes; at least I told her I was a widower; I never felt a call to tell her more; she would not understand, look you. She asked me what this leaden locket was I wear about my neck, with this poor broken piece of stick in it, and something withered clinging to it still, and I told her it was a charm against the ague. Now, you—I'll wager you can tell me what it holds."

"No, not I. How should I know?" inquired my Lady hurriedly.

"You do know, anyway. This fellow is not the

sort of man to carry charms, you think; and all that's sacred to him in the world or out of it hangs on his love that's drowned. This, then, must be some token—were there not fuchsias upon either side the porch where first they met? There, now, you have it, I can see.

'You plucked, perhaps, a piece of fuchsia when you plighted troth,' murmured my Lady.

'Ay, when we plighted troth,' answered the other mournfully; 'and breaking a twig in twain, all blossoming then, but now—see, dried to dust—each kept a half. I have seen far up the hills in Mexico a piece of the true Cross, that's held to be the richest possession that the Church calls her own in those parts; well, that's not sure; it may be or it mayn't be what they term it; but this poor twig has never been out of my sight or reach, and so I kiss and worship this, my relic, as no devotee can do.—Now, what would Mary Forest say to that? She is not like my Lucy; no, indeed, no more than I am like the Ralph of those old days; and if she were, should I be fit for her? My Lucy married to a drunken, gambling ruffian! 'Tis blasphemy to think upon it. But as for this wench, your waiting-maid, she and I are suited well enough. She wants a husband, and is willing to take me; while I, who have been tossed so long on the stormy billows of life, shall be glad to come to anchor. It is you only—she told me so herself—who stand in the way.'

'And would you have me, then, advise this woman—being my faithful friend as well as my servant—to unite her fortunes with a man who, from his own lips I learn, is hopeless, reckless, godless, a drunkard and a gambler'—

'Hell and Furies!' broke forth the other impatiently, 'will you dare to use what I have just now told you against myself! Beware, beware, proud woman, how you cross a desperate man! Since my life is worthless, as you paint it, you may be sure that I shall hold the risk of losing it lighter than better men: there is nothing that I dare not do to those who cross me.'

'I have no fear for myself, sir, and least of all things, Ralph Derrick, do I fear death,' answered my Lady calmly. 'Yet willingly I promise that I will never breathe one syllable to human ear of what you have said to-night.'

'So far so well, my Lady. When I found you here, I was on my way to court your waiting-woman, but she does not expect me. She has written me her answer "Yes" or "No" before this, and I shall get it to-morrow in London: it was agreed between us she should do so. I was to have started to town this afternoon, but I overslept myself—not but that I got up early enough, as Master Walter will witness—and missed the train from Dalwynch. I am going thither to-night; but, in the meantime, I thought I could come back and take a farewell kiss from Mary, and her "Yes" from her own lips. I will receive no other answer, and if such should reach me, I shall know from whom it comes. The matter is in your hands, I know; come, let us part friends.'

'God forbid we should part enemies,' replied my Lady fervently; 'I will wrong you in nothing, but be assured I shall do my duty at all hazards.'

'And be assured I shall have my way, Lady Lisgard, at all risks,' returned the other grimly. 'Are you too proud to take my hand at parting?'

For a single instant, my Lady hesitated; then reaching out her fingers, they met his own stretched

out at fullest length, for the tomb lay between them. They shook hands across Sir Robert Lisgard's grave.

CORNISH LEGENDS.

CORNWALL is one of the most original and one of the most un-English of English counties. It is an isolated Celtic district, abutting on the old Saxon frontier. Clinging to the past, jealous of the new, the Cornish miners and fishermen, stay-at-homes themselves, and unvisited by many strangers, have retained among them more old legends and traditions of the past than even the Welsh or the Highlanders. The country into which Athelstan's hungry sword drove the chafing Briton, was the last region into which the railway engineer penetrated. Brindley never drew the liquid lines of his canals through the Cornish moors, and the road-maker, that greatest of all civilisers, was very slow in penetrating west of the Tamar.

Undisturbed by the railway shriek of doom, the giants lingered long about the granite headlands of St Just; the fairies circled in the moonshine about the moors of Bodmin, years after they had quitted the green meadows of Devonshire for ever; and even now the mermaid is seen (by the natives) shining through the green waves that wash against the slate cliffs of King Arthur's castle at Tintagel. The Demon-hunter continues to hurry his hell-hounds on autumn nights over the wild wastes of St Austell and St Agnes, and the ghosts of witches still mutter their incantations over the blown sand-hills of Perranzabuloe. As once into their strange promontory of rock and moor, the Britons retired, as a sediment precipitates itself to the bottom of a glass, so do their legends and superstitions still remain there, filtered down from the rest of England, as the Celtic race receded westward.

The brothers Grimm did such great things for German legend, that for a time we over-petted the Spectre of the Brocken, and made too much of that reserved and eccentric personage, the Wild Huntsman. The French antiquaries, too, dived down and brought up such curious scraps of Breton folk-lore, of fairy, giant, Washerwoman spectre, and Treasure-seeker, that we almost forgot to explore our own legendary wealth, and it still has to be explored.

Mr Hunt,* the learned secretary of the Royal Cornwall Polytechnic Society, has now done for Cornwall what Mrs Bray once did for Devon. During thirty years, whether resting in mine-levels, climbing up mine-ladders, or seated on timber settles by fishermen's fires, this zealous antiquary has been gathering the stories that are now fast dying out. Wesleyanism, education, railways, are fast effacing the old-world tales, as the language was wiped out more than a century ago. As records for the ethnologist, historian, and mythologist, they are invaluable, for their evidence is as ancient as it is unbiased. They exist like 'the giant hedges' beyond Penzance, to rouse and yet to baffle curiosity.

It is especially to the isolation of Cornwall that we are indebted for the preservation of these semi-mythological legends. In 1788, a traveller was

* *Popular Romances of the West of England, or the Drolls, Traditions, and Superstitions of Old Cornwall.* Collected and edited by Robert Hunt, F.R.S. 2 vols. Hotten, 1865.

five hours going from Loo to Lostwithiel. No carriage could be used on the shore-road. Thirty years ago, a *kitterine*, or van, was the only means of communication between Penzance and Plymouth. When a mail-coach was first introduced, it was reserved for wealthy persons.

The wandering minstrel and story-teller, who lingered in Cornwall till thirty or forty years ago, also served to perpetuate these stories to our own time. It was the newspaper that killed them. Carew, in his *Survey of Cornwall*, describes the story-teller as as well known a character as the jester was a century ago in Scotland. Sir Tristrem, the last of the Wideslades, whose estates were forfeited in the Great Rebellion, led a walking-life with his harp from country-house to country-house. He was the musician, the jester, the newsmonger, and the story-teller of the district. A correspondent of Mr Hunt's, still living, remembers one of these droll tellers, an old blind soldier, in the parish of Cury, who 'touted' for a conjuror, and sang ballads from place to place. His name was Anthony James, and he was always called Uncle, as a term of respect. He usually had a boy, a dog, and a fiddle with him. He neither begged nor offered for sale, and although sure of a welcome and bed and board in every house he called at, he seldom stopped anywhere more than one night, as it required all his time to visit each of his clients once a year. As soon as he reached a house, he stretched himself on the chimney stool, and slept till supper-time. After his frugal supper of bread and milk, he tuned his fiddle, and sung 'missus' her favourite ballad, *The Woeful Hunting* (Chevy Chase), *Lovely Nancy*, one of the old Cornish three-part songs, or

Cold blows the wind to-day, sweetheart;
Cold are the drops of rain;
The first true love that ever I had,
In the green-wood was slain.

Uncle Anthony had also a knack of turning Scotch and Irish songs into Cornish ditties. For religious folks, he had in his wallet *The Babes in the Wood*; but he carefully avoided the 'Conorums,' as he called the Methodists. His favourite story was of the ancestors of the conjuror Luty, for whom he reverently touted—taking a mermaid prisoner, and obtaining from her the power of breaking the spells of witches. The same correspondent also remembered another old droll teller, old Billy Frost of St Just, who used to attend the parish feasts and public-house, or, to use the real Cornish term, the Kiddle-a-wink revels. In 1829, there still existed two droll tellers in Cornwall, and from one of these Mr Hunt gathered some of his old-world stories.

Let us begin with our old friends the giants, those stalking lubber-fiends, so unwieldy, so weak in the knees, so ferocious as to appetite, so feeble in point of brain—those cannibal kings, whom in childhood we feared, and yet despised. Who were the giants? They were not Goths, Cimbri, Franks, or Saxons, but Gauls, Britons, and Celts—those Titans and Cyclops, who built and fought when the Jews were buying tin at the Land's End, and the Druids worshipped in the forest of Dartmoor. Looming through the mists of the past, the Celtic warrior, with his great toil and cruel wars, appeared like a giant. Dead men only a century old have turned into ghosts, and demons, and boding spectres; but it takes ages to grow

appear as primeval workers and early conquerors.

The traditions of giants are numerous in Cornwall. The giants of Treccrobben dwelt in a castle on a grand wild hill which rises in view of St Michael's Mount, and close to the village of Lelant. On the flat rocks inside the castle they sacrificed their victims. In the days of the wars and troubles, when their race was dying out, they buried their treasures in the granite caverns of this hill, where they still remain, guarded by the fairies.

In several parts of Cornwall there still exist huge rocks, said to have been used by the giants when hurling or playing at athletic games. The Titans of Treccrobben and St Michael's Mount often met to play at 'bob-buttons.' The throw was generally made from Treccrobben Hill, and the Mount was the 'bob,' on which huge slabs of rock served for the buttons. Holiburn of the Cairn was a giant, who is said to have married a farmer's daughter. Once, when watching some Cornishmen hurling, he was so pleased at the game made by a young peasant, that in sheer good-nature he killed him by patting him on the head. The giant of Trebiggan was a much less benevolent son of Anak. He is said to have dined every day on children whom he fried on a flat rock outside his cave. His arms were so long that he would snatch the sailors from ships passing by the Land's End; and sometimes, after having had his fun, replace them again. Perhaps, after all, the Phœnicians and Greeks who came to Cornwall to buy tin, brought stories of Polyphemus and the Cyclops to England, for Trebiggan and his kinsmen bear many points of resemblance with the giants of the *Odyssey*.

In some of these 'drolls,' it is too evident that the story-teller has well earned his name by having embroidered the old legend, and that, too, pretty handsomely. Of these aberrations from truth, the history of 'Tom and the Giant Blunderbuss' is a painful example. Tom was a lazy young giant near Hayle, and his unwieldy rival lived in a castle towards St Ives. Tom, in driving a wagon full of beer from market, trespassed on the giant's territory. The giant attacked him with his club, which happened to be a young elm-tree; Tom fought him with a wheel and an axle-tree, and eventually ran him through the body with the pole. As a reward for his fair fighting and courage, the giant left Tom all the gold, copper, and tin in his castle. This generous giant figured for centuries in the old guise-dances at Cornish festivals. The giant Bolster was another hero of Titanic days. He lived on St Agnes Beacon Hill, and the earth-work near Trevenance Porth still bears his name. This monster could stand with one foot on St Agnes Beacon, and the other on Carn Brea Hills, six miles apart. A bad husband, he employed his wife in carrying and removing blocks of granite from hill to hill. He fell in love with St Agnes, and that virtuous lady, weary of his importunities, offered to marry him if he would fill a hole in the cliff at Chapel Porth with his blood; but as the hole opened into the sea, unknown to the obtuse and unobservant giant, he fell a victim to his love. The red stain still visible in the cliff shews where the deluge of blood once poured. Nor was the giant of Goran, who dug the huge intrenchment there, twenty feet broad, and twenty-four feet high, in one night, one whit wiser. The latter fiend being ill, called in a subtle doctor, who played him

great medicine-man kicked him over the cliff, and killed him. The promontory is still called the Dodman or the Dead Man. The Cupboard, a curious gorge on the coast near Portwreath, was once the cavern of the giant Wrath, who waited there for wrecks and drifts. Wading out to sea, he used to tie the boats to his girdle, walk back to his den, and there devour the luckless fishermen. Jack the Tinker figures largely in the giant stories. He was a friend of that Tom who slew Blunderbuss, and was remarkable for a bull's-hide coat, which was as tough as iron. He thrashed Tom at singlestick, and taught him to draw a bow with his toes, so as to kill hares and kids that were almost out of sight. Jack drove the enchanter Pengerswick out of his castle, and dug a pit for a vicious old giant at Morva, into which Jack's enemy fell, and broke his wicked old neck.

Very much akin to the giants, though dating only from the seventeenth century, is the Demon Tregeagle, that terror of Cornish children. This demon, when in the flesh, was the steward to a lord down Bodmin-way; he destroyed deeds, forged titles, and persecuted the poor. As a magistrate, he put to death innocent persons, to hide his own iniquities; as a landlord, he was rapacious, grinding, and unscrupulous. He is reported to have murdered his sister, and broken the hearts of his wives and children. On one occasion, his spirit is said to have been called into court as the witness in a case of a disputed title to some land. Reluctant to retire, the lawyers and churchmen were at last compelled to bind Tregeagle to empty out Dosmery pool with a pierced limpet-shell. This Dosmery is a black lonely pool on the Bodmin moors. One night, chased by demons and hell-hounds, Tregeagle fled to Roach rock, thrust his head in at the east window of the chapel, and implored help of the hermit. The monks of Bodmin then gathered together, and sent the erring spirit to the shore at Padstow to make trusses of sand, and ropes of the same material, with which to bind them. Every night he packs them together; every day the breakers roll them level again. Worn out with his howlings, the priest of Padstow banished him to Bareppa, and there condemned him to carry sacks of sand across the estuary of the Loo, and empty them at Porthleven, till the beach was clean down to the rocks. Every night the sweep of the Loo round towards the Lizard effaced the poor creature's labours. One night, however, the mocking devils tripped up the sack-bearer, and so Tregeagle fell, and the sand pouring out, raised the bar that destroyed the harbour of Helstone. Once more banished, the unjust steward was sentenced to sweep the sands from Porth-curnow Cove round Tol-Peden-Penwith headland. There Tregeagle still labours. His roarings are heard during the coming storms, and on the moors his shrieks pierce the night-winds.

The 'merry maids,' or mermaids, figure as largely in Cornish as they do in Breton mythology. They are descended from the Greek Sirens and the Norse water-spirits, and are firmly believed in all through the tin country. Morva, a parish between Zennor and St Just, is famous for them; and families still exist there who are supposed to have received gifts from them. At Morva they are seen as 'ladies' on the rocks, going from the shore to isolated reefs, or weeping and wailing on the beach.

Padstow harbour is said to have been choked

with sand by a mermaid, in revenge for being shot at by a fisherman. The town of Seaton, near Looe, was, tradition also says, overwhelmed with sand for a similar reason. Near the beautiful serpentine cove of Lamorna, not far from the Lizard Cliff, a lady shews herself previous to a storm with comb, mirror, and other fitting decorations, to compensate for the fish's tail. Before a wreck, she has been heard singing plaintively, the moaning spirits along the shore echoing her lamentations. Young men are known to have swum off to the rock that she haunts, lured by her songs; but they have never returned.

At Cury, near the Lizard, there exists a strange tradition. An old man walking in a retired cove, came suddenly upon a rock on which was seated a beautiful girl, with fair hair so long that it covered her whole body. Alarmed at the intrusion, the mermaid slid off the rock into a deep transparent pool, and there, crying, angry, and frightened, held a parley. It appeared she had strayed from her husband and family, who were asleep out of the reach of the hot sunshine, in a cave at Kynance Cove. She implored the old man to take her on his back to the sea, as there was a dry bar of sand now stretching between her and her watery home. For this favour, she gave him her comb, and the power to break witches' spells, to charm diseases, to discover thieves, and to restore stolen goods. Whenever afterwards the old man wished to see his young friend, he had only to go to a half-tide rock, and comb the water with the mermaid's comb. He afterwards carried the water-spirit to a secret place, where, unobserved, she might see the funny 'people, who had their tails split so that they might walk on them.' The mermaid offered to make the old man young again, but he refused; nor would he obey her wish, to visit her home under the waves.

In a valley near Perranzabuloe, by 'the buried church of the sands' there is a still wilder tradition. The wife of a yeoman named Penna, while bathing her infant daughter in a pool amid the arched rocks of Perran, suddenly saw the child, as if in a paroxysm of joy, leap from her arms, and disappear in the water. The mother's terror and agony were soon, however, removed by the babe swimming up to the surface of the water smiling, and brighter and more beautiful than before. The mother saw no difference in the child, but the old crones in the village at once dubbed it a mermaid's changeling. Years passed away as they are in the habit of passing, and Selina Penna grew up a beautiful woman. The squire's nephew, urged by the praises of a malevolent man, a rejected suitor of her mother's, saw her, fell in love with her, and seduced her. Broken-hearted at her disgrace, she died, and was buried in the churchyard on the sands. The night after a revel, the squire's nephew (Walter Trewoofe), straying on the sands, heard a voice singing a dirge, and passing round a rock, discovered a beautiful woman seated at the mouth of a cavern. She was like his buried love, but she disappeared when he seized her by the hand. On another visit to the same cavern, the maiden, as he addressed her, turned into a mermaid, who seized him in her arms. A storm rose, the waves broke round the rock, and Walter Trewoofe found too late that the vengeance of the water-spirits had overtaken him. Still the mermaid clasped him, till the sea washed them both to the highest pinnacle of the rocks, and then

bore them out to the ocean. That night, during the fiercest of the storm, the water-spirits were seen tossing from one to another the corpse of the seducer and destroyer of one of their race.

The Cornish fairies are less sprightly and more malevolent than those of Devonshire. There are five species of Cornish fairies—the Small People; the Spriggans, the ghosts of the giants who guard treasure; the Piskies, mischievous sprites who mislead travellers, and ride the farmers' horses; the Knockers, or mine spirits; and the Brownies, or domestic sprites.

The Small People are by some supposed to be the old Druids, gradually becoming smaller and smaller, because they will not renounce their idolatry. They resemble the elves of Scandinavia in many of their attributes. Others imagine them to be the spirits of the old inhabitants of Cornwall who lived centuries before the birth of Christ. Too bad for heaven, too good for hell, they are condemned to remain on earth, and to grow smaller and smaller, till they turn into ants, and then perish.

The Irish have almost the same belief, only they say that the fairies are a portion of the fallen angels, who, less guilty than the rest, were suffered to undergo a final state of probation. At St Ives there is a tradition of a poor woman, who lived on one of the hills near Zennor church-tower, being intrusted by the fairies with a child to nurse. By using some water to wash her eyes with from a magic ewer supplied by the child's father, she became possessed of the power of seeing the fairies anywhere and at all times. Detecting the fairy father stealing fruit at St Ives' market, her power became known, and the fairies put out her right eye. When she got home, the boy was gone, and from that hour she and her husband became poor.

Scrofulous children, in Cornwall, are often supposed to be changelings. Some thirty years since, a poor woman of the hamlet of Treonike lost her little boy in a wood. It was found some days after, asleep on a bed of fern. By his own account, he had been lured into the centre of the wood by supernatural music. Falling asleep, a beautiful lady appeared, and had led him through the palaces of Fairyland. The Gump at St Just has always been notorious as the revelling-ground of the Small People. On one occasion, an old miner hid himself near the gump, in hopes of seizing some of the fairy treasure. At the due time, he saw the hill open to the sound of music. Every blade of grass was hung with coloured glow-worm lamps, every furze-bush sparkled with little stars. Presently appeared innumerable courtiers, soldiers, musicians, and crowds of servants bearing vessels of silver and gold, and cups hollowed out of jewels. Last of all, on thrones, carried upon a platform, came a young prince and princess. As the marriage-feast began, the old man stole round to the back of the mound, to get nearer for a sight at the royal table. To his surprise, the mound was dark there, and as he looked over the hillock, he was startled by seeing thousands of little eyes all intently and mischievously fixed on him. Screwing up his courage, he took off his hat, and raised it to cover the prince, princess, and their little table of gold-plate, when a shrill whistle was heard—his hand remained motionless in the air, and the banquet disappeared. There was a buzz round him, as of a flight of angry bees, and from head to foot he was pricked and pinched. Then he rolled down

the mound, and lay speechless, his arms and legs, like Gulliver's, secured by thousands of little silken strings. As the moon shone out, he saw a fairy, no larger than a dragon-fly, stamping on his nose, and dancing with glee. When the sun arose, he found that he had been tied to the ground by gossamer webs. He shook himself, and was free. Wet, cold, and sulky, he returned home to tell his misfortune to his friends. This was a fairy wedding; but a fisherman of Lelant had once the good-fortune to see the funeral of a queen of the fairies. He was returning from St Ives laden with pilchards, when he heard the bell of Lelant Church toll as if it was muffled. Making his way over the waste and hills of blown sand, he looked in at a window, and saw that the building was illuminated. The fairies dug a little hole near the sacrament-table, and placed in it the body of their queen, throwing in upon it flowers and myrtle branches. When the mourners began to shriek, the fisherman involuntarily shrieked too. Instantly the lights were extinguished, and the intruder was pursued, and pricked and pinched till he had left the little folk far behind in his maddened flight.

These Small People, too, are sometimes as thievish as they are mischievous. Not many years since, a favourite red-and-white cow of a farmer at Bos-francan ceased to give her usual quantity of milk. On the evening of one midsummer's day, the dairymaid who had milked this cow plucked a handful of clover to put on her hat to steady the bucket. Amongst this clover there happened to be a stem with four leaves; this gave the girl power to see the Small People. When she looked, there were thousands of them filling buttercups and foxglove flowers from the milk, and laughing and drinking as they gathered their stolen beverage. By her mother's advice, the dairymaid instantly rubbed the cow's udder with fish-brine, to scare the Small People. The cow never yielded much milk after that, but pined away, and nothing thrived with the farmer.

The little green spots between the cairns near the Logan Rock are called 'the Small People's gardens.' On summer nights, music is heard there, and hundreds of little lights are seen moving among them. Far out at sea, the fishermen smell the scent. By day, the flowers turn to mere ferns and sea-pinks. Sometimes the fairies hold fairs. Some miners saw one once at Bal Lane, in Germoe. Next day, one of them, as he told the story in the mine, fell down the 'bob pit,' and was killed. His companion, who called fairies 'wicked spiteful devils,' was thrown down stairs, and dreadfully bruised. In many fairy stories, as in 'The Adventures of Cherry of Zennor,' a pretty country girl is hired by a fairy to nurse his child. Beguiled into Fairyland, where all is sunshine, and flowers 'grow spontaneous in the open air,' she generally contrives to steal some fairy ointment, anointing her eyes, with which she is enabled to see the fairies, and all their mischievous pranks. The theft is discovered, and she is banished to earth, where she sometimes pines or becomes crazed. In the famous case of Anne Jefferies, a labourer's daughter at St Teath, 1626—1698, who described her adventures in Fairyland, the existence of fits is sufficient to shew that the girl was either very diseased or a great liar.

But the Cornwall Celts have wilder stories than those of the fairies' pranks. They believe in the Demon-horse, that tempts benighted travellers

to mount it; they tell of a suicide ghost rising from its grave on the cross-roads, and leaping up behind a drunken farmer, who had shouted to it. At Boscean, the well-known Spectre Bridegroom legend prevails. In the Cornish story, however, the unhappy girl is saved by a blacksmith, who, with a red-hot iron, burns her dress from the hold of the spectre.

Cairn Kenidsek, a desolate, stone-heaped hill between St Just and Penzance, is said to moan and howl at night over the heath below. The devil and his headless dogs hunt souls there by night, always overtaking them at a certain old stile. Two miners returning by here from Morva, saw demons wrestling, and the devil looking on. When one of the demons was cruelly thrown, the miners, fond of fair-play, and seeing no one help the apparently dying giant, ran up, and whispered Christian hopes into his ear. Instantly the rocks shook as with an earthquake, it grew pitch dark, and the two blazing eyes of Satan were seen to disappear in a great black cloud, that drifted off the west.

A vicar of Wendron, named Jago, was supposed, some centuries since, to have had power to lay ghosts, detect thieves, and bind devils. He never took a groom with him, it is said, in his moorland rides, for the moment he alighted, he had only to strike the earth with his whip, and up started a demon horse-boy. Dando, the priest of St German, was an abandoned wretch, unlike the vicar of Wendron, for he was as cruel as he was profligate. His vices were the vices of the Wild Huntsman, and in his skill he also resembled him. One Sabbath, as he hunted, the devil appeared to him, and claimed the game he had taken. As Dando blasphemously defied the black horseman, Lucifer bore away the priest, and disappeared with a blaze of fire in the waters of the Lynher.

In many of these legends, modern persons have been incorporated with old Celtic superstitions. Let us take as a special example the legend of 'The Spectral Coach.' Parson Dodge, vicar of Tolland, on the Looe Road, from 1713 till his death, was celebrated for laying ghosts. He used to be seen at night pursuing with his horsewhip evil spirits that fled before him. It was he who was said to have exorcised the black coach drawn by headless horses that used to appear on Blackadon Moor.

Even in the present century, however, wild beliefs have sprung up in ignorant parts of Cornwall, just as fungi spring up inevitably from damp and decay. A woman named Sarah Polgrain, who had lived at Ludgvan, was hung at Bodmin for the murder of her husband, a crime to which she had been instigated by a horse-dealer, known in the district as Yorkshire Jack. On the scaffold, the man appeared, and kissed his paramour before the bolt was drawn. It was said that he had there promised to join her after death. The horse-dealer went to sea, and on his return from the Mediterranean in a fruit-ship, was washed off the deck by an enormous and supernatural wave, and presently, in a lightning cloud, the sailors saw the devil, Sarah Polgrain, and Yorkshire Jack pass away out of sight. Bad weather in Ludgvan is still attributed to the exertions of Sarah Polgrain.

There is a curious superstition also at Gorn-hilly, on the Lizard promontory. On a large, lonely piece of water there, known as 'Croft Pasco-Pool,' there is sometimes seen by night a ghostly vessel with lug-sails spread. 'The Ghost of Rosewarne' dates from the reign of James I.,

when Ezekiel Crosse, a low attorney, fraudulently obtained the estate. The ghost of one of the Rosewarne appeared to him as an old man, and led him to a cairn containing treasure. He used to appear to Crosse constantly afterwards when he was dining with his friends, to whom he had always to represent the ghost as an idiotic and deaf and dumb intruder. Worn out at last by this spiritual persecution, the attorney surrendered the ill-gotten estate to a person of the ghost's shewing. Crosse eventually, it is said, destroyed himself, and the ghost appeared and rejoiced as the bad man's funeral was passing by the treasure cairn.

Let us now turn to the legends of the miners, since two-thirds of the Cornishmen spend half their days underground. All tin-workers believe in 'the Knockers,' or 'Buccas,' spirits who indicate productive lodes by blows with invisible picks and sledges. They are supposed to be the ghosts of those old Jews who crucified our Lord, and were sent as slaves by the Roman emperors to work the Cornish mines. It is certain that Jews farmed the mines in the days of the early Norman kings. The miners say they often see little imps dancing and tumbling about the mine-timber when they come to work. Every mine has its own tradition. At Wheal Vor, a white rabbit always appears in one of the engine-houses before a fatal accident; it has been often chased, but never caught. About thirty years since, at the same mine, a man and a boy were blown to pieces while blasting. The engineman, shocked at the mere fragments of flesh that were alone left, took them on a shovel, and threw them into the blazing furnace. From that time, the engineman declared that troops of little black dogs haunted the place, whether it was open or shut; and it was found difficult to get men enough to work the machine.

At Wheal Jewel, a dead hand used to be seen carrying a lighted candle, and moving up and down the ladders. It appeared after a rather bad fellow had fallen down the mine, and been killed. After a suicide at Polbreen mine, near St Agnes Beacon, a voice used to appear beguiling the workmen. On one occasion, however, it mercifully called two men from a level where a mass of rock soon after fell.

The fishermen round the wild headlands of Cornwall have their legends also, for sailors living as they do on an element full of mysteries are proverbially superstitious. A pilot at St Ives told Mr Hunt a story of how one midnight, strolling on the wharf, to watch a vessel, afterwards wrecked, that he had to take into Hayle, he saw a man, who refused to speak, leaning against a post. On looking closer, the pilot saw that there were pieces of seaweed and stick in his whiskers; that the flesh of his face and hands looked as if it were parboiled; and that as he walked, the water 'squashed' in his shoes. The pilot was ill six months from the fright occasioned by this apparition. All along the Cornish coast, the Phantom Ship is also thoroughly believed in. Years ago, a vessel made signals of distress to the westward of St Ives' Head. On reaching the ship, which was schooner-rigged, and had a light over her bows, one of the sailors made a grasp at her bulwarks, in order to leap on board; but his hand met nothing solid, and he fell back into the boat as the ship and lights disappeared. The next morning, a London vessel was wrecked at Gwithian, and all on board perished. The Phantom

Lights—called by the sailors 'Jack Harry's lights'—are generally seen before a gale, and the ship beheld resembles the one that is subsequently wrecked.

At Porthcurno Cove, near the Logan Stone, there is sometimes seen, when the mists are rising from the marshes, a black square-rigged vessel, with no one on board, that glides over the sands to Bodelan and Chygwidan, and there vanishes. On whoever sees it, ill-luck is sure to fall. The Dead Ship is another superstition peculiar to Cornwall. Years ago, a pirate, too wicked even for his companions, was put on shore in the Priests' Cove, near Cape Cornwall. Settling at Tregaseal, the wretch lived by wrecking—beguiling vessels with false lights, and murdering those who escaped the waves. When this man lay dying, a black vessel, with all her sails set, was seen coming into the land against wind and tide; but as the man fell back and died, it bore out to sea again in a whirlwind, and surrounded by lightning. At the funeral, a black pig suddenly joined in the procession. When the men reached the church stile, the storm again broke out, and the bearers, leaving the coffin without the churchyard stile, rushed into the church for safety. Then came a blaze and flash ten times fiercer than the rest, and the coffin was seen to fly burning through the air.

The huge green-stone rocks of an island near St Ives are connected with a curious superstition. Some years ago, a vessel was wrecked there. The men who went off to the rescue found on board a lady, who held a child in her arms. She refused to part with her charge; and in drawing her by a rope from the vessel to the boat, the child was lost in the boiling waters. On recovering her senses, and hearing of the child's death, the lady pined away, and soon after died. Shortly after her burial, however, her spirit was seen to pass over the wall of the churchyard, traverse the beach, and walk on to the island. There she spent hours looking among the rocks, and as day broke, returned to the land, and disappeared near her grave. When the nights are very tempestuous or dark, she carries a corpse-light for a lantern; but on fine nights, she makes her search without a light. This apparition is supposed to predict disasters to seamen.

Nor are the hardy sailors of Cornwall without other omens and warnings. The parts of the shore where wrecks have taken place are often haunted. At night, before the coming of storms, the voices of dead sailors are heard calling their own names.

Porth Towan is the scene of a wild belief. A fisherman walking one night on the sands, when all was silent, except the lip and whisper of the tide, distinctly heard a voice from the sea exclaiming three times: 'The hour is come, but not the man!' At that moment, a black figure appeared on the top of the cliff, then rushed impetuously down the steep path, over the sands, and was lost in the sea.

Very often local phenomena have given rise to superstitions intended to account for them. At Snichen Cove, there is sometimes seen a band of opaque misty vapour that stretches across the bay. It is supposed to be a warning to fishermen not to venture out, as it was always followed by a severe storm. Once when it appeared, a wicked old fisherman, seeing the weather still fine, ventured out, and beat the fog with a flail, to drive away the 'hooper,' as he impiously said. The boat passed through the bar of thick fog, and went to sea; but a storm soon after rose, and it never returned.

The 'wraith,' as the Scotch call such an apparition, is not uncommon in Cornwall.

It foretells the death of the person it resembles. They tell a story of a wraith of this kind that was seen forty years ago by a smuggling farmer at Newlyn. A boat laden with ankors of spirits was starting at Mullion Cove for Newlyn. At the last moment, one of the crew, remembering he had business at Helstone, was left behind. On his return from Helstone, as he passed the top of Halzaphron cliff, he met all the men, with their hair and clothes dripping wet. The boat and crew were never heard of more; and the farmer was so affected by the circumstance, that he pined and died shortly afterwards.

The innumerable stories of witches and general superstitions, as well as the interesting legends of the early saints collected by Mr Hunt, we have no room to touch on. We have given, we think, enough to shew that Cornwall is second to no district of Europe in the wildness, variety, and originality of its legends. Long may it be before the blown sand-hills, the great cliffs of jointed granite, the desolate moors, rough with burial-mounds, and the little coves, where the sand is so soft and white, and the rocks so emeraldine under the sea, cease to be haunted by such associations. But while amusing ourselves with such curious remains of bygone mythologies and old beliefs, do not let us forget that they are proofs of ignorance to be lamented, and education still lamentably insufficient. They give false notions of the Divine rule and governance, and are, however poetical, too palpably relics of an old paganism, that can never blend thoroughly with Christianity.

To the antiquary and poet, the ethnologist and the student of mythologies, they will always be valuable and interesting objects of study; but as popular beliefs, the sooner they become obsolete, we think, the better.

UNDER THE BLACK AND YELLOW.

IN TWO PARTS.—PART II.

I FOLLOWED my host's daughter, taking care to tread as noiselessly as possible, and a few paces brought us to the grotto, a pretty artificial cave, containing a statue of the Cumean Sibyl. Here Assunta's strength seemed to fail her, and she sank trembling on a moss-grown seat.

'In Heaven's name, what has happened?'

The young marchesa—they call daughters by the father's title in Italy—turned her dark mournful eyes upon me. 'They are captives—captives to the hateful Austrian butchers—dragged away to Brescia. They had no time to flee, no hope of defending themselves; and they will be murdered—yes, murdered!'

Here her voice broke into passionate sobs, and I began to understand what had occurred. A 'domiciliary visit' and arrest—common, too common then in Lombardy—had taken place. With some trouble, I learned the details. As I had feared, there was a conspiracy, one of those well-meant but luckless schemes for shaking off the Austrian rule, which so constantly drenched Italy in patriot blood. Assunta's brothers were involved in the plot, along with many of the chief inhabitants of the neighbourhood; but she positively declared her conviction that her father was not cognizant of it. Be that as it might, a wretch who had eaten their bread, the more easily to betray them—the villain

Giuseppe—had denounced them to the authorities, and a swoop had been made on the unprepared household. Assunta, half-maddened by despair, had watched from an upper window for my return, and had stolen out of a secret door, at which no sentinel was posted, to inform me of the calamity, and to adjure my instant aid in saving her unhappy relatives.

Poor girl! she connected the notion of England's greatness with that of the power of individual Englishmen, and fancied that I might intercede for the lives of her father and brothers, now in prison at Brescia.

'If you could but reach Monza quickly, the viceroy has a heart, they say, less hard than those of most of our oppressors. He will hearken to you, an Ingles; he will interfere, and not suffer such cruelty for a few rash words spoken or written—for a few— Ah, Madonna Mia, I forgot those dreadful arms!'

'Arms!'

'They were hidden in our house. Giuseppe had discovered the place, it seems, for he led the soldiers direct to where the weapons were concealed. O Luigi, it was rash, cruel to our father; to me, who have no mother; cruel to your own young life, brother; but it was for Italy—for Italy!'

And here her weeping became so wild, that I began to fear for her reason. From her broken words, I gleaned that the prisoners were to be tried by court-martial; that the officer who made the arrest had shaken his head ominously at the discovery of the arms; and that, from the known ferocity and harshness of General Rupert Ebersdorf, commanding at Brescia, it was certain that the sentence of the court, should it be death, would be carried out with ruthless promptitude. I felt little hope as to the result of any intercession with the Austrian Archduke who filled the post of viceroy, even could I reach Monza in time. The authorities were not likely to brook any interposition between their own subjects by the right of conquest and the law. I knew how stern was their sway over the land that loathed them. And yet, how to refuse! I had not the heart to tell the weeping girl that it were folly to count on my influence with so exalted a person as the viceroy. However, I remembered that Robert had letters of recommendation to men of rank in Vienna, since there had been some talk of our visiting Hungary and Styria, and perhaps the sight of these might give weight to a petition for some delay, at least, in the proceedings.

'Your pupil—how selfish I have been in my own sorrow,' sobbed Assunta—'he is under arrest too. In vain my father, my brothers, assured the wretches that he was innocent of any knowledge of plots; the weapons were concealed in his chamber; there was a trap-door, a cavity in the flooring. The youth said truly that he never knew of it, nor did he; but the Austrians refused to believe him. They were so glad to be able to drag a foreigner into the business. They say we should never dare to murmur but for the help and counsel of the *Forestieri*, though it is a slander. Ah, one day they will know that Italians are not cowards!'

Here was a new difficulty: it almost took away my breath. Robert a prisoner! Robert involved in the accusation! Such a notion was hard to realise. But Assunta mournfully assured me that it was too true, and that innocence was no safeguard under such unfortunately suspicious circumstances. Robert had been writing letters in his

room—the room where the firearms were found concealed—when the soldiers of the Kaiser broke in. He had resisted arrest, no doubt by the instinctive impulse that rouses a freeman to struggle against arbitrary insolence; had struck an Austrian, and had with difficulty been saved from the bayonets of the angry Croats by the prompt interference of the captain. On hearing these details, I at once decided to set out for the town. My purpose was twofold: first, to set Robert at liberty, which I doubted not could be easily effected, by putting a true statement of his position before the commandant; and secondly, to ascertain if the lives of the other captives were in imminent danger. I could not but imagine that Assunta's natural fears and indignation had caused her to exaggerate the urgency of the peril, and wished to satisfy myself on this score before setting out for Monza.

But scarcely had I reached the town, before a conviction that the girl was right came over me, as I beheld the ominous preparations for some act which it was evidently deemed would rouse the wrath and pity of the populace. The guard at the gate was doubled, patrols of cavalry rode slowly through the streets, the heavy tramp of their horses, and the clank of their massive steel scabbards against the stirrup-irons, falling sullenly on the ear. Crowds of people were abroad, as usual, but their faces bore a dejected look; the light laughter and sprightly merriment which distinguish an Italian throng were absent; the men looked resentful, the women sorrowful and alarmed.

In the great piazza were drawn up, silent and stern, two squadrons of cavalry, and a regiment of Austrian grenadiers, evidently to overawe, by their display of physical force, any disposition for revolt or rescue. Before the government palace were triple ranks of bayonets and four cannon, whose grim mouths were turned towards the palpitating, murmuring multitude, the gunners standing by with their lighted matches, ready for instant action, should the fatal word of command be given. In vain did I try to obtain admission to the presence of General Ebersdorf. I was rudely repulsed by the sentinels, and was pondering on what might be the best course to pursue, when I felt a twitch at my coat-sleeve, and saw the wrinkled face of old Giacomo, the marchese's body-servant, at my elbow. The faithful old fellow's face was ghastly pale, and there were tears in his aged eyes.

'Ah, Signor Pastore, it is all over with my master—with them all. Our Lady of Sorrows be good to them; the cruel Tedeschi have passed sentence.'

'And the sentence?'

'To be shot—to be shot dead by a party of Austrian grenadiers—curses on their white coats and flat faces!—at noon to-morrow.'

I could hardly believe my ears. Giacomo went on: 'All—all condemned. The Judas, Giuseppe, swore to anything and everything to gain his vile reward; then the weapons, the papers—all were doomed. They might have saved their lives, the brave young men, had they consented to betray their fellow-patriots, but they scorned it. My poor master—I know he was innocent as a *Bambino* of any plot—and the young *Milordo*—'

'Robert Hawthorne—condemned! My good old friend, sorrow has bewildered you; it cannot be; he had done nothing.—You shake your head. I

will speak to the general instantly,' cried I in deadly terror, hardly knowing what I said.

But Giacomo informed me that not only was General Ebersdorf deaf to entreaty and reason, but that orders had just been issued to apprehend 'the other Englishman,' and that my own detention would be the result of any intercession for Robert's release. The shrewd old man caught eagerly at Assunta's suggestion, that I should hasten to the viceroy's own presence. It was a chance—it was the only one. The Austrian Archduke was reputed merciful. There were good horses in the stables at the villa, and if I could but reach Monza in time, all might yet go well! The old serving-man hurried me to the gate; but before we reached it, the result of the court-martial was noised abroad, and a wild cry, a cry of anguish long pent up, and which I never can forget, broke from the people. In that clamour spoke forth such indignant sorrow, rage, and shame, that even the dull souls of the Kaiser's mercenaries must have felt its meaning. But the answer was a hoarse word of command: the muskets clanked, the troopers advanced their glittering line a few paces, and no more cries were uttered in the guarded square of Brescia.

Noon—noon to-morrow! That was the hour when the victims were to die, and the time was brief. It was late in the day when we reached the villa; the sun was drooping in the crimson west. We had not dared to apply at the post-house for horses. During the state of siege—and it had lasted ever since the reconquest of the province—no post-horses could leave the town without the permission of the military authorities, while to shew my passport was to court arrest. There was only one chance, Giacomo said, and that was to saddle Signor Luigi's fine Hungarian horse, and to ride to some station beyond General Ebersdorf's jurisdiction.

'But, my good man, I am but a poor horseman; never was accustomed'—

'Holy Madonna, Signor Pastore, this is a case of life and death. The steed is gentle as a lamb. He will carry you well and swiftly. See, I have drawn the girths' (for this conversation had occurred in the large stables of the villa, now abandoned by the terrified servants, and which we had entered by the back way). 'I will lead him past the mill, and as far as the cross-roads, and then you must push for the west; and Heaven give you a good journey.'

The old servitor was himself quite unfit for such a fatiguing expedition; besides, it was needful that he should remain to care for the safety of the young marchesa, since the other domestics had for the most part fled, and Austrian soldiers yet held possession of the house. Thus there was no help for it. I *must* go.

What a ride that was, speeding on first by the light of the dying day, then stumbling along through the moonless night, along the white arrow-straight roads, where the tall reeds swayed with melancholy cadence to the breeze, and the fire-flies shone, pale and greenish, like goblin eyes, among the orchards. Luckily, the Hungarian horse was really as gentle as he was represented—a noble brute, which Luigi had taken from the enemy in some skirmish of the late war. I say luckily, because I was, in very truth, a wretched rider, and had never mounted anything but one of our Cumber-land mountain-ponies; but the errand on which I was bound gave me unwonted resolution. At

eleven at night I pulled up my tired steed, reeking with heat and white with foam, at the door of the Pontirolo post-house.

Bribes, vociferation, and a judicious hint that I was on my way to the immediate presence of the viceroy, caused a calessa and horses to be prepared for my use in an incredibly short space of time; and though a sleepy functionary in a cocked-hat and slippers demanded to inspect my passport, he saw nothing in it to warrant the detention of the Rev. Philip Simpson, M.A.

It was early morning, raw and gray, when I reached Monza, and my post-horses were pulled up with a jerk before the portico of the viceroy's summer palace. Here, however, I met the usual obstacles which await those who try to gain an unauthorised interview with royalty. I had no credentials, no dispatches, and my request for admittance was of course rejected contemptuously by the Archduke's domestics. The major-domo's deputy, the highest authority as yet up and stirring, said, in answer to my appeals, that if I would send in a written petition for audience, it should be submitted to his Imperial Highness at breakfast-time, but that the vice-regal slumbers could not be disturbed to save the lives of all the Forestieri in Italy. Fortunately, the captain on guard—an Englishman in the Austrian service—suddenly recognised me, and came up to greet me with extended hand. He was a tall sunburnt fellow, his face so altered by the long tawny moustaches and the scar of a sabre-cut, that I did not at first know wild Tom Oxley, the son of a parishioner of my father's. Glad indeed was I to meet him, and eagerly I told my tale.

'Well, Simpson,' said the tall Anglo-Austrian, 'I am sorry for these poor wretches, sorrier for your pupil; and you shall not have to say that Tom Oxley was unmindful of old friends and old times. I have an English heart under this white cloth of his Imperial, Royal, and Apostolic Majesty's, I assure you. I dare not—yes, *dare* is the word—disturb the Archduke before his usual time. Luckily, he is an early riser, and his valet was an old hussar of my regiment. We'll smuggle you in somehow before breakfast. Mind how you tackle him: be frank, but respectful: he is not a bad fellow for a Hapsburg.'

It was done. Tom contrived, not without trouble, to get an early audience for me; and I found the viceroy affable and soldier-like, a benevolent despot, but still a despot. He heard me out, and asked a few pertinent questions with the air of one accustomed, not only to command, but to scrutinise men and motives. 'Hark you, Mr Simpson,' said he in French, 'I have a difficult part to play here, and my duty must sometimes prevail over my feelings. I know General Ebersdorf well. He is stern, a little hasty, but he has the confidence of his master, my august relative, and merits it. I cannot take on myself to reverse his decision, save with respect to your pupil, Hathorn—Hawthorne? Yes, Hawthorne. But I will reserve the Italians till the emperor himself shall have revised the sentence of the court-martial.—Have you breakfasted?'

Tom nudged me. I ventured to remind the Archduke that the execution was to take place at noon-day, and that the sun was already getting high above the horizon. The viceroy hastily wrote a few lines. 'Here,' said he, putting the precious paper into my hands, 'is a free pardon for your

pupil, the English lad, and an order to relieve the others till the emperor is informed of all the circumstances. Never mind thanks or formalities—your audience is over. *Bon voyage!* Yet stay. Rittmeister Oxley can go with you: the postilions will drive faster for an officer than for a civilian.

What a gallop it was! With bribes, with threats, with blows even—for Oxley, like most Austrian officers, was very rough in his bearing towards the country-people—the postilions were urged to redoubled speed. We flew along the dusty road; one reeking team after another was cast off at each relay; the bloody flanks of the panting horses told how furiously we went. No delay was permitted: never did calèche flee so fast along the reed-fringed and poplar-shadowed roads of Lombardy. On, with stress of spur and whip—on, through clouds of dust, the rickety carriage swaying and swinging—on, through affrighted villages, where we passed like a meteor, winding through the midst of carts and herds of snorting, terrified cattle! But still Time, like the tortoise in the fable, made cruel progress in the race. Sure and steady, higher and higher climbed the sun into the blue meridian; and I closed my eyes and groaned, then looked at my watch, and cried aloud in feverish hurry for the postilions to go faster.

'Huzza, there's Brescia! We'll do it yet!' cried Tom, wiping his forehead, and standing up in the open carriage, as the well-known towers and walls came in view—'we'll do it yet: never fear!' Our pace was a rushing gallop. The panting horses, goaded by the spur, strained every nerve. What was it that answered Tom's words of hope? The death-knell! Heavily it tolled from steeple and tower in Brescia, that sullen boom, and then followed the doleful chant, faintly heard, of a procession of friars singing the *Miserere*, and the dull deep thud of the Austrian drums beating out the Dead March in *Saul*.

'Avanti! On, you lazy hounds—faster, or we shall be too late after all!' cried Tom, almost as eager as myself. A few more long minutes, and, from a swell of ground, we saw them—the prisoners—bound, blindfolded, kneeling in front of a yawning grave, on the edge of which were ranged several coffins, rudely smeared with black paint. In front of them were drawn up a platoon of grenadiers. Several priests and monks, and a strong force of troops, were present, as well as the general, on horseback, surrounded by his staff and mounted orderlies.

My bloodshot eyes, before which all things seemed to swim, failed to mark Robert among the kneeling victims. I rose up in the carriage; I tried to shout, but my tongue clove to the roof of my mouth, and not a sound came. Mechanically I shook the pardon high above my head, while Oxley exerted his powerful voice in a loud call, in German, of: 'Stop, stop! in the Archduke's name.'

Too late—too late! I saw the muskets glitter in the sun as they were brought to the level, saw the red flash of the discharge run along the line, heard the sharp report, and then I fell back, sick and blind. When I recovered, I was in the centre of a group of officers, Tom Oxley was loosening my cravat, and before me, anxiously aiding in the efforts of the others to restore me from the swoon, was Robert Hawthorne, whom I had fancied dead. He was pale indeed, and his hands were fettered together, but he was unhurt.

'Lucky we came when we did,' said Oxley,

'though two minutes would have saved a sad butchery. It so happened that they divided the prisoners, meaning to shoot Mr Hawthorne and the old marchese in the second batch, and we are here in time to prevent that, anyhow. But as for the first four, among whom were the two sons, Antonio and Luigi—look there!' I looked. The quivering bodies were being hastily thrust into coffins, and at that sight exhaustion and excitement overpowered me, and I sank back fainting, and only recovered my senses to find myself prostrate on a bed of fever.

Poor old Marchese Frescobaldi was pardoned, but did not long survive his sons, and Assunta retired into a convent at Bergamo. For my own share in this sad history, I have little more to tell. Mr Hawthorne promised me the revision of a benefice, which he did not live to bestow; but Robert, his successor, presented me to the vicarage of his own parish, where my wife and I are now living.

GETHIN.

On the verge of Christmas-time, and on a spot singularly picturesque, with its pine-woods and long mountain-range in the background, one of those sad tragedies has been played out which every now and then thrill the country with horror. Thirty-five hardy and brave colliers have been added to the list of the forty-seven who perished in the adjoining seam only four years ago. Gethin is nearly two hundred yards deep, and the workings extend almost a mile to the east. The plan exhibits a diameter as large as many a flourishing town, the shops being represented by stalls, the streets by headings, and the noise of wheel and voice by the mandrel and the tram.

The explosion happened at five minutes past eight on the morning of the 20th December; but the colliery being several miles distant from Merthyr, it was nine o'clock before the rumour spread. At ten o'clock we were at the colliery, and found that only a few injured men and one or two of the dead had been brought up. There was a dense circle of colliers and workmen from the neighbouring iron-works around the shaft; but we looked in vain for the indications of strong feeling which newspaper writers generally connect with such scenes. The mass of the colliers present were men between twenty and thirty years of age. They looked just what they really were—young fellows, naturally careless, but sobered by the extent of the calamity. No one spoke; but all looked earnestly towards the shaft; and as body after body was brought up and placed on a heap of straw close by the pit, there was simply a crowding forward of the spectators. The sufferers, with few exceptions, seemed to be sleeping. Their bodies were warm and supple, and the tinge of health could be distinctly traced underneath the coal-stains on their countenances. They seemed to be cases, at the worst, of suspended animation. No injury had been sustained by any vital organ. They had fallen down at their work, or in their effort to escape, and had been suffocated by the choke or after-damp which follows in the wake of an explosion. The methods adopted in order to restore animation were of the simplest kind, but carried out with all diligence by the medical gentlemen of the works and the town. Each body was placed on the heap of straw, and

then moved regularly from back to side, the arms being occasionally lifted and depressed. When there appeared to be hope, water was poured in a stream upon the brow; but in no case out of twenty and upwards that we saw were these efforts successful. Most of the men, it appeared, had been in their then condition for two hours, and this fact seems from the first to have destroyed all hope.

When the last dead body was brought to bank, the whole of the sufferers were placed in a train, and then the engine whirled its freight of the living and the dead to Merthyr. On arriving at the Cyfarthfa Works, there was a great gathering awaiting us, and then we saw, and not for the first time in our experience, how deeply and truly the Welsh can feel. The Welsh language is indeed an apt medium for the strongest expression of the feelings. The Celtic wail, the loud moaning cry of 'Dear, dear father,' of 'My poor, dear boy,' falls with overwhelming power on the English ear. And these poor unsophisticated souls, inured to toil, accustomed to hardships and sorrows, how passionate was their outcry! With the exception of one Englishwoman, who had lost a son, no one swooned—their natures were too hardy for that; but, in a delirium of agony, they paced by the side of the bearers of the dead, and gave the freest and fullest utterance to their feelings. That day, in almost every street on the western side of the Taff, there was a house of death, and a scene of horror. Early in the morning, fathers and sons had left their houses, and before mid-day were borne in stricken dead. It was the suddenness of the calamity as well as its terrors that overpowered the mourners. There had been no sickness, no failing in the rude health of the toiler. One hour alive, bidding wife and children good-bye; the next, and the stalwart frame was palsied, and the heart and tongue at rest.

This is the seventh catastrophe of its kind in this part of the country, and science, which has progressed in so many of our channels of commerce and manufacture, seems in that of coal-mining to be at a stand-still. Not only are coal-pit explosions as destructive as ever, but each tragedy comes unaccompanied with its lessons for future warning. In the present case, facts point to the accumulation of gas in a certain state, and suggest that this unsafe condition was intensified by the rashness or carelessness of the colliers themselves. Safety-lamps are provided, but the men pick these with ease, and will do so at any risk in order to light their pipes. Matches and open lamps, with pipes and tobacco on the dead bodies, shew how the colliery rules were observed by the men at Gethin. Then, as regards the ventilation. Competent men represent this as perfect, but those experienced in coal-workings know how likely it is for the stroke of a mandril to lead at once to an explosion, if a naked light be near. The thoughtful man exclaims: 'No man should work where a naked candle cannot be burned in safety, for if the air be too impure for the flame of a candle, then it must be too impure for the vital flame.' But, this conceded, what a vast tract of our coal-measures would be undeveloped! Men of science must solve the problem, and step to the rescue, for it is a disgrace, in this advanced age, that we should see in the cheering flame upon our hearths the wasted lives and the ruined homes of our toiling colliers.

WARLOCK WOODS.

THE oaks are doomed in pleasant Warlock Woods;
Soon they'll come crashing through the hazel copse;
Already rocking like poor wind-tossed ships,
I see their reeling spars and waving tops.

Shipwrecked indeed: the old estate is gone;
The knights have yielded to King Mammon's lords;
Rent is the good escutcheon—sable, gules;
Shivered at last the brave Crusaders' swords.

Soon barked and bare, the oak trees' giant limbs
Will strew the covert, all o'er-grown with fern;
I hear the jarring axe that cleaves and splits;
I see the woodman's fires that crackling burn.

'Twould be a dismal sight in winter-time,
When boughs are snapped, and branches tempest-cleft,
When dead leaves drift across the rainy skies,
And not a wayside flower of hope is left.

How much more mournful now in sunny air,
When hyacinths in shade grow blue and rank,
When echoing cuckoos greet the spring again,
And violets purple every primrose bank.

Here has the flying rebel cowering hid,
Waiting the footfall and the pitying eyes;
And here, with sullen psalms and gloomy prayers,
The Ironsides have doled their prophecies.

And here the outlaws, in the Norman time,
Strung their big bows, and filed their arrow-heads,
While the wine-jug went round so fierce and fast,
When near them lay the fallow-deer just dead.

These trees have heard full many a parting kiss,
The suicide's last prayer, the lover's sigh,
The murdered one's wild scream: it is for this
I hold them bound to man in sympathy.

The oak-woods pay for many a spendthrift's fault;
Old giants, centuries long without a fear,
Fall prostrate at one scornful tap from thee,
Frail ivory hammer of the auctioneer.

'Bare ruined choirs where late the sweet birds sang,'
No more to be the homes of hawk or owl;
No more on stormy nights the banshee wind
Shall through thy riven branches gasp and howl.

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ON SOME SAVAGE CUSTOMS OF GREAT BRITAIN:

ESPECIALLY THAT OF AFTER-DINNER SPEAKING.

THE miseries of human life, says the philosopher, are few indeed which laws can cause or cure; but he does not venture to include Custom. The necessity of doing the usual thing—that is, of following the precedents laid down by the great mass of society, who unhappily are neither wise nor witty—adds very much to those evils to which flesh is heir. The dull man makes a great point of fully attiring himself in black broad-cloth, in order to dine with fourteen other dull men upon a mid-summer night; the sixteenth man, whom (taking a generous average) we will suppose to be a sensible person, has to do the like. It takes a man of genius resolutely to refuse to put himself to this inconvenience, even where only men are concerned. If there are ladies in the case, he regrets the circumstance, but of course attires himself accordingly.

In the very hottest noontide of July, there is not a gentleman in England who dare walk down Regent Street in the wide-awake, or other head-covering adapted to the state of the thermometer, which he wears everywhere else except in London.

Nobody who dines, as a guest, in Belgrave Square ventures to ask one of those ridiculous footmen—with the flour in their hair (though not, of course, a camelia, as is the case with his lovely and accomplished neighbour)—for a glass of table-beer, although he may prefer it to all the vintages of France and Spain.

There is more than one club in Pall Mall where it is held indecorous to bring a pipe into the smoking-room, the society (of whom five-sixths are pipe-smokers) being 'so very genteel.'

If my uncle dies at St Petersburg, I am obliged to impart the sad intelligence to the population of the metropolis by pulling down my dining-room blinds in Baker Street, a chamber which is not well lighted at the best of times. If he had died of sun-stroke at Hong-kong, one can imagine friends being requested to accept the information in that form; but since it was otherwise, why should I

light my gas two hours earlier than usual? It is surely not a subject for an illumination.

It is not supposed, I believe, even by Mr Darwin, that man originally walked backwards, and only from long practice eventually attained to his present mode of progression. Why, then, in the presence of royalty, do we perform the stupid and dangerous evolution of 'backing' out of the room? It is surely a poor compliment to Majesty to credit it with such little sense as to be pleased with so awkward a manœuvre. How wonderful that folks who do such things every day—and at night with lighted candles in their hands—could not keep their countenances when the Siamese ambassadors approached the steps of the throne upon all-fours! Such a proceeding was surely far more fitting, since the apparent object of both sorts of courtiers is to degrade themselves to the level of the beasts.

How blind, however, we can be to our own absurdities, while intolerant of those of our neighbours, was never more clearly shewn than on a late occasion, when a learned—and what is much better, a generally sensible—judge, found fault with a Quaker for keeping his head covered in court. Conceive a gentleman in a horse-hair wig eighteen inches long, and a red gown which has to be held up for him if he would walk, finding fault with a man's hat! How a judge is dressed, however, is a matter entirely between himself and the criminal classes, and I believe their chief objection to him is his wearing an article of apparel which is certainly not often seen within doors—namely, a Black Cap.

For my part, I have only to ask why ordinary gentlemen will come into my drawing-room with a crush-hat tucked under their arms? If they are afraid of it being stolen, if left below stairs, why do they not bring up their great-coats also? Are Gibuses so very rare that they are thus offered to the inspection of the ladies of my family, like a Jack-in-the-Box; or is it that these persons are unable to join in polite conversation without having something to 'fiddle' with? Suppose I was to bring up my umbrella, and amuse myself by opening and shutting that!

But the greatest nuisance I have to complain of with which society has saddled us, without the least necessity, is the custom of after-dinner speeches. In the case of ministers and public characters who are asked to dinner by committees, it is all very well; they are (in one way or another) paid to speak, and the people who meet them like to hear them. It is a strange taste to wish to receive information so immediately after food, but I am of a catholic temper, and have not the least objection to the mistakes of my fellow-creatures so long as they do not affect myself. But unfortunately this matter does affect me.

When more than eighteen people (of the male sex) dine together (for to do society justice, nobody is now permitted to propose a toast at a private party), there is always a chance of somebody rising 'with permission of the chair,' and making me uncomfortable. Now, why does he do that? Is he aware that with the exception of Mr Bright, Mr Gladstone, Mr Disraeli, and Mr Dickens, there are not half-a-dozen men in England who can say anything *extempore* worth hearing; or does he suppose that he is one of those six? Do I, or anybody present (although we may madly rap the table with the handles of our dessert-knives), care three farthings for what he thinks upon the subject he has chosen to dilate upon, even at his best; or does he imagine that, gorged with food and drink, he is in a better condition than usual for expressing these commonplace ideas of his! If he really believes what he says, namely, that 'he feels it his duty to get up and say a few words, &c.,' he deserves, indeed, consignment to a lunatic asylum, and a strait-waistcoat to keep him quiet in the cab. But the fact is, he is lying, and he knows it. While he talks about his want of eloquence (when we all cry 'No, no'), he in his heart believes himself to be a Kossuth in that respect. He is a foolish, vain, impertinent, false man. Why is the pleasant conversation of my next neighbour (who has read my works, I find, and likes them) to be totally interrupted, and silence to be proclaimed for this ridiculous coxcomb, who happens to have the gift of talking on his hind-legs! I protest against it, in the name of those down-trodden myriads who are forced to cry 'Hear, hear' with their lips, while their minds are full of bitterness and contempt. Who wants to hear what he has to say about the Queen and the Royal Family, and the Memory of his Royal Highness the Prince Consort! Who cares whether he approves or not of the institutions of the Army and Navy! Who feels the slightest interest in the fact, that this fellow can lay his hand upon his heart while he patronises the Church of England; or what member of that establishment would not, on the whole, be rather pleased than not to find that such a stick was a Dissenter! Why these eulogies upon the House of Peers, for instance, as though they had departed from us that afternoon, and were never more to be heard of, save upon this momentous occasion!—which is, unhappily, far from being the case. It is my belief that if there were no after-dinner speeches, the Conservative party would find themselves great gainers; it is impossible to listen long without feeling some disgust at the innocent objects of such misplaced panegyrics. Why should not 'Vaccination and may it take,' be proposed with as much reason as 'the Bench of Bishops!' For my own part, I admire both institutions, but I

don't want to hear Mr Anybody's views upon them immediately after dinner. Do let us stop it, do.

Let some public testimonial be subscribed for at once, and presented to that Venezuelan envoy, who, at a dinner at the Mansion House, in December last, returned thanks for the Foreign Ambassadors in these remarkable words: 'God save the Queen.' It was mentioned by way of apology, that that was the only sentence in the English tongue with which His Excellency was acquainted. But surely there was no necessity for any such excuse. Was not his observation pregnant with piety, with loyalty, and with brevity, which is the soul of wit? Was it not secure of the adhesion of those present? Did it not carefully steer clear of all things that could compromise or embarrass his government at home? Finally, was it not infinitely preferable to the most ornate and studied oration which should attempt to describe those outlandish parts from which he hailed, on the situation of which in the map not a F.R.G.S. present could probably have set his finger; and about 'the reciprocal feelings of amity' entertained by whose inhabitants the Lord Mayor and his guests must have taken an exceptional quantity of liquor if they believed one word.

Again, should not something be done to rescue from oblivion the name of that Australian landed proprietor who resolutely refused to open his lips at a public dinner given in his honour at the capital, and designed as a tribute to Endeavour and Perseverance, as exemplified in his own rise from a very humble rank.

'Gentlemen,' said he, 'what you have said is doubtless true, and certainly agreeable, but I never made but one speech in my life before any large number of people, and short as it was, the result was so unfortunate, that I made up my mind never to make another.' Upon cross-examination, it turned out that he alluded to his own trial at the Old Bailey about half a century ago, and that the speech he had made was: 'Not guilty, my Lord;' in spite of which he had been transported for life.

Unhappily, it is not everybody who has the moral courage to decline to make an exhibition of himself, just because his health is proposed, or because he finds himself suddenly made spokesman, by some pestilent fellow, to return thanks for somebody else. Suppose, while the folks were assembling before dinner, some guest had been requested to utter a few remarks about nothing particular at the top of his voice, is it likely he would have done it? Would he not have replied with asperity: 'Sir, I have nothing to say upon the subject you mention, and certainly nothing worth the attention of this large and respectable company.' And is it to be imagined that this poor fellow is in a more intelligent condition *after* dinner than before. Wine may give a man audacity, but it has been justly remarked that it is the enemy which he puts into his mouth to steal away his brains.

The classes of people to whom the savage custom of after-dinner speaking is due are two—first, the Proposers of Healths, who are, of course, the origin of the evil, and deserve the greatest obloquy; and, secondly, the Returners of Thanks, who, as 'accessories after the fact,' are almost as culpable, and without whose connivance, the nuisance could not exist. The former have naturally, or think they have, what is vulgarly called the Gift of the Gab, and seize

upon every opportunity to exhibit it. The professional after-dinner speaker—the fellow who never misses a chance of ‘asking the permission of his friend in the chair, &c.’—feels the same sort of craving, I fancy, as the drunkard for spirits, and exhibits the like hideous relish for his pleasure: he moistens his lips before commencing, loosens his cravat, pushes his chair well back, and gives a short sharp bow, which one wishes would crack his neck. As there is no reason which we can see why he should have got upon his legs, so there is none that he can see why he should sit down. Words, unfortunately, do not fail him (although he often tells us they do), and what, I daresay, he calls his thoughts, are the merest platitudes and commonplaces.

You may know how dull he is by the fact, that if he happens to deliver himself of the smallest jokeling, which in his ordinary conversation we should pass over in silence, and the charitable hope that such a thing would not occur again, it is received with the most uproarious applause. It is such a relief to laugh, to rap the table (since we cannot hit him), to do anything, in short, instead of listening to his hackneyed tropes, which fall like the ceaseless ‘drip, drip, drip’ of water (so popular with the Holy Inquisition) upon the tortured brain. When Boanerges has done, too, we, of course, break out into an ecstasy, the cause of which his vanity causes him to utterly misconstrue. Our mock-applause, in fact, is the garbage on which he feeds; it strengthens all that is capable of strength within him—that is, it gives him wind and words—and no sooner has it subsided, than he gets up again, smirking and smiling, to inform us that he has made a sad omission in not proposing a toast (here his voice sinks to what he believes is Pathos, but it ought to be spelt with a B)—‘a toast which he is sure that every one here present, whatever opinions he may hold, and whatever convictions he may entertain, will drink with the utmost pleasure and enthusiasm; a toast such as will evoke not only cheers from the lip, but the best wishes of our human hearts, &c. He will, however, detain us no longer; but, without further preface’ [after this comes a long one], ‘he will beg to propose—he dares say we have all anticipated him’ [so we have: some of us think it’s ‘the Queen,’ others, the ‘New Reform Bill;’ nobody is right]—‘he only need mention the name of our estimable friend here present, Mr John Smith.’

Nine of this man’s hearers out of every ten earnestly wish that he spoke nothing but Venezuelan; but John Smith himself is almost moved to hurl a decanter at him. He, poor fellow, belongs to the No. 2 class of after-dinner speakers, and has no gift of the gab whatever. It is just as cruel and cowardly to compel that worthy and inoffensive person to speak in public, as it would be to ask a blind man what he thinks of the rainbow. Boanerges knows this very well; the forthcoming exhibition will afford the better foil to his own oratorical performance. There is a long and painful pause. The real fact is, that Smith, being a sensible person, is searching for an idea that may be worth the attention of the company; or having found, is clothing it with any scanty garment of words that he can lay his hand on. A violent rapping of the table, intended to encourage him, puts idea and words alike to flight; but he rises in obedience to the call, and stammers and stammers

through a few involutions and repetitions, until he judges that his tormentors must be satisfied, when he sits down sorry to have made such a fool of himself. To all persons of sensitive and kindly natures, he has afforded unmixed pain; to others, amusement; and to Boanerges, triumph. If it is really essential that Mr John Smith’s health (or anybody’s) should be proposed at all, let the victim have due notice; almost every man can compose, in the quiet of his chamber, a few fitting remarks, and learn them by heart; repeating them to himself, if he pleases, with appropriate action, in the silent watches of the night, or at other periods when removed from the public eye. He will thus be, doubtless, made rather uncomfortable for a few days, and will certainly not enjoy the dinner after which the honour in question is to be conferred upon him (if you sit next him, you will hear a low recitative between the courses, which is the rehearsal of the coming speech): but, at all events, he will not lose his self-respect, or give an opportunity for malignant joy to Boanerges.

When, however, any worthy gentleman may not happen to have received this warning, and finds himself called upon to ‘return thanks’ upon a sudden, without the *de quoi*, I beg to recommend the following brief formula, first heard from the lips of a certain mathematician of my acquaintance, any one of whose thoughts would supply Boanerges with ideas for life, but whose words are not winged.

‘Gentlemen,’ said he, when his health was proposed at his own fellowship-dinner, ‘a morbid desire for originality prevents me from saying that *This is the proudest moment of my life*; and it does not occur to me to say anything else.’

If this reply was generally adopted, I think the savage custom of after-dinner speaking at social meetings would be a good deal checked: let me recommend Mr Smith to try it.

For the gratification of my readers, I may add that this about-to-be-benefactor of his species is on the high road—for nobody has to make ‘a charge’ *extempore*—to be a Bishop; and, in my opinion, he deserves nothing less than one day to write himself ‘Cantuar.’

MIRK ABBEY.

CHAPTER XIV.—ONCE MORE IN MY LADY’S CHAMBER.

As my Lady left the chrychard by the wicket-gate, she caught the flutter of a female dress that flitted on before her, and vanished in the regions belonging to the domestics. Was it possible that anybody had been a witness to her late interview, or worse, a listener to the conversation? It was in the highest degree improbable, but not impossible. By crouching down behind the low stone wall, next Sir Robert’s tomb, a person in the Abbey grounds, without doubt, could have overheard, and even, with caution, might have watched them. It chilled my Lady’s heart to think of it. Yet what could be more unlikely? What servant of hers would have ventured upon such an outrage? Could Mary Forest have so far forgotten herself, actuated by an irrepressible curiosity to hear what her mistress and her lover could have to say to one another at that strange time and place? It was much more probable that some domestic about to use the

short-cut through the churchyard, had seen her coming from it, and hastened back, to avoid a meeting. At the same time, the suspicion added to my Lady's troubles.

These were serious and pressing enough already, Heaven help her! and yet, urgent and perilous as they were, it was not of them that she first thought when she found herself once more in her own room. There are no circumstances, however tremendous, which have power to quench the susceptibilities of women; their feelings must have way, no matter how dangerous the indulgence in them, how immediate the necessity for action. The meshes of a net which threatened destruction to herself and all that were dear to her were closing in around Lady Lisgard, and, calm as she looked, she knew it well—well as the wily salmon that poises motionless, and seemingly unconscious of his peril, in the red pool, below which the fisherman has set the spreading snare; but my Lady turns her back for a little upon the tide of woes that is setting in upon her—a spring-tide that may reach Heaven knows how far—and seeks the inland Past. It is the last time that she will ever visit it, and therefore she cannot choose but linger there a while, and shed some bitter tears. Her door is locked, for none must see her wishing 'Good-bye,' and the windows are wide open to the air, which blows the flame of her reading-lamp hither and thither. She needs air, poor lady. A waft of wind that has swept some snowy steppe would have been grateful to her throbbing brow that April night; and as for light, a very little is enough for her purpose. Those few old letters she is reading, taken from a secret drawer in my Lady's desk, are as familiar to her as her prayers, and she seems to hold them almost as sacred. Yet one is not even a letter, but only a piece of folded note-paper, torn at the creases, and yellow—nay, yellower than mere age could possibly have turned it. It has been damaged by sea-water. Within it are two locks of hair, quite white, and a few words in faded ink, *Frank Meade* and *Rachel Meade*, with a date of five-and-thirty years ago.

She takes out the silver tresses, and looking on them reverently for a few moments, kisses them, and puts them back in the secret drawer—but not the writing; that she holds above the lamp until it has caught fire, and watches it until it is quite consumed, and the last spark has gone out. Then she brings forth from the same hiding-place two letters, evidently both by the same hand—a very unclerkly one—ill-spelled and ill-composed, but which have been to her more dear than any written words for a quarter of a century; for they were letters of a dead man, written, the one when he was her accepted lover, the other after he became her husband. They are letters of the Dead no longer; for he who was thought to have died is still alive, and being so, has become an enemy more terrible than any who should seek her life; one who, by simply saying: 'This is my wife,' would thereby dishonour her, disgrace her children, and even shame the memory of that righteous man whose tomb she had just visited, and wept over with such honest tears. And yet with tenderness, though mixed with a certain awe and shrinking, does my Lady look upon those time-worn words, notwithstanding that the sacredness of Death is no longer on them. The first is what is called a love-letter, a note filled with foolish fondness, expressed with vehemence, but without coarseness; the

second a tissue of passionate self-reproaches; the writer accusing himself of bringing a curse upon her happy home in having married her; then stating, as though reluctantly, certain arrangements he had made at the seaport, from which his communication was dated, for the passage of herself and parents by the *North Star*. Both are signed *Ralph Gavestone*.

'So loving and so penitent,' murmurs she. 'Time cannot surely have worked so ill with such a nature as he would have me believe! When he first sang that carol to my ear, I thought it might have been an angel singing:

O'er the hill and o'er the vale
Come three kings together.

Alas, alas! to think with what terror I heard him sing it the last time. He may not be more changed within, perhaps, than he is without; since, notwithstanding what he said about his looks, I knew him again the first moment my eye lit upon him on yonder lawn. I wonder whether he would have known me, supposing he had snatched away my veil. Merciful Heaven, what a risk was that! nay, is not every moment that he remains at Mirk a risk! What if he heard the name of Gavestone coupled with mine? I am sure he recognised something in my voice, although I disguised it all I could. He must never come back hither—never, never! He must be as dead to me now as I deemed him to be before. God knows I pity him from the bottom of my heart: and also'—here she paused—yes, and also that I do not love him—no, not him, although I love the man that wrote these words. I never concealed it, no, never, from my—Sir Robert himself. I said: "I have no love to give you," all along; "only respect, devotion, duty." And those, Heaven knows, I gave. If all together, and a hundred other gracious feelings added, could have made up love, then Sir Robert would have had that; but they can not. He knew it, noble heart, and was content. He knew that in that drawer I kept these very things that came on shore with me when—O Ralph, Ralph, Ralph! My Lady shook with sobs; and then, in her agony, mistaking the noise of her own passion for some interruption from without, started up from the desk on which she had thrown herself, and listened.

Nothing was to be heard save a faint peal of laughter from the croquet-ground, where Walter and the two young ladies were endeavouring to play by lantern-light—a frolic she had heard them planning at dinner-time. Yet even that slight tidings from the world without recalled her to the present. 'I must burn all proofs,' she murmured, as though repeating some authoritative command of another rather than any determination of her own. Then with a steady hand she took the letters, and burned them to the last atom, reading the words with greediness, as though, as the flame consumed them one by one, the remainder had grown more precious, like the Sibyl's books. There was more to try her yet. The last thing which the little drawer contained had yet to be brought forth—a leaden locket, the facsimile of the one which Derrick had just shewn to her in the churchyard. Within, although almost, as he had expressed it, 'dried to dust,' was a tiny sprig of wood. She emptied this into the hollow of her hand, and instantly the wind whirled all away. My Lady uttered a low moan of anguish, then sat with the

poor token in her hand, which, worthless and vacant as it was, yet, to her streaming eyes, held all the treasure of her youth. "Alas, alas, for the time that is no more!" cried she. "Who could have thought that I, with my own hand, should destroy this precious pledge? Kind Heaven, direct me—teach me what it is right to do! Till death should part us, did I swear to cherish him; and now, though we both live, alone he roves the world. It may be I should win him back to his former self, and save a soul alive. He has loved me always—always; and he loves me now, although he deems I have lain beneath the waves these thirty years, and although he seeks— But that shall never be. I will tell Mary Forest rather to her face: "I myself am married to this man whom you would wed." He shall not bring another sin upon himself and shame on her, and— Ah, Heaven help me; what is that which I should do in this sad strait?"

It was terrible to see my Lady's look of woe, as, rising from her chair, she paced the room, and now prayed Heaven for aid, and now stood listening to the mirth that still broke in from out of doors by fits, and now gazed fixedly upon the little leaden case within her hand, as though there were some magic help in that. "Farewell, Lucy," murmured she; 'the last words that I ever thought to hear him say, which, having said, he dropped, to save my life, into the wave. And now I see him storm-tossed in the sea of sin, certain to sink, without a plank but this poor ancient love of his to which to cling, and yet I may not stretch a finger forth to aid him. Ah me, what base return! Why did I not cleave to him, although I thought him dead, as he to me? Why was I not faithful to his memory, as he to mine? Why say: "In three years' time, Sir Robert, if your fancy still holds firm, I will be yours?" Why not repeat that "No" I gave him first? Then, earning my own living as I was born to earn it, I might have lived on alone until this day, when, meeting with my poor lost Ralph once more, I could, without a blush of shame, cry "Husband!" and be to him indeed the guardian angel his love paints I was. Heaven knows, I wish it for his sake alone. I wish for nothing for myself but Death—yes, that would be best of all, a thousand times.'

My Lady's once plump face looked pinched and worn, almost as though the Shadow for which she sighed was really nigh; her anxious eyes, not softened by her tears, peered timorous as a hare's to left and right, as though the tenantless room held some one who could read her secret soul. Then sitting down upon the sofa, with her hands clenched before her, she stared out upon the twilight, deepening down upon the windmill on the hill. But presently, 'Forgive me these black thoughts,' prayed she with inward shudder. 'If, as they say, the place reserved for the wicked is filled with those who have promised themselves to do some good, and have not done it, then haply those who in their minds revolve some deadly sin which they do not commit, may be forgiven. I will not, with God's blessing, thus transgress again. I know that that is wrong, and prompted by the devil; but which is right and which is wrong in this' (once more her eyes fell piteously upon the locket in her hand)—'Lord help me in this trial.'

Here Walter's ringing voice was heard upon the lawn beneath: 'Never mind pulling up the rings,

Letty; they are the best burglar-trap a householder can lay; only bring in the mallets and balls.'

'My Walter!' exclaimed my Lady, starting up with haste. 'Have I forgotten you, then? My proud Sir Richard, too, disgraced, dishonoured, shall men call you bastard? My sweet Letty—never, never, never!' As though she dared not trust herself to think, she kept repeating that sad word: then thrusting the dear token in the centre of the wood and coals that were laid in the fireplace ready for the match, she set all alight.

'Better for one to suffer than for three,' she muttered to herself. 'The die is cast. I am My Lady still. I would my heart could melt away like this dull lead, and weigh me down no more, and with this last relic of the past, that every thought of it might likewise perish. It can never be, I know. While this my life still holds—a life of lies, a whited sepulchre—this sting will never lose its venom—never, never!—Shade of the dead,' cried she with vehemence, turning toward the old church-tower, which stood up black against the rising moon, 'I charge you, witness what I do for you and yours! Here, in this flame, I sacrifice not only this poor token, but the man that was my husband; nay, who is, the man that I once loved, nay, whom I love now; the man that laid his life down for my sake, with those two words, just "Farewell, Lucy." Great Heaven, is not this enough? Surely, now all will go well—save for him and me. Is this too much to ask? . . . Forgive, forgive: I know not what I said. Teach me to be humble, patient under every blow, and no more vain regrets. I must act at once. What did Arthur say? "The matter lay in my own hands," said he, whether this man should stay at Mirk or not. How little did he know with what truth he spoke! And I must speak to Mary without delay, for that I alone could stop her marriage with this man. How true again! Well, I will do it.'

Then my Lady washed her swollen eyes, and smoothed her hair, all tangled and escaped from its sober bonds, unturned the door-key, and having rung her bell, awaited with the lamp so placed that it threw her face in shadow, the coming of her waiting-maid.

CHAPTER XV.—MISTRESS AND MAID.

'Mary,' said Lady Lisgard gravely, when her attendant had closed the door behind her, 'I want to have a little serious talk with you to-night.'

'As you please, my Lady,' returned Mistress Forest, in a tone which the other did not fail to mark: it was a very respectful tone—a more humble one even than she was ordinarily wont to use—but there was a certain deliberation and set resolve about it too, which expressed as decidedly, as though she had used the words: 'I am ready to listen, madam; but I know very well what you are going to ask me, and I have made up my mind already to answer "No."'

'Mary,' continued my Lady earnestly, but not without a tremor in her kind soft voice, 'come and sit here on the sofa beside me, and let us not be mistress and maid to-night, but only friends.'

'Yes, madam;' and Mary's voice trembled too, for this unlooked-for arrangement would place her, she knew, at a disadvantage in the argument which was certainly at hand. 'We have known one another many, many years, Mary—more than half

our lives—and I don't think we have had a single quarrel yet.'

'Not one, ma'am, not one,' assented the waiting-maid; already, after the manner of her susceptible kind, beginning to cry.

'I can remember you when quite a child, Mary; not fifteen years old; as willing and kind-hearted as a girl as the sun ever shone upon; and when I had not a friend in the world, nor even so much as a coin that I could call my own, and when I was weak and sick at heart, having lost all that was dear to me, I remember who it was that tended and caressed me as though I was her own sister.'

'Don't ye, don't ye, my Lady; hush, hush!' cried the weeping Mary. 'It was only natural that I should take to a sweet innocent creature cast at our very door by the raging sea. I often dream of that storm o' nights, madam, even now; of the thunder, and the lightning, and the rain; and of the flashes that were not lightning, but signals for help—that, alas! we could not give—from the poor doomed ship. And how father and the other fishermen, and many of the visitors themselves—and among them poor Sir Robert—all crowded down to the Cove, for they could not get nearer to the shore because of the waves; and I was with them, sheltering myself in the brushwood as well as I could, and peering through the branches to see the great white waves lit up for an instant, and then the darkness shutting all things out except the roaring of the storm. I mind it just as though it were but yesterday; and ah! my Lady, shall I ever forget when that one great wave dashed up into the very Cove itself, wetting us all to the skin, and knocking down young Jack West, whom it almost carried back with it in its return, and then the Great Black Spar, which it did carry back, with something white a-clinging to it; when my father cried out: "O my God, a woman!" and all our hearts seemed stricken with a sudden shoot of pain. Lord! how I cried, for my part, to think that a poor creature should be tossing in that dreadful foam; and when I heard good Sir Robert's voice, clear and loud as a bangle: "One hundred pounds to the man who brings her ashore, dead or alive!" I do believe I could have run out and kissed him. Ah, my Lady, what a noble gentleman he was; for though he could not have known how dear you were to be to him—you might have been an old woman, for all he could see—how he worked and strove to save you; not by his money alone, for no mere gain would have tempted men to do what was done that night, but by risking life and limb. They made a double chain, holding one another's hands, for there was no time to spare for ropes, and went down almost among the breakers, where you were: my father and Sir Robert were the two first men, God bless them!'

Here Mistress Forest paused, interrupted by incipient hysterics, and my Lady herself cried like a child, but not in agony; her tears were tribute to the memory of a gallant deed.

'I mind my father had a black shoulder—a place you could not cover with both your hands—all along of the spar being driven up against him, but they carried it up with you upon it safe into the Cove, and then there was a great cry for us women to come down and help. Ah, how beautiful you looked, my Lady, though we thought you dead, white, and cold, and wet, with your long black hair dripping like sea-weed, and your tender

limbs all bruised and bleeding. It must have been a kind hand as tied you to the plank, for between your dainty waist and the rough rope there was bound a sailor's jacket.'

My Lady moaned, and held her hands up as though she would say, 'Forbear!' but Mistress Forest could not be stayed.

'There was little enough clothes upon you, poor Lady, just a bodice and a petticoat, but round your neck there was hung a charm or two, and perhaps that had some hand in saving you from drowning.'

My Lady looked quickly up; how strange it seemed that the comment passed by Mary Forest upon the locket (and the bundle of letters in their little waterproof case) should have been so exactly what Derrick had pointed out it would be. The coincidence reminded her of the task that lay before her, and of the danger of delaying it.

'Yes, Mary, I indeed owe my life to you and yours, and I am not forgetful of the debt. Your welfare is, and ever will be, only second in importance to that of my own children, and it is concerning it that I now wish to speak with you. Your future'—

'You owe me nothing, my dear Lady, that you have not paid again and again, I am sure,' interrupted the waiting-maid hurriedly. 'When you rose to that high station, for which it seems to everybody you were born, your hand was always held out to me; through good report and evil report, you have ever stood my friend: it will be a great wrench of my heart, dearest mistress, when I leave your service—as I shall have to do, I fear, very soon.'

'Mary!'

'Yes, my Lady. You see I'm not a young girl now; and it is not everybody who has so good a chance as I have now of—settling in life. Service is not inheritance, you know, my Lady, although I am well aware I should never want for nothing'—

'Whether I live or die, Mary,' broke in her mistress eagerly, 'I have taken care of that, good friend; and if I should die to-morrow— But you shall see my will itself, for it lies here.'

She laid her hand upon the desk before her, but Mary checked her with a determined 'No, my Lady; no. I was never greedy—with all my faults, you will grant that much, I know—and if I had been like Mrs Welsh, and others of this household I could name—but that I never was a mischief-maker—I might long since have put myself beyond all need of legacies, and you never would have missed it. But Mr Derrick is himself a person of property; a very rich man indeed for one in my condition of life—not that I need be a burden upon any man, thank Heaven, for I have money saved out of my wages—and very handsome they always were—and that great present of good Sir Robert's still untouched: the most generous of gentlemen he was. I am sure, my Lady, nobody felt for you as I did when Sir Robert died; and you have often said how terrible it was to lose a husband; and therefore'—here for a moment her excessive volubility flagged for the first time; she paused, and reddened, then added, with the air of a mathematician stating an indisputable corollary—'therefore, you must allow, dear mistress, that to find one—particularly when one comes to my time of life—is not unpleasant, nor a chance to be lightly thrown aside.'

'That depends entirely upon the sort of husband he may be, Mary,' observed my Lady gravely.

'Really, dear madam, with all respect, I think I am the best judge of that,' rejoined the waiting-maid tartly; 'although, indeed, I never thought to say such words to you. Sir Richard may have his likes and dislikes, but I am not his slave; nor yet his servant, for the matter of that. While Master Walter, who, saving your presence, everybody knows to be worth a hundred of him, likes Ralph very much.'

A pang shot across my Lady's face, and left it crimson, as though she had received a blow; but the waiting-maid little knew what had brought the colour there, although she felt that she had pained her mistress deeply.

'God forgive me,' cried she penitently, 'if my foolish tongue has hurt your feelings, my Lady! I did not mean to say aught against Sir Richard, I am sure. I scarcely knew what I said, for when those are dear to us—as Ralph has grown to be with me, and I don't deny it—are misjudged and wronged, why, then, we are apt to say bitter things. This talk was none of my seeking, my Lady; and although Ralph thinks that you are to blame because of his being forbidden the Hall, and all the rest of it, I have always told him you have never said a word to set me against him; and oh, I am sorry you are doing it now, because what is done cannot be undone, and—'

'Great Heaven! you are not married to this man?' cried my Lady, rising from her seat with agitation.

'O no, my Lady—certainly not, my Lady,' rejoined the waiting-maid with a certain demure dignity. 'There has been nothing underhand between us in the matter at all, except, that is, so far as meeting Mr Derrick at the back gate'—

'Did you go out to meet him *to-night*?' inquired Lady Lisgard sharply, and keeping her eyes fixed steadily upon her attendant's face.

'No, madam, I did not.'

'She is speaking truth,' murmured my Lady to herself. 'Who, then, could it be whom I saw upon the churchyard path just now?'

'Although,' continued Mistress Forest quietly, 'I don't deny that I have often met him after dusk, no other time being permitted to us; but to-day he has gone to town.'

'And you are to write to him thither to give him your final decision as to whether you will become his wife or not.'

'How on earth do you know that, my Lady?' inquired the waiting-maid with a curiosity even beyond her indignation.

'I do know it, dear old friend,' answered Lady Lisgard tenderly, 'and it is because of that knowledge that I have sent for you to-night, to strive to persuade you to write "No," while there is yet time.'

It was very seldom—not once in a year, perhaps—that Mary Forest was ever out of temper with my Lady; but then such a supreme occasion as the present had never occurred before. Underneath their mere superficial relation of mistress and servant, they were more like elder and younger sister; but then even sisters quarrel when the one wants the other—generally under some pretence of mere prudence, not to be listened to by a woman of spirit—to give up the man of her choice. The ample countenance of Mistress Forest expressed something more than Decision in the negative;

there was an unpleasant smile upon her pale lips, which seemed to say: 'If you knew what I know, you would know that you are wasting your breath.' She sat with her plump hands folded before her, like a naughty boy that has been put in the corner, but who does not care—nay, more, who knows that he has got a cracker to put presently under his master's chair, the results of which will make full amends for the inconvenience he at present experiences.

'I will say nothing more, Mary, of the mutual esteem and affection between us two, and of the pain that an eternal parting—such as your marriage with this Mr Derrick would most undoubtedly entail—needs must cost us both. I presume that you have weighed that matter in your mind, and found it—however weighty—insufficient to alter your determination?'

Mary nodded, sharply enough, but it was doubtful if she could have spoken. Already her features had lost their rigidity, as though melted by my Lady's touching tones.

'You have known this person—that is to say, you have met him some dozen times—during a period of less than four months; yet such is his influence over you, that you are prepared to sacrifice for him a friend of thirty years' standing, a comfortable home, and a position in which you are respected by all who know you. If I was speaking to a young girl, Mary, I should not advance these arguments; but you are a—wise and sensible woman, and yet not of such a mature age that you need despair of finding a suitable partner for the rest of your life.'

Mistress Forest heaved a little sigh of relief, and her cheeks began to tone down to something like their natural crimson; they had been purple with the apprehension of what my Lady might have said upon the subject of age.

'Now, what is it,' pursued my Lady, 'which has produced this confidence in an almost entire stranger? Do you know anything of his former life, which may be a guarantee to you for the stability of your future? Have you ever met a single individual who is acquainted with it in any way? For all who know, this man may have been a'—

'My Lady!'

For a moment, the relative position of Mentor and pupil were exchanged; there was a quiet power about the waiting-maid's rebuke, for which an archbishop would have given more than his blessing, if he could only have incorporated it into a 'charge.'

'You are right, Mary,' said my Lady frankly; 'let us only speak of what is within our own knowledge. Does this man's own conduct, then, give any promise of lasting happiness to the woman who may become his wife? Is he sober?'

'I believe he is fond of a glass, my Lady, as most men are who have no home, or people to look after them. If he had a wife, he would never go to the public-house at all, perhaps—he tells me so himself.'

My Lady smiled faintly.

'Is he industrious and provident, Mary?'

'He has earned his money hardly enough, my Lady, and it seems only natural that he should now spend a little in enjoying himself.'

'But not fling his money to left and right—I use your own words, dear Mary—and treat every chance companion he comes across to liquor. Do you suppose that at his age he is likely to change habits of this sort?'

'I am not aware, my Lady, that his age is anything against him,' replied the waiting-maid coldly. 'He is not so like to run through his money as if he were younger, and particularly when he has got some one to provide for beside himself. And indeed, so far as money goes, he has thousands of pounds; and if all goes well with him—and something has occurred to-day about which he has sent me a line by hand, dear fellow, by which it has been made almost certain that things *will* go well—he will be a very rich man indeed after a week or two. There is some great race on Epsom Downs'—

'O Mary, how can you talk so cheerfully of money acquired in that way. If it is won to-day, it is lost to-morrow; and even if it were not so, do you know that it is gained from those who can ill afford to lose it, and who, having lost it, often turn to wicked ways?'

'I don't know about that, my Lady, I'm sure,' responded the waiting-maid demurely; 'I leave all these things to my betters. But, I suppose, if racing was a crime, Mr Chifney would not be let to have the Abbey Farm—Sir Richard being so very particular—and Master Walter would not for ever be up at the stables. Why, he and Mr Derrick are both together, hand and glove, in this very business—something about a French racer, it is; although, when you and I were at Dijon, my Lady, we never heard of there being such a thing in all France, did we?—so my poor Ralph cannot be so very wicked after all. And please, ma'am, it is no use saying anything more about it, for I have written him that letter already which he was to find in London, and put it in the post.'

'And did you answer "Yes" or "No," Mary?'

'I answered "Yes," my Lady—that I would marry him—and begging your pardon, madam, but I mean to stand to it.'

SEA-SALTS.

ANY one who has made a veritable sea-voyage cannot have failed to notice the intensely blue colour of the water in certain parts of the ocean. In the vicinity of land, he will have seen the water of a bright green colour, which will be found to prevail until soundings cease to be struck. In the deep unfathomable parts of the ocean, he will have seen the water of so deep a blue as to be fully as dark as the strongest solution of blue vitriol; and even in the regions where deep blue is the general colour of the sea, he may have seen, if he have been in the Gulf Stream, or gone 'down the Trades,' a deeper blue than the deepest, in certain particular localities. There is a current in the China Sea that washes the Aleutian Islands, and is so dark, as compared with the other waters of the ocean, that the Japanese call it the Black Stream. Other ocean-streams there are, and particular portions of the ocean itself, which are more blue than their neighbours. Every West India voyager knows the marvellous blue of the Trade-wind waters.

Some people, even those who are familiar with many facts of physical geography, account for this blue colour by the reflection of the blue firmament in the mirror of the ocean; some ascribe it to the depth of the water, asserting, that if the green water which is found nearer land were piled up in a basin as deep as that which holds the blue

mutation, brought about by volume, be the same dark blue.

Now, while it is certain that the brightness or dulness of the day affects the colour of the deep sea so far as to make that which on a bright sunshiny day is an intense blue, an equally intense black when the day is overcast and sunless, it is quite as certain that the reflection of the firmament has nothing to do with the originally dark colour of the water. If it had, the same effect would be produced on the sea near land, in a less degree, perhaps, but still produced; while, at all events, it would be wrought beyond all question in the great northern seas, when circumstances favoured the reflection—and yet, under no circumstances whatever, is it ever produced upon them. Their waters, no matter how bright the day, or how clear the sky, are ever green.

Then, as to the reason founded on the depth of the sea, the argument based upon the ever-greenness of the unfathomable north seas, applies against it with as much force as it does against the reflection theory. Besides, what would be true of the water near land, in one latitude, would be true of the water near land in another; so that the sea about the Caribbean Islands should be green on soundings as it is green in the English Channel. But, as a matter of fact, it is not so. The waters of Carlisle Bay, Barbadoes; of Kingstown Harbour, St Vincent; and of the West India Islands generally, are almost as blue as the mid-ocean waters. Look down over the side of a vessel anchored in either of the places mentioned, and you will see the bottom, through a medium so blue as to make you think you are lying in a sea of sulphate of copper. There are good reasons why the blue is not so intense as it is further at sea, but it is blue very distinctly, and never under any circumstances is it green.

The true cause of this blue colour of the ocean is to be found in the saltiness of the ocean; and in the case of the West Indian waters, to the absence of those causes which are in full operation in more northern latitudes, and which as clearly mark the seas of those regions to be different from those more southerly, as their respective climates are distinguished by different degrees of heat and cold.

It is observed in the pools or brine-vats of salt-works, that the more concentrated the water the bluer the colour of it, the saltiest of all being of a hue nearly as deep as that of the intertropical waters. The light-green colour of the North Sea and the Polar Seas, is to the blue of more southerly waters what the middle brine-vat is to the vat in which crystallisation takes place; and the Gulf Stream, off the coasts of the Carolinas, and the waters of the Trade-wind region, are to the other waters of the Atlantic what the last vat is to the penultimate vat; that is to say, the dark-blue sea is saltier than the light-green sea, and the deeper the blue the saltier the water.

Now, this difference of density in sea-water is not mere supposition, but an ascertained fact, the amount of saline matter contained in one part differing from that contained in another, in the following proportions, the water of the English Channel being taken as 1: The Baltic Sea, 0.19; the Black Sea, 0.61; Irish Channel, 0.96; Mediterranean, 1.11; ocean at the equator, 1.12; North Atlantic, 1.16; South Atlantic, 1.20; Dead Sea, 10.86. This is only a general statement.

Biscay contains three and a half per cent. of salt; the water of the Trade-wind region, four and four-tenths; and that in the Gulf Stream, off Charleston, four per cent.; and similar results might be gathered from tests applied to different parts of other seas. If the blue colour and the difference of density did not speak plainly enough, there is the additional fact, that ships' copper, in the Gulf and Caribbean Sea, is more corroded than in waters north of this latitude, to shew that there are more chemical agents at work in them than in these others.

While the Baltic Sea is, as shewn above, almost brackish, it is reckoned that if all the salt contained in the water annually evaporated from the north-east Trade region of the Atlantic could be heaped into one place, it would cover an area equal to the size of the British Islands to the depth of fourteen feet. The Trade-wind region is the saltiest part of the Atlantic, it having been ascertained that the heaviest water in all that ocean is found between the parallels seventeen degrees north and south of the equator.

Now, although it has been discovered that for certain the salt waters of the globe differ from each other in saltiness, it has never been found that they differ in respect of the actual salts contained. The same ingredients go to embitter the waters of the brackish Baltic Sea that salify those of the mid-ocean; it is only in the distributive proportion that the seas really differ. The salts contained in sea-water, according to an analysis made of a specimen taken off Havre, were found to be as follow: In one thousand parts of water there were thirty-one and a half parts of solid matter; and the solid matter was thus made up: Chloride of sodium (common salt), 24.632; chloride of potassium, 0.307; chloride of calcium, 0.439; chloride of magnesium, 2.564; bromide of magnesium, 0.147; sulphate of lime, 1.097; sulphate of magnesia, 2.146; carbonate of lime (common chalk), 0.176; carbonate of magnesia, 0.078. In some waters there are found other ingredients than these; but they are due to local causes not exerting any wide-spread influence, and they cannot be reckoned among the common components of sea-water.

Why the sea should be salt at all; why, being salt, it should have different densities; whence the salts come; whither they go; what office they have in the economy of nature; and whether 'in the beginning' the sea was salt or fresh—these are all natural questions arising out of the facts ascertained and mentioned above; and most of them can be answered, if not quite satisfactorily, yet with sufficient probability.

That the sea-water should be denser—that is, saltier—in one part than another, is a consequence of the constant operation of causes that of necessity tend to bring about such a result: such are greater evaporation, less rainfall, less importation of fresh water by means of rivers, &c. These three causes are brought to bear upon those regions of the sea where the water is densest. From the Red Sea it is estimated that eight feet of water are annually withdrawn through evaporation only, and this amount will seem to be yet more considerable when it is remembered that there is no river, and hardly even a brook, running into this sea, whereby its waters may be replenished; that its banks are of sand; that there is no rain; and that there is positively no equalising force at work, apart from

the sea itself, to restore the equilibrium disturbed by evaporation. It is not therefore surprising that the Red Sea should be saltier than a sea like the Baltic, where the loss through evaporation is but in comparison almost nil, and where the influx of river-water from numerous streams, and the addition derived from heavy annual falls of rain, are very abundant. The amount of saline matter contained in a thousand parts of Baltic Sea water is about twelve parts, while the Red Sea at Suva contains 41 in 1000 parts of water, and at the Strait of Bab-el-Mandeb, 39.2 in 1000.

In the Trade-wind region, which is the saltiest part of the ocean, evaporation is said to take place to the extent of fifteen feet annually—the salt from this quantity of water being estimated, as already mentioned, to be able to cover the British Islands to the depth of fourteen feet. Here, of course, no rivers can give their assistance towards mitigating the loss sustained, though the rains which at times fall with wonderful liberality are far from being mean refreshers. Still the impoverishing agent are so many more in number, and so much more active than in the latitudes outside the Trades, that they bring about that concentration of brine-making principles which entitles this part to be called, *par excellence*, the water of Marah.

The Indian and Pacific Oceans have each their brine-streams, produced by the same causes that give rise to that in the Atlantic—evaporation, want of rain, absence of rivers—so that, as it is a fact, so it is a necessity, that one part of the ocean should be saltier than another.

But why salt at all? This, too, comes from the nature of things. The rivers which receive from brooks, springs, dew-washings, rain-gatherings, &c., a multitude of soluble matter, also pick up on their own account, as they travel towards the sea, as much saline matter as they find to absorb, and they bring this tribute of themselves and their feudatories to the great receptacle, the Ocean, and cast their burden into its bosom. There the salts which the fresh-water rivers could not retain, are taken up by the sea-water, soaking into its pores and are appropriated for those purposes of the ocean which will be declared presently. Certain streams running through soils of a special character collect in their journey the special salts which distinguish those soils, so that they arrive at the ocean laden with contributions different from those brought by their neighbours; but the sea is not therefore more charged with this particular salt, even in the immediate locality where the river empties itself, than it is at other parts, by reason of a beautiful system of compensation and equalisation, which is the principle that sets currents flowing. The ocean is the great reservoir where all the matter which its tributaries have been able to collect is distributed and assigned a place, by agencies the most powerful, yet the most easily set in action, whose work is visible to all who care to inquire into it, and who sing for ever the praise of Him who was their first cause. The salts poured into the ocean cannot get back into the rivers, for obvious reasons, and they are accumulated in one shape or other in the great depository. Evaporation ever going on, the sea-water must ever grow more brine-like, one would think; the salts are continually imported, fresh water is being continually withdrawn, and though restored to it again after the lapse of time, it is chiefly in the shape of an agent which will bring fresh supplies

of saline matter, for the rainfall in the ocean represents only a tithe of its fresh-water receipts, at least in the band of the globe within forty degrees north and south of the equator.

As a matter of fact, however, the sea, although denser in the parts most exposed to causes which deprive it of fresh water, is not becoming brinier, nor is it, so far as can be ascertained, salting up, in the sense of forming great beds of salt at the bottom. The system of Currents, already treated of in a late number of *Chambers's Journal*, rectifies, as between latitudes exposed to impoverishing causes and those not so exposed, the inequality of the supply of salts to them respectively; the heavy and heated waters of the tropics streaming away north and south, carry a full freight of saline matter to be absorbed by the fresher waters, which in their turn, and in obedience to an apparent law, that to every current there shall be a counter-current, rush forth from their colder and fresher climate, like the Norsemen of whom they were prototypes, to seek a home in kindlier and more hospitable regions. So that hereby is the universal sea maintained in its saltiness; and hence comes it that seas from which there is no evaporation, and which receive abundant supplies of fresh water from rivers and otherwise, keep up their character, and do not degenerate into saltless lakes. By this beneficent arrangement, the salt-saturated waters of hot regions are prevented from becoming intolerably briny, and order is maintained in the household of ocean.

But if the ocean receives more salt than it can carry in the pores of its waters, as is alleged it does, and it cannot become saltier by reason of the fact that it cannot hold more than a certain definite quantity of salt in solution, what becomes of the balance which is not needed for keeping up the standard strength of the ocean?

It has been said that, so far as has been ascertained, the ocean is not depositing banks of salt at its bottom, and this is a reasonable conclusion, if we may argue from the analogy furnished by the Mediterranean and Red Seas, not to speak of any more. These two seas receive from their respective ocean-feeders such a supply of saline matter, that in the course of a few hundred years they would become two enormous districts of solid sea-salt, were it not that they are able to ease themselves of all the food which is superfluous to their nourishment. It is a known fact, that neither of them is salting up, and the means by which this operation is avoided are also well ascertained. An under-current of thoroughly saturated water runs oceanwards through the Strait of Gibraltar and the Strait of Bab-el-Mandeb, conveying again into the ocean the overabundance of food which that liberal caterer provided. The density of the Mediterranean under-current has been found to be four times greater than that of the surface-water; indeed so strong in salt is it, that an eminent surveyor of ocean-phenomena, who was adverse to the theory of the under-current oceanwards, having obtained a sample of this lower stratum of water, was driven to the conclusion that he had struck a 'brine-spring.' But apart from the fact, that 'brine-springs' are not among recognised submarine agents, nothing being known of their existence as a matter of truth, it has been demonstrated in a variety of very satisfactory ways that there is an under-current setting outwards from the Mediterranean through the Strait of Gibraltar.

The same thing may be said of the Red Sea and the Strait of Bab-el-Mandeb, and of all seas similarly situated. They draw from the ocean-waters such quantities of salt as are required to keep up the standard of their strength, and return the surplus to the giver. They are not salting up.

But then, what becomes of the surplus, which is already large in the ocean itself, and is increased by this return of proffered gifts into its bosom? The same process by which the seas rid themselves of salt is not available for the ocean; on the contrary, it adds to the burden of it. The analogy between the feeder and the fed goes no further than this, that as one is not salting up, so neither is the other: the means by which this identical result is arrived at are wholly different. If the outlets to the Mediterranean Sea were closed, the rivers now falling into it continuing nevertheless to find an outfall there, the result would be a deposit of salt in some shape or other, unless means similar to those adopted in the ocean were resorted to. But an outlet is found for Mediterranean brine, the ocean is relieved by a method which operates to a small extent in some of the inland seas, but is in full activity only where it affords the sole vent for over-saltiness.

There is in the ocean a world of beings, countless in number, infinite in form and size, whose office and duty it seems to be to regulate the density of the waters, to set the breathing apparatus and the current machinery of their world in motion, and while apparently doing no more than is necessary for their own well-being and comfort, to be the founders of empires larger than Charlemagne's, and far more durable. Who are these? Let Schleiden tell us of some of them, in his own words, which cannot be bettered. He is speaking of the bottom of the Indian Ocean:

'Dense masses of Meandrinæ and Astræas contrast with the leafy, cup-shaped expansions of the Explanariæ, the variously ramified Madreporæ, which are now spread out like fingers, now rise in trunk-like branches, and now display the most elegant array of interlacing branches. The colouring surpasses everything: vivid green alternates with brown or yellow; rich tints of purple, from pale red-brown to the deepest blue. Brilliant rosy, yellow, or peach-coloured Nullipores overgrow the decaying masses, and are themselves interwoven with the pearl-coloured plates of the Retipores, resembling the most delicate ivory carvings. Close by wave the yellow and lilac fans, perforated like trellis-work, of the Gorgonias. The clear sand of the bottom is covered with the thousand strange forms and tints of the sea-urchins and star-fishes. The leaf-like Flustra and Echara adhere like mosses and lichens to the branches of the corals; the yellow, green, and purple-striped Limpets cling like monstrous cochineal insects upon their trunks. Like gigantic cactus-blossoms, sparkling in the most ardent colours, the Sea Anemones expand their crowns of tentacles upon the broken rocks, or more modestly embellish the flat bottom, looking like beds of variegated ranunculuses. Around the blossoms of the coral shrubs play the humming-birds of the ocean—little fish sparkling with red or blue metallic glitter, or gleaming in golden green, or in the brightest silvery lustre. . . .

'Whatever is beautiful, wondrous, or uncommon in the great classes of fish and Echinoderms, jelly-fishes and polypes, and the molluscs of all kinds,

is crowded into the warm and crystal waters of the tropical ocean—rests in the white sands; clothes the rough cliffs; clings, where the room is already occupied, like a parasite, upon the first-comers, or swims through the shallows and depths of the elements.'

There are, besides these, that numberless host of microscopic organisms, which, living at the top stratum of the sea, attack the fresh water newly arrived with its salts, take their full of them, and having done their duty by appropriating a minute portion of superfluous salt, sink to the bottom as an atom of solid matter. Then there are the marine plants, drawing upon the treasury of the waters for their sustenance, for a contribution to the Sargasso Seas, the banks of weed, the oceanic garden, which has duties to perform that are but slightly ascertained.

Such are the equalisers of the ocean-strength, such the just weighers of the balance between salt water and brine, such the work-people whom God has appointed to have their place and duty in the world of His sea. The little madrepores, the corallines, have built the Florida Reefs and the Bahama Banks; they have studded the Pacific with atolls, or lagoon islands, and thrown their barrier and encircling reefs round the West India and East India islands, and everywhere that circumstances were favourable to their operations. They and their comrades, the shell-fish of all kinds, appropriate the lime which the sea cannot stomach, and the Diatomaceæ use the silice. Others, whose names are given, some of them above, do their part in the general purification; and all the inhabitants of the ocean—both Fauna and Flora—work together for the common purposes for which they were created, and of these, one undoubtedly is the relief of the medium in which they live from an overweight of that which would injuriously affect their own existence.

So the sea is salt by reason of the earth-washings which are poured into it; it has different densities because of evaporation, rainfalls, and rivers; it is prevented from stagnating by a universal system of ocean-currents; and it yields out of its abundance materials for the building up of continents to be. Such are the conclusions at which science, long labouring, has arrived; such the results of observation by patient, careful men, who, going down to the sea in ships, have seen the works of the Lord, and His wonders in the deep.

A SHORT-HAND WRITER.

OF all the short-hand writers in the precincts of Lincoln's Inn, Cornelius Bubb stood the highest in matter of inches. He was six feet six, and very thin from constant lack of sleep in term-time. He was known in the Lane as the man in black—he had black clothes, black hair, and black looks. He was very sharp—his walk was sharp, his tongue was sharp, and his pen was sharp. The more business he got, the worse his temper grew; but it was all bark—there was no bite in it. If he scolded a poor wandering short-hand clerk one night, he was none the less ready to give him another job the next, should he happen to call. The most deadly offence in his eyes was correctness. He could be spiteful to clerks who were clever enough to give no occasion for criticism. He gave the

preference over such to clerks who were human, and who erred. These gave a nightly feast to his irony and sarcasm. Disappoint him of his meal, be as sharp and immaculate in copying from your short-hand notes as himself, and you forfeited his friendship for ever. You were a conceited fellow—an unpleasant companion from four P.M. to perhaps the small-hours of the morning.

One Thursday night in November, when Michaelmas Term was a week old, Mr Bubb strode along from his modest dining-place through the cold fog in the Lane towards his office. He stepped quickly up the dark, unlighted staircase, and stooped into his rooms. There were only some thirty or forty folios to write out, and then he was free to use a ticket for the Opera given him by a friend. In the outer or clerks' office, was his established clerk—a boy of ten years, who lived in the regions below with his mother. There was also a stranger waiting—a young man with a note-book in his hand.

'Nothing to-night,' said Bubb, who could not yet afford to pay others for doing what he could do himself.

The stranger turned to go.

'If you please, sir,' said the boy, 'Hume and Smollet have sent round to say they want the evidence in Jones and Perkins by nine o'clock to-morrow.'

'What!' cried the disappointed playgoer.

The boy repeated his message.

'Why, there's three hundred folios of it, and I've told everybody I shouldn't want them. Run down the Lane, and if you don't find some of them, never shew your useless face here again. Run!'—The boy disappeared on his errand.—'And now,' said Bubb, turning to the stranger, who had lingered, 'you are in for it. There's three hundred folios to do before you leave this office.'

'Very well, sir.'

This philosophic reply caused Bubb to scrutinise the stranger more narrowly. He was dressed in an Inverness cape; he held his round hat respectfully in one hand, and a brand-new reporter's note-book in the other. He looked very young; his voice was not broken; his cheeks were smooth, and free, as yet, from whiskers; his dark hair was short and curly; his black eyes had a merry look in them: in fine, he was a very good-looking boy.

'I have never seen you before,' remarked Bubb. 'Where did you learn short-hand?'

'At home, sir.'

'Have you ever done such work as mine before?'

'No, sir.'

'Good gracious! Then pethaps you can't do it? I am sure you can't. You don't look as if you could. And what's to become of me? Do you know what three hundred folios mean?'

'No, sir.'

'I thought not,' said Bubb contemptuously. 'Well, then, I'll tell you: it's more than twelve hours' hard work. And what will become of me? If that boy doesn't find some help, I'll hang him.'

'It is true, sir, that I have never done this work before,' persisted the short-hand novice, 'but you can't tell whether I can do it or not till I have tried.'

'An Irishman said something like that when he was asked if he could play the violin,' remarked Bubb severely.

Here his boy-clerk returned. 'I can see nothing but the fog, sir, if you please.'

Under the pressure of business, his master deigned no reply but a look.—'What is your name?' he demanded of his would-be assistant.

'John Smith, sir.'

'A very remarkable one. Sit down opposite me there, and tell me if I read too fast.' He opened the note-book in which he had taken down the evidence in Jones *versus* Perkins, and began to read aloud. John Smith wrote it down in his own short-hand in the note-book he had brought with him, beginning the questions at the extreme left, and the answers in the middle of the page. He had nearly filled a couple of slips, when Bubb stopped suddenly and watched how far he was behind. Only four or five words.

'Read!' said Bubb.

John Smith read it unhesitatingly. Bubb tried hard not to feel pleased, and failed.

'Write it out on this paper. Begin six lines from the bottom—I will put the heading in afterwards—and mind put the "Qs" and "As" in the margin.'

Without a word, John Smith did as directed, and that in a swift clear handwriting.

'Don't leave blanks,' said Bubb, 'and don't puzzle over a word you can't make out at once; ask me.'

But Smith had nothing to ask.

'You'll do,' remarked Bubb pithily. A bright thought struck him. 'You can't expect, Mr Smith, the same pay as an experienced hand. Twopence per folio is what such a man gets, and we reckon about eight folios in a sheet of evidence. I'll give you three-half-pence; will that do?'

'Yes, sir,' replied Smith humbly. So at their work they went—Bubb dictating about fifty folios at a time to Smith, with directions to fit it in on the right side of a sheet, and then copying out himself the continuation from his own note-book. They worked on thus without interruption, save a cup of tea and a hastily swallowed crust, till between three and four the next morning, when all the evidence was written fairly out.

'Come as soon after three this afternoon, as you can,' said Bubb, as he parted with his new assistant at the door of the office; 'I have a case in Kindersley's court.' Bubb returned to read over, page, and stitch in a neat cover his many sheets of manuscript. Then he made himself a bed on the couch in his own office, and slept soundly till eight o'clock, when his boy-clerk came up from the kitchen with his breakfast.

That night the offices of Mr Bubb presented a noisy and busy scene. The outer one was crowded with assistants, who smoked, and wrote, and talked, and sent out the boy for beer, which they passed to each other under the table—who were constantly asking questions, and making mistakes, and occasionally swearing, *sotto voce*. The door of Mr Bubb's private office was ajar, and from thence his snarl and sneer came to them in rapid sequence. All the evening, they had been taking turns to be dictated to at Mr Bubb's desk, and the wrangling

between him and his slow dictatees—his erring favourites—was ever in the ears of all. The law-stationer's boy had worried Bubb into a state of fury. But he never became confused; his clear head revelled in the general distraction. Not so his new assistant, John Smith; he had asked leave early in the evening to work in Mr Bubb's room.

'As you like—on the stairs, if you please, so long as you get it done,' said his master.

It was eleven o'clock; Bubb had given out the last of his notes, and the law-stationer's boy was snoring in a corner, ready to be shaken up for the last sheets. Near them was seated young Smith, straining hard to keep his eyes open, and forcing sore reluctant fingers to finish his task. An assistant brought in the last of his work, and then made a speedy exit. But his master's tongue followed him. Running his eye maliciously over the sheets, Bubb cried out: 'I say, Dixon, do you mean to say you did this yourself?'

'Yes, sir,' responded the assistant from the outer room.

'I can't believe you, Dixon,' replied Mr Bubb; 'there are only sixteen words misspelt.' A loud laugh from his comrades. At this moment the new assistant gave in—his head dropping helplessly on to the desk. Bubb jumped up, and raised him gently, and was about to unfasten his neck-tie and waistcoat, when, with an exclamation of dismay, he drew back as if he had burnt his fingers. Smith opened his eyes, and revived wearily.

'I thought you had fallen asleep, Mr Smith,' said Bubb, in strangely tender tones. 'Have you much to do?'

'No, sir.' And poor Smith went at it again, while Bubb watched him curiously.

'Dixon,' he called out, 'have you gone yet?'

'No, sir.'

'Then come here; I want you.' Dixon entered the sanctum. 'Here's our new friend very tired; perhaps you don't mind seeing him home. He has nearly finished.'

Smith was too fatigued to object, if he had any objections; indeed, he had to lean very heavily on the arm of the good-natured Dixon.

'Come to-morrow with your bill,' said Bubb, as they left. 'The fresh air will revive you.—You will take care of the boy, Dixon?'

In the outer office, amongst the seasoned oldsters, the boy excited much sympathy. Ignoring in their kindness the eye of Bubb, they openly offered him their pewter pots to drink from. Smith faintly thanked them, and declined.

On Saturday morning, Smith presented his first account to Mr Bubb in that gentleman's private office. He paid it at once, cutting off an odd ninepence for luck, as he said. Bubb always contrived to pay first accounts when due; it made people's minds easier under any delays that might take place with other accounts. Smith was retiring with his well-earned money, when Bubb, clearing his throat, detained him with these words: 'Mr Smith, I have nothing to do with your private affairs; you do what I pay you to do; still—I think you ought to give me a reference.'

Smith blushed like a girl, and stammered out: 'I can give you a note to Dr P— of Bloomsbury; he knows me.'

Mr Bubb eagerly assented. How will he word it? thought he. His curiosity was pictured so plainly in his face, that Smith, with a smile, politely

handed it to him to read. 'Dr P—— is earnestly begged to say a word of recommendation in favour of his young friends the Smiths.' Bubb felt disappointed. He took some interest in this cheap and able short-hand writer, and the clever vagueness of the note still kept him in the dark. He watched Smith from the office-window till he was out of sight, and then started for Dr P——'s. The doctor was very busy; could spare Mr Bubb only two minutes.

'Seeking work from you, sir, I presume? Well, the Smiths are highly respectable and trustworthy; poor from a misfortune. Take my guarantee for any materials however costly you may trust them with, whatever your business may be. Good-morning, sir.'

'Excuse me; I am a cautious man,' said Mr Bubb. 'What misfortune?'

'The father—wealthy man—turned his son out of doors. The daughter left with him, and will not return till he is forgiven. The son is consumptive—won't live long. Good-morning, sir. You have my guarantee.'

On his way back, the sharp-tongued short-hand writer composed a beautiful romance, with himself for the hero, and his new assistant for heroine. The plot ran thus: The discarded son of a wealthy father is ill, and Mr Bubb finds employment for his faithful sister at a reduction only of a halfpenny a folio. She is grateful; she is also not insensible to his personal charms—she loves him. The discarded and consumptive son dies. The wealthy father calls back his daughter to his penitent bosom; and at the expiration of the fashionable term of mourning, Mr Bubb marries his late charming assistant, now heiress-at-law to her father's wealth.

For the remaining weeks of the term, however other assistants fared, there was always something for young Smith. For him Mr Bubb suspended his economical habit; he sat idle himself rather than turn young Smith away. But as business chanced to be very brisk, this was very seldom the case. Dixon always accompanied Smith home, waiting for his younger comrade, if it were necessary. Mr Bubb had always to read over and correct when his assistants were done. But he was not jealous of a man who was only five feet four, and made mistakes in spelling; besides, the fellow did not know Smith's secret, and was luckily too stupid to find it out. Meanwhile, Mr Bubb set about displaying himself in the eyes of John Smith as an unparalleled short-hand writer and a magnanimous man. As luck would have it, he had a heavy case nearly every day, and the usual lot of cheap incapables to help him to get it out. These he made a good foil for his own sharpness, and he did not spare them in that capacity. He dictated from his notes twice as fast as he had had to write himself; and when the slow short-hand writer timidly asked him for a word three sentences back from where he was reading, he would look towards Smith for sympathy, and assume the air of a contemptuous martyr. He did not bully his men so much as of wont, nor did he so frequently make them copy their work over on account of a blot or an erasure. His voice, too, lost much of its acrimonious tone; towards Smith, indeed, it was sickly sweet. In an easy-chair, with nothing to do, young Smith might have had leisure to admire his master towering morally as well as physically above his subordinates; but bending all

the night over ill-written short-hand characters, and puzzling over the mysteries of 'fitting in,' he noted little of the change which was a common topic among his fellows. They, you may be sure, did not neglect to take advantage of the governor's unaccountable softness. They smoked more, wrangled more, and had more beer in. They turned saucy to him.

'I can't make this word out,' remarked Mr Bubb, coming to a sudden stop in his dictation; 'it is strange I can't make it out, for it is written so plainly—so very plain.'

'Then,' said the assistant, 'don't write it so plain the next time.'

But Mr Bubb bore all for the sake of the future—for the sake of the third volume of his romance. However, the cloud over the hot sun of his temper passed suddenly away, and his unhappy assistants were scorched again worse than ever. This was on the last day of Michaelmas Term. On that night, for the first time, Smith did not appear at his accustomed desk. It was a busy night, and his other assistants, so far as erring went, were more human than ever. Bubb missed the quiet, accurate, and ready pen of Smith. He was also tormented by other feelings. These were confirmed when, on the next day, Saturday, Smith did not present his weekly bill as usual. Had he lost him for ever? Would his grand romance turn out an illusion, after all the fine opportunities of temper he had given up?

That evening, he called again upon his reference, Dr P——. He was as busy as ever, and it was not till Bubb had waited half an hour that he popped his head into the room where Bubb was pacing about impatiently, and said: 'Oh, it is you. Well, a reconciliation has been effected. Want no more work. Good-evening, sir.'

Bubb caught him in the passage, as he was stepping back to his surgery. 'Will you give me the address? There is money due, sir.'

'Ah,' said the doctor, 'honest man! Send the money here; I will forward it.'

'And a letter?'

'Yes, anything. Good-evening.'

Bubb went back to his office revolving a love-letter in his mind. 'If,' thought he, 'her short-hand had been the same system as mine, what a lot I could have said!'

The letter was very characteristic. It ran thus: 'MY DEAR MISS SMITH—I send you with this one pound eighteen and eightpence-halfpenny, per favour of Dr P——, for which please forward receipt. Why should you be afraid of letting me know your address? You were not afraid of working beside me night after night in an illegal disguise. Was I ever harsh to you? Did I ever make you write a single sheet over again? Did I ever find fault with your spelling or punctuation? Did I not allow you to estimate the number of folios yourself, and did I ever cut you down, as I do the other fellows? Did I not always read slowly to you, not that you require it, for you are a beautiful short-hand writer, as well as a beautiful woman!'

'That's capitally turned,' said Bubb to himself proudly. 'I wonder what her Christian name is! She called herself John Smith—perhaps it's Jane.' He wrote on: 'My darling Jane, I love you. I think I can even now see your ready pretty little fingers taking down the words from my lips. Oh, do let me see you again! Let me see you in the dress proper to you, in which, I am sure, my dearest

Jane, you must be irresistible. Once your kind master, now your imploring lover,

CORNELIUS BUBB.

P.S.—Don't forget to send receipt.'

But no answer came to this moving epistle, and the cruel silence brought Bubb to such a desponding state, that probably the advent of Hilary Term alone saved his life. Indeed, so disgusted was he with human life, that on Christmas Day he made his landlady, notwithstanding her many protestations, provide a plate of cold boiled beef for his dinner. Hilary Term brought healthful work, his gang of incompetents, and the exhilarating use of his bitter tongue.

One night he was in one of his customary fixes, out of which, somehow, he always contrived to get without loss of professional reputation. He had received unexpected orders to write out some old notes by the next day, and he had nobody to help him. For reasons of his own, he would trust solely to wandering clerks. One of these came in—it was Dixon. He had not seen him since Smith's disappearance.

'Good-evening, Mr Bubb; you owe me fifteen and six,' said Dixon, flinging down his bill.

'Certainly, my dear boy; why did you not bring it before?' and Mr Bubb pulled a handful of silver out of his pocket, and paid the claim without even a grumble. He felt as a sergeant might feel slipping the shilling into the hand of a recruit. 'You are in luck, my boy, to-night,' he said to Dixon: 'there are two hundred folios for us to get through.'

'Are there?' said Dixon drily, as he receipted his bill.

'Yes, come; look sharp, and get to your desk.'

'I am going to the theatre, Mr Bubb, with a friend,' replied Dixon with a grin.

Bubb tried hard, but he could not speak—it was a kind of gasp.

Dixon went on: 'The fact is, I have come into—that is, I am now independent of short-hand.'

'Then what did you want with my fifteen shillings?' asked Bubb, who felt himself robbed on false pretences.

'Here, my lad,' said Dixon to the boy—'here is five shillings for you.' This act of munificence confirmed Dixon's story. He must have fallen into some good thing.

'I wish I had that young Smith here,' said Bubb regretfully, for he was again in a fix.

'I can tell you,' said Dixon, 'what has become of him. He has been sent by his father to Paris to study medicine, at least so his sister told me.'

'What! you know his sister?' asked Bubb eagerly.

'Yes. The fact is, I am—I am engaged to be married to her.'

'To her that used to come here?'

'What the devil do you mean by that, Mr Bubb?' demanded Dixon in rather fierce tones.

Bubb rose and twisted his chair between them, so that Dixon might not be tempted to any foolishness. He temporised: 'I meant to say, Dixon, how did you become acquainted with the family?'

'Oh, I don't mind telling you that. Although my father was a poor barrister, and died before he got much practice, I have a few friends left, and it was at the house of one of these that I met the sister of the young gentleman who used to come here when he was under a cloud. She was so like her brother I was accustomed to walk home with, that I was confounded at first, and I suspected—

that is, she told me they were twins, and that accounted for the resemblance. She is now waiting for me to take her to Drury Lane. Good-bye, Mr Bubb.'

From that day, no short-hand writer without a beard durst present himself at Bubb's office, and those with beards deplore their ill-luck in having to go.

THE MONTH:

SCIENCE AND ARTS.

THE past month has been fruitful in topics embracing science, art, medicine, the weather, cosmology, emigration, shipwreck, scurvy, and the kine-pest. Some of the recent results of science, particularly as regards instruments of observation and representations of celestial phenomena, were to be seen at the *conversazione* given by Mr Warren de la Rue, President of the Royal Astronomical Society, at Willis's Rooms. Among the most remarkable objects there exhibited, one was a portion of a meteorite which fell in the south of France in May 1864: it consists of minute crystals of sulphur and a rare kind of iron mingled with a peaty substance resembling London mud, which falls down to powder when placed in water. It was lucky, therefore, that no rain was falling at the time the meteorite fell, otherwise, the fragments would have been washed away, and thus lost to science. Another remarkable object was a photograph of the solar spectrum by M. Becquerel, a celebrated French chemist, in which all the colours have their natural appearance, red, blue, and so forth; and not different tints of brown, as is usual in photographs. This suggests the inquiry: If the solar spectrum can be photographed in its natural colours, why not other objects? A great triumph is in store for any artist or chemist who will photograph a landscape in the natural colours.

A *Sixth Memoir on Radiation and Absorption*, by Dr Tyndall, read before the Royal Society, gives particulars of some experiments on the subject which were attended by unexpected results. Ever since Dr Franklin laid small pieces of cloth on snow, and noticed that the darkest-coloured sank the deepest, it has been supposed that dark colours absorb and radiate more heat than light ones. But Dr Tyndall shews conclusively that this is not the case; but that radiation and absorption depend on other conditions than mere colour, and that in a number of instances the lightest colours absorb and radiate the most heat. Those who wish to study the question with full details, will do well to look out for the next part of the *Philosophical Transactions*, in which the paper will be published.

Mr Huggins, F.R.S., who has rendered good service to astronomy by his spectrum analysis of stars and nebulae, has added somewhat to our knowledge of the constitution of comets. In the course of last month, he got an observation of Comet I, 1866, and found the nucleus to be in the condition of ignited gas, shining by its own light; but the coma, or tail, having no light of its own, shines by reflected light, in the same way as clouds do in our own atmosphere. This is an interesting branch of cosmical science, and when next a brilliant comet appears in our sky, the opportunity will be seized for a series of observations, which, so far as

instrumental means permit, will settle the question.

We have recently seen a self-registering barometer which appears to be worth notice, inasmuch as it is combined with a clock, and can be placed on a mantel-piece or bracket. The graduated portion of the mercurial column is shewn at the upper part of the case, and the clock-face at the lower part. Working connections are made between the mercury and the clock-work; a sheet of paper to serve for a day, week, or month is wound round a cylinder which is moved by the clock, and on this sheet a dot is made which indicates the height of the mercury at each hour of the day or night. The makers of this ingenious instrument are Messrs Frankham and Wilson, Gough Street, London, W.C.

The experiments made under government authority to test gun-cotton, though not yet successful with great guns, have led to encouraging results with small-arms. Cartridges of gun-cotton can now be manufactured which command a range as great as that of powder, and without injury to the rifle, even after firing two thousand rounds. Moreover, certain special advantages are claimed for gun-cotton: it creates but little smoke; it does not foul the barrel, and the 'kick,' or recoil, is much less than with powder. This being the case, we are not surprised to hear from General Sabine, chairman of the committee appointed to investigate the subject, that gun-cotton cartridges have been largely in demand for sporting purposes during the past shooting-season.

To many readers it will be a satisfaction to know that the rainfall of last year (1865) was greater than the average. This is perhaps an indication that the cycle of drought is ended, and that the gloomy forebodings which some persons entertained as to a long period of deficient rainfall may be laid aside. Between the middle of October and the end of the year, there fell such a quantity of rain as more than made up for the deficiency of the previous months; and from many quarters we hear that ponds which had dried up are again filled, and springs and small streams which had disappeared are again flowing. This acceptable abundance of water will be confirmed by the effects of the great snow storm of last month. Of course, meteorologists are trying to find out the explanation of all this; and as the British Meteorological Society has now got a royal charter, and is to become *The Meteorological Society* par excellence, we may expect the members to work with more purpose than ever. An Aeronautical Society is also to be founded, with the Duke of Argyll as president, with the professed object of studying systematically the meteorology of the upper regions of the atmosphere.

As was to be expected, the gales, or rather what may be described as a three-weeks' gale, which ushered in the new year, occasioned much disaster on land and sea. The number of wrecks reported to the Board of Trade was more than four hundred; significant of a fearful destruction of life and property, yet at the same time suggestive of the heroic efforts made around our coasts for rescue. But the world holds on its way nevertheless, and men and ships put to sea in ever-increasing numbers. Germany even, though not a maritime country, is on the move: 95,000 Germans sailed last year for the United States, chiefly from the ports of Hamburg and Bremen; and it is expected that the number will be doubled this year. Political dissatisfaction

is perhaps the motive for this multitudinous forth-going.

In connection herewith, it is noteworthy that Professor Welcker, well known in German literature, has offered a reward of one thousand florins for the best essay on the way to get rid of a government without a revolution—that is, a government only which sets itself systematically to violate the constitutional rights of the people.

A paper read before the Graphic Society at Exeter, by Dr Scott, the President, deserves consideration by all persons who take interest in photographic portraits. How often it happens when a person is about to be 'taken,' that he or she dresses for the occasion, perhaps puts on a little jewelry, and so appears in the picture in a style which is not the familiar one. This is a mistake, for the object should be to produce such a portrait as will shew the sitter in his everyday aspect—that in which all his friends know him best. The outrages on true taste perpetrated by men in this particular are many; but women are offenders in a much greater degree. Dr Scott remarks: 'Blue objects absorb all other rays, and only reflect the blue ones; red objects reflect the red rays, and absorb the others; and yellow objects, in like manner, absorb all rays but those which are yellow. A lady going to have her portrait taken in a yellow dress, would naturally think it would come out of a lightish hue, and she would be very much surprised to find that it came out almost black. Hence, if a lady wishes to appear in any particular tone of dress, it is of great importance that the proper colours be selected, and not such colours as will produce darks for lights, and the contrary. It is difficult to get a dark dress and the flesh tints both properly done together; the radiations from the light complexion of the skin being much more effective on the photographic plate than those from the dark dress. It is very common to see ladies going in dark dresses, with long floating ribbons, or cap-strings of white or blue, large white collars and cuffs, producing pictures of such violent opposition, and blotches of white far larger than the face, that this feature has to be sought for in the picture, and found out, so much as it is thrown into the shade by the parts of dress here mentioned.' As a rule, it would be best that sitters should allow the photographer to tell them how to dress.

Mr R. E. Alison states, in a communication to the *Quarterly Journal of Science*, on the climate of Tenerife, that he can feelingly testify to the superiority of the climate of that island to that of any European district, for all affections of the lungs. When he left England, he had all the bad symptoms of pulmonary consumption, brought on by a neglected cough, yet, in a very short time, without any medicine, they entirely disappeared. He does not wish it to be supposed that the climate of Tenerife will cure consumption; but its warm, dry, equable temperature, which can be obtained throughout the year by varying the altitude, is a most powerful remedial agent. In his opinion, it will do more to ward off the distressing malady than any other part of the world, excepting, possibly, the city of Mendoza, on the eastern foot of the Andes. One of the pleasant places for a sojourn in Tenerife is Villa de Orotava, at an elevation of 1100 feet, where the lowest winter temperature is 54° 5' Fahrenheit; ten degrees warmer than Penzance, which is one of the mildest winter-residences in England. Visitors who

required a yet warmer winter temperature, would find it at Santa Cruz, the port of Teneriffe, where the lowest range of the thermometer in January is sixty-four degrees nearly.

Some of our readers will be interested in Mr Alison's remarks about the canary-bird. 'When I saw it first in its native woods,' he says, 'I could scarcely recognise it as the same species as our domestic yellow warbler, so much is the latter altered by domestication and repeated crosses. The native bird is gray on the wings, the belly is green, and the back a very dark gray. It builds on bushy trees or high shrubs, lays from four to six pale-blue eggs, and sometimes hatches six times in a season. I was surprised to find that each flock has a different song. The note is between that of the skylark and nightingale. The natives assert that the bird is very difficult to rear, and generally dies in a couple of years if kept in a cage.'

Mr Fowler, in his inaugural address as President of the Institution of Civil Engineers, having recommended young men entering the profession to study physical science, the *Times* directed attention to the School of Mines in Jermyn Street, as a place where a knowledge of physical science might be acquired. The *Times* might have added that there are two colleges in London—University and King's—where physical science may be studied with advantage, indeed with more advantage than at the School of Mines, for the latter teaches no mathematics; and it is well known that if a man wishes to make a practical use of his knowledge of physical science, he must combine with it a good knowledge of mathematics.

The Report of the Postmaster-general for 1864 has just been published. Though more than twelve months after date, it is satisfactory to know that the revenue of the Post-office in that year was more than £4,000,000, of which £1,160,000 was profit. The number of letters delivered was 679,084,822; and of these, 170,000,000 were delivered in London alone. In the same year, the increase in the number of inhabited houses in the whole kingdom was 40,000; in London, 10,000; the total number of houses being 3,693,991. It is estimated that the population now amounts to thirty millions.

THE CHURCHYARD YEW.

UNDER the black yew-tree
(Its berries like drops of blood)

I love to sit,

In a moody fit,

Thinking of how to clay and dust,
Canker, decay, and moth, and rust,
Come all that we love, and hope, and trust—
Beauty and Wealth, and Pleasure, and Power,
And Learning, and Sense, and Wit.

Down in your coffin there,
Beauty, answer me now,

As here I sit,

In a cynical fit,

Where is hidden thy jewel-chest?
Where are the diamonds that once did rest
On the rise and fall of thy snowy breast?
They sparkle no more in the gloom and dark,
Than does a *cretin's* wit.

Ambition, thou misled fool,
Thou with the rusty crown,
As I meditate
On thy fallen state,
Open thy coffin lid, and tell
Of the battles thou hast won so well;
How many wretches there bleeding fell,
All for a fort or some farm in a dell,
A mound of earth, or a line on a map,
Wrestling so hard with fate.

Learning, thou purblind thing,
Sage with the half-closed eyes,
Come, answer me,
In my tyranny,
And prove me how thy midnight toil,
Thy waste of wholesome harmless oil,
And all thy fretting and careful moil,
Thy nouns declined, thy accents marked,
Avail in the dull Dead Sea.

Pride, thou art humble now,
Thanks to the sexton's spade;
Around this tree
Lies good company,
Yet none to flatter, or fawn, or bend.
Pomp and Pleasure have come to an end;
Narrow the chamber is left thee, friend:
Pedigrees, parchments, charters, and rolls,
Are little avail to thee.

Wealth, thou art last of all,
Laggard and lazy of old;
Come, knave, up here
From thy velvet bier,
What is that strange frilled robe thou'st on?
'Tis out of fashion, thou simpleton.
Are all thy tinsel and trappings gone?
Yes! time is over for change and freak:
Money is useless here.

Under the Churchyard yew
(Its berries as red as blood)
I love to sit,
In my moody fit;
Round me rise the hillocky graves,
The Dead Sea's green and silent waves,
Death's black banner, the dark tree braves,
As I think of how vain are Power and Wealth,
Beauty, and Love, and Wit.

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L U C K.

THOSE were no doubt dark days of superstition wherein the goddess Fortuna was worshipped, and had temples of her own: but there was a great deal of convenience about that arrangement. When things went wrong with the devotee, he at once set down his misfortunes to the insufficiency of his sacrifice, some omission or irregularity in his supplications, or to other definite causes which might have aroused the displeasure of the Divinity. Such a vague phrase as 'out of luck' did not exist in his vocabulary.

With us, unhappily, who have thrown off all allegiance to the lady with the blinded eyes, there is nothing fixed, with the very unsatisfactory exception of the Doctrine of Chances, which requires a mathematician to understand, and a philosopher to apply it to his own case. The very existence of Luck is questioned, although the greatest unbeliever does not fail to *act* as though it did exist, and to take advantage, however thanklessly, of its benefits. We are all Mr Micawbers at heart, I fancy, and entertain an idea that 'something will turn up' some day, which we will not say we have not deserved, but for which we have not laboured. Among those who place reliance on Luck, however, rather than on their own efforts, Mr M. must be considered unusually fortunate to have ended so well as he did, and it must be remembered that he suffered severely throughout life, and only at the very last was crowned with prosperity. The man who has great luck, and trusts to it, is almost sure to come to grief, sooner or later. Napoleon was fortune's darling in a hundred fields, but she deserted him, and went over to the other side in the most momentous of all his battles. When she did that, he no longer called her his Star, but his Fate. The kings of old would not have courted his alliance as the Hapsburg did. They were so afraid of a lucky man, that one of them wrote to a royal brother to decline his friendship, upon the ground, that some dreadful calamity was certain to overtake him: a very selfish act, by the by, even in a king. He believed in Nemesis—which may be

freely translated as the modern Principle of Compensation—and wished to cut the connection with its future victim while he decently could. The royal brother was so alarmed at this—at the idea of being deserted, *while still in a state of prosperity*, by his friends—that he determined to cast into the sea the article upon which he set the greatest value—a certain ring of priceless worth—in order to appease the gods; to voluntarily draw misfortune upon himself, just as folks used to anticipate the small-pox by inoculation.

Perhaps he did not like to part with his best ring, when it came to the pinch, and substituted for it some inferior jewel; or perhaps the gods did not approve of this attempt to 'hedge;' but the story goes that a few days after the sacrifice, some fish (exceedingly like a whale, but eatable) was brought to his table with this very ring in its gullet. After which manifestation of the will of Fate, the king wisely determined to enjoy himself, and take as much luck as he could get; and it even seems to have struck him to prove himself worthy of it. It seldom does strike lucky men to do this, although many of them have cast, if not their jewels into the sea, at least their money into the gutter. It is 'light come, light go' with them, and what it has cost them no trouble to gain, they are easily persuaded to part with: if there was a Luck Hospital, they would very likely subscribe to it; but since, I suppose, they have not the audacity to ascribe their fortune to the favour of the Powers of Good, they do not exhibit their gratitude in that direction.

I once knew a man of some parts who had three fortunes unexpectedly left him by distant relatives, each of which would have been sufficient to found a county family, and each of which found him beggared by play. Though rivers of plenty were poured out to him from the cornucopia of fortune, this man only carelessly held out for their reception a sieve! Even to the last, he was very lucky; for although there was an execution in the house when he lay a-dying, he did not die in jail.

Among the educated and upper classes, there is no set of people so superstitious in the matter of luck

as your Gamblers. The very best players, who have spent half their lives at the whist-table, and employed all their wits in mastering that science which has been not improperly called the Game of Common Sense, are victims to the grossest delusions in this respect. 'Let us take the lucky seats,' say they, whenever there is a change of position, and they have the choice; as though it were on the seats, and not on the heads (and hands) that success depends. 'Providence,' it has been impiously said, 'is always on the side of strong battalions;' and I think, without impiety, we may add, that Luck generally, and, at all events, in the end, goes with the best players; indeed, I will say this much for these superstitious gentry, that when two inferior players are engaging with their superiors, the latter are always the favourites in the betting, notwithstanding that they may be sitting on the unlucky mahogany, or on the sides of the table remote from 'the hinges.'

A still more ludicrous belief, if possible, is that one pack of cards is more lucky than another. 'These cards,' says one, 'have won all along.'

'Then it's high time they should lose,' cries some exceptional sceptic, who actually believes that.

Now, in the *shuffling* of the cards there really is something, if they happen to have been running in suits; and a good player will shuffle them, and a bad one, who knows his inferiority (for some do not), will let them alone under such circumstances, for excellent reasons; but in the cards themselves, the situation of which entirely depends upon the last cut, what virtue can possibly lie?

I have known more than one statesman—members of her Majesty's government, and concerned in constructing laws which I must obey whether I believe in them or not—gravely rise from the whist-table on the ground that 'Luck was running against him.' Let us hope that these right honourable gentlemen devote their best intelligence to the business of the country, and keep only the dregs of it for social life: otherwise, supposing that these views are entertained by all their colleagues, how can we be sure that a cabinet council does not consult auguries, and is not encouraged or deterred in their enactments by signs and portents? It is shocking to think that the creation of a new bishopric, for instance, may depend upon the investigation of the entrails of a fowl. 'Luck running against him!' Is it, then, a river? Well, it would appear that it is; for if one of the honourable gentlemen whom I have in my mind happens to persist in play and win, I have heard him say that 'The tide has turned!' But if a river, whence does it rise, and whither does it take its course? Partly, it seems, underground, like some of those streams in Craven, which now are seen of men, and now disappear in the bowels of the hills; so that

If you drink not when you may,
When you will, you shall have 'Nay.'

The practical application of which is, to back yourself whenever you are 'in Luck,' and to abstain from wagering when you are out of it. Most excellent advice, no doubt, if one could be sure of the premises; but who is to know that morning may not be on the point of breaking, although it is just now dark enough, or that the present glorious hues are not those of sunset, and that blackest night is close at hand.

If it was only gamblers who believed in Luck, this paper would not have been written. But what can shew more clearly the illogical character of the ideas of the public upon this matter—not to speak much more severely—than the paragraphs headed *Lucky Escapes*, which we have lately seen going the round of the newspapers as pendants to those terrible details of the loss of the steamship *London*. One man finds the voyage so rough, even upon the way to Plymouth, that he leaves the vessel at that port, and forfeits his passage-money—thereby, as it turned out, saving his life. Another, applying at the last moment, is not able to get a berth even at a premium, and so escapes in spite of himself; &c. These cases are all put down to Luck, and curious enough it is to see such an acknowledgment paid to the heathen goddess, after reading that harrowing but reverent description of the shipwreck itself, with all its incidents of piety and self-devotion, of courage and labour. On the other hand, one very remarkable case of ill-luck is narrated, and even dwelt upon with a certain gusto, as though it corroborated the writer's views upon this subject; it is headed *An Unlucky Man*, and describes how a poor fellow, having been already wrecked in the *Duncan Dunbar*, got on board a certain vessel bound for Melbourne, but being objected to by the ignorant crew as a Jonah, left it, and took his passage on board the *London*, and so perished after all.

The religious newspapers, of course, treat these matters as Special Providences; and when we read in their columns how the five rascals who deserted the doomed ship at Plymouth were thereby 'providentially saved,' we are almost tempted to inquire, with the cynical Bachelor of the Albany, whether the five honest men who took their places were 'providentially drowned,' or not. It seems to me, nevertheless, whatever difficulties may beset this line of argument (and putting the theological question, *as such*, aside, since this is no place for its discussion), that it is much more tenable than the other. But if they would be logical, its supporters should certainly maintain it in all cases, which few of them are prepared to do. They are very particular about the *dignus vindice nodus*, and when anything short of preservation from death takes place—such as the rescue of all a man is worth from the flames—I observe that the religious newspapers are as glib with their 'Good-Luck' as the profane ones. Not so was honest Simeon, who, when he got home from any expedition on horseback, was accustomed to return thanks to Heaven for his safe return; and he was not a bad Rider either.

The mention of Simeon reminds me that in the universities themselves the belief in Luck is still as flourishing as elsewhere. It was only a year or so ago that a certain gentleman (my informant) being examiner for *mathematical honours*, perceived upon the papers of one of the candidates what he at first took to be a letter-weight, but which, on a nearer inspection, turned out to be a horseshoe, which this son of science had brought in with him for Luck! If such an incident can happen in the Cambridge senate-house during an examination for mathematical honours, who can say that Fortuna has lost her votaries, although the rites of her religion may not be so methodically paid as in the days of yore. As Lord Macaulay said of the extremest dogmas of the Roman Catholic religion, apropos of another scholar who believed in *them*

(I think, Thomas More): 'she will be believed in as long as the world endures.'

We do not suppose that our would-be Wrangler could have given any reason for the faith that was in him; but in some few cases, the notion of Luck is really corroborated by the fact itself. Thus, I am given to understand that the popular belief in the ill-luck of a dinner-party of thirteen (originating, of course, in the number present at the Last Supper) is borne out by the Registrar-general; since of any thirteen adults such as meet over the mahogany, one, on the average, in the course of a twelvemonth, does die, or is married.

Generally, however, the matter of Luck admits of no reasoning whatever, far less of calculation; and perhaps, after all, the old doctrine of Nemesis is the most natural one. A certain amount of good-fortune probably falls to the lot of all, and in much more equal proportion than is generally supposed. We get it early, or we get it late, but we seldom get it both late and early; and when we do, it is seldom for our good. The moral of which has been enforced in two well-known lines, which can, however, bear, with a difference, to be here repeated:

'Tis not in mortals to command success:
Let us do more, my readers; let's deserve it.

LIFE WITH THE BRIGANDS.

THE history of romantic adventure has received few stranger or more interesting contributions than the narrative of Mr Moens's memorable captivity among the Neapolitan brigands.* The whole story is of the most exciting kind, and it is occasionally so diverting, that not all the sympathy which one feels with the unfortunate captive, and the compassion aroused by the miserable, baffled suspense in which his wife was kept from May 15 to August 25, can overcome the sense of amusement which accompanies the perusal. That Mr Moens is a very fine fellow, brave, cheerful, and truthful, never tempted into magnifying his sufferings, and of a ready generosity and magnanimity of character, is the impression produced so far as he is concerned; and the wider meaning of the narrative, its bearing on the political and social aspects of life in the Two Sicilies, are so important, and convey so hopeless a picture of disorganisation and lawlessness, that we may be excused for feeling glad that Neapolitan matters are practically no affair of ours. Even when they are brought home to our perceptions with unpleasant vividness by such a circumstance as the capture of an Englishman, and his detention for months in the mountains, it is evident that our interference can do no good, and may expedite the fate of the victim. Nothing in this strange story is more curious than the fact that all the efforts made by Mr Moens's friends for his release placed them at variance with the Italian law and executive, and exposed them to the utmost personal danger.

There was a dramatic simplicity about the capture. Mr and Mrs Moens arrived at Palermo in January 1865, and went through the routine usual under the circumstances. They were delighted with the weather, which was 'June-like,' and with the climate, which was delicious. They poked about

the place, and found out the beautiful old cloisters; they made excursions to the churches and monasteries; they photographed everything; and Mount Etna was accommodating enough to shew them a capital eruption at the very best time, when the sputtering monster was entirely clothed with snow. The hotel *Ragusa* was in every way commendable, and the landlord the politest of men. He actually forbade an expectorating compatriot the *table-d'hôte*, in deference to Mrs Moens's prejudices against that wholesome custom. The English residents made themselves agreeable, and bouquets of roses, carnations, and heliotropes were readily procurable in February. There was really nothing to object to, except the burial observances, which are not consonant with English taste, and the egotism of the Sicilians, who persist in believing Sicily to be the pride of the earth. This is naturally exasperating to the British traveller, who knows how immeasurably superior everything he leaves behind is to everything he finds anywhere else, but after all not intolerable under Sicilian skies, and with the barometer apparently set fair in Paradise. Then it was very pleasant to arrange plans for a *giro*, or tour round the island, and even a little gossip about brigands was rather agreeably exciting than alarming. The English tourists no more contemplated abandoning their *giro*, on account of the 'bands,' than the present peaceful inhabitants of Dublin would think of relinquishing their accustomed festivities in deference to the Fenian fraternity. Brigand stories were popular at Palermo, just as tiger stories might be at Singapore, but the *giro* was to commence in ten days, and the landlord, the consul, and public opinion announced perfect security and serenity. The *couleur de rose* was deepened by a little incident of an entirely Arcadian character, Arcadian after Watteau and Shenstone. The tourists, in exploring Monte Pellegrino, visited a famous cave. The arch was eight hundred feet high, and through a small opening, the splendid blue of the sky appeared, while two large eagles floated in the crystal air. Great stalactites hung from the roof, and the sides were tapestried with beautiful creepers and light-green spurge. The glittering sea lay shining before the eyes of the travellers, and the whole effect must have been marvellously like that of a splendid transformation scene, supposing the Titans and the Tritons to maintain a gorgeous theatre for their delectation. Then two men, carrying guns, who, though at first alarming, eventually proved not only harmless, but hospitable, appeared, and guided the strangers to their 'cave,' carefully breaking down the creepers in their path, and escorting the lady with the utmost grace and politeness. The repast which followed was rural and picturesque. The guests sat on rough seats, covered with the coats of their shepherd-entertainers, and, surrounded by four dogs, ate bread and scalded cream; after which they retired, having vainly proffered money to these peasants, worthy of a vaudeville. After such an experience, they were less likely than before to feel apprehensive about the perils of the *giro*.

They reached Salerno on the 14th May, and made up their minds to visit the ruins of Paestum at once. The authorities at Naples gave positive assurance of safety, and they found posted up in the hall of the hotel *Vittoria* a notice, which must have had rather an odd effect. It announced that the roads were safe and open, not in the sense of

* *English Travellers and Italian Brigands: a Narrative of Capture and Captivity.* By W. J. Moens. Hurst and Blackett.

weather, but in that of brigandage. Off they started, in a carriage with three horses, and a jingling accompaniment of bells. At a short distance from Salerno, they were joined by soldiers, who escorted them to Paestum, but did not give them any intimation of the danger, of the existence of which they were perfectly aware. Mr and Mrs Moens, and two friends, Mr and Mrs Aynsley, passed a very pleasant day, did all the customary admiration and exploration, took their tea, and started late in the afternoon for Salerno, unaccompanied by the soldiers, who had disappeared. They talked and laughed about the brigands, and Mrs Moens soon fell asleep. She woke at Mrs Aynsley's exclamation: 'Here they really are at last!' and then the affair was over in a few moments. The road and the fields were covered with armed men, who signed to the gentlemen to get down. The coachman politely opened the carriage-door; the brigands surrounded their captives, and marched them off. Mrs Moens jumped out of the carriage, and ran after her husband; but one of the band gently and courteously remonstrated, and gravely led her back to the vehicle, in which the two ladies sat, quite helplessly, under the observation of about fifty peasants. The brigands had disappeared, the captives with them. Soldiers came up, and hearing the news, galloped off in pursuit, which proved wholly unavailing. At length, the ladies, in despair, drove to Battipaghi, and there awaited intelligence. The position was a dreadful one, and much more dreadful than it appeared to them, for they had no conception of the difficulties which would beset them in effecting the liberation of one of the captives, as indeed it would be difficult for any one unaccustomed to the habits and manners of brigands, and unaware of the obstacles with which the Italian government has to contend in connection with them, to form any approximate idea of their multiplicity and weight. In two days, Mr Aynsley made his appearance; but Mr Moens was retained in captivity, his friend having undertaken to negotiate his ransom. The selection of the hostage was decided by lot, and Mr Aynsley was the fortunate man. Mr Moens relates the fact briefly, and dismisses it with his usual simplicity; but it is suggestive of a cruel dilemma, and a strong mental struggle.

The complicated movements of this very serious drama in action are curious to consider at every stage. In the mountains were the brigands and their prisoners, the Englishman, and two Italians. The composition of the brigand band was very various as to race and degree, but a tolerable equality prevailed among its members on the score of crime. Murderers escaped from justice to earn a livelihood by robbery, and expend a portion of the proceeds in prayers for the souls of their victims, and in the erection of neat crosses to their memory, form the large majority of these communities; but they are also recruited from the ranks of the army, and in many instances by peasants, who adopt the life as a means of attaining a little independence in a shorter time than by other modes of earning, and who, having realised their object, 'present themselves,' as they express giving themselves up to justice, cheerfully go through their term of punishment, and then betake themselves to the peaceful enjoyment of the fruits of their industry. In pursuit of these lawless creatures were the Italian soldiery, abhorred by the peasantry, who piously believe that the brigands

are partisans of the fallen Bourbon dynasty, because they are hunted by the troops of Victor Emanuel. At Salerno were the friends of the captive, the English residents and the civil authorities, all anxious to effect his release, and all checked and impeded by the illegality of treating with the brigands.

'Send us 30,000 ducats, or you shall have your husband's head sent to you,' was the simple and quite unmistakable message to Mrs Moens of Capitano Manzo, the chief of the band, and who, if his portrait resemble him, must be one of the handsomest and most elegant-looking men in existence. The actual money was the least part of the difficulty; the too great eagerness of all parties to pay it was seriously embarrassing, for it increased the estimate made by the band of the value of their prize, and rendered their demands more exorbitant, and their determination that he should not fall into the hands of the soldiers alive more fixed. The great misfortune of the position was that every effort made on his behalf, owing to the contending interests, increased his danger. He was a millionaire, was said on one side; then the brigands would put him at still a higher ransom, and probably try a little mutilation in case of delay in the payment. No; he was only a poor artist, and very little could be paid for him. Then they might as well kill him, for he was expensive to keep, and dangerous to carry about, as prolonging the pursuit of the soldiers. He was a relative of Lord Palmerston's, and England would pay for him. No; he was a friend of Francisco, and they would get a reward for his safety from the ex-king. All these and other contending rumours intensified the difficulties of the case. The civil authorities were anxious to befriend the prisoner, which could only be done by contriving that the money should reach the brigands safely; and the military authorities were intent on capturing the band, their pursuit placing his life in imminent danger from their own men, and certain peril from his captors, and equally intent on preventing any access being had to the *malfattori*. To elude the vigilance of the military, and stir up the supineness of the civil power; to contrive to supply the unhappy captive with some of the necessaries of life, and to preserve their proceedings from discovery, lest the brigands should revenge their detection upon him; to induce the Neapolitan papers to publish statements explanatory of Mr Moens's real position, and to prevent the mischief impending from mis-directed zeal, unable to comprehend the intricacies of the case—such were the principal points of the task of the friends of the prisoner in *villeggiatura* with Capitano Manzo.

The ransom demanded was ready for transmission; the letters of the prisoner to his wife, written in Italian, at the dictation of Manzo, became more and more urgent and imploring; the unrelaxed pursuit of the soldiery, who were constantly within sight of the brigands, and actually had several skirmishes with them, was increasing his danger and adding to his sufferings; and still no means of communication with the bands could be devised, without risk of interruption by the soldiers. The British government sent a gunboat to Naples, and thence resulted a consequence which no one could resist laughing at. The brigands believed that Mr Moens owned this imposing vessel, and became more than ever resolute to have the money out of

so very rich a customer. Meantime, the personal experiences of Mr Moens were of a very remarkable and a curiously mixed character. It is evident that his sense of humour occasionally overcame his sense of suffering, and enabled him to extract gleams of amusement from the threatening gloom of his position; but seriously told and seriously contemplated, nothing more corporeally wretched than the life of the brigands can be conceived. The existence of the Mongol tribes is luxurious in comparison. They at least have shelter, and their feeds of mutton, if monotonous, and unsophisticated by culinary art or admixture of bread, are at least certain, and peaceably procurable. But the Italian brigand leads the life of a wild beast, and is endowed with the human capacity of suffering. No more and no less than the privations they had to endure did the brigands inflict upon their prisoner. The list was tolerably comprehensive, including, as it did, cold, hunger, thirst, dirt, exposure to every kind of weather entirely without shelter; food, when obtained, always of the coarsest, sometimes of the most revolting kind; perpetual watching, merciless fatigue, and constant danger. Of all the lives led by outlaws from society, that of the brigand appears to be the most destitute of any of the allurements of guilt. There were some women among Manzo's band, dressed and armed like their masters, whose sex Mr Moens did not at first discern. They endured the same hunger and fatigue as the men, but were not all unwomanly. They used their needles with dexterity and zeal, and one of them, horribly wounded in the arm, bore unutterable pain with heroic courage. To witness this suffering and this dogged endurance was not the least of the prisoner's trials; he sickened and shuddered at the sight when, from the hideous wound, the festering flesh was cut away with rough scissors, and the sufferer ground her teeth and never groaned. The moral degradation of the brigands is probably no greater than that of all habitual vagabonds and depredators, but it has a grotesque, and sometimes an affecting aspect. Their schemes are of a transparent complexion, and the cheerfulness with which they recognised the impossibility of deceiving the Englishman, was equalled by the astonishment and reverence with which they greeted the discovery of such simple accomplishments as telling the time of day by the sun, and recognising their whereabouts by the points of the compass.

Brigandage is a fine thing for the Neapolitan peasantry, and in their connivance lies the secret of its strength, far more than in its singularly fortunate geographical position. Without supplies, which the peasants only can furnish, the brigands cannot exist, and therefore they are at the mercy of their purveyors, who charge them an exorbitant price for the barest necessities. The tariff, as given by Mr Moens, reminds one of the list of prices at Petersburg and Richmond before the final pulverisation of the Southern Confederacy. It is plain that the difficulty of the position is great, is well-nigh inextricable, and though it is difficult to admire the shooting of peasants found with more food in their possession than their own necessities are deemed sufficient to account for, without any form of trial, it is due to the hapless rulers of an ungovernable community to give them credit for doing the best under the circumstances, according to their judgment, and the means at their disposal. Captain Manzo and his men endeavoured to deceive Mr Moens with regard to their transactions with

the peasants, representing them as captured, and forced to give up their goods, and even, on one occasion, pretending that they had killed one of them as an *infame*. There was a great pretence of guarding the English prisoner, and covering his head with a *capote*, while the bloody deed was being done out of earshot; but Mr Moens recognised the victim, alive and well, two days later, and the brigands laughed good-humouredly, and thenceforth abandoned all attempts on the credulity of their captive. The most that can be effected by the utmost vigilance would be the prevention of supplies reaching these robbers by the hands of the peasantry; to establish any system of obtaining information through their means, appears entirely out of the question. If the understanding were less perfect, the intimidation would avail quite as powerfully; and, on the whole, it seems that the suppression of brigandage is about as probable as the extinction of Etna.

The relations of Mr Moens with his captors were of an exceedingly remarkable and amusing character. Of course, there was a great diversity of character among the men, and some of them were naturally and irrepressibly cruel, and therefore ready to add to the prisoner's inevitable sufferings by inventive playfulness of their own. But Mr Moens was a match for them, and his fearless self-assertion, and the conviction with which he inspired them, that by no possible contrivance could they make him afraid of them, was the surest path to their respect. They watched him unremittingly, as was natural, and they occasionally struck him, but he returned the blows, and that cooled their ardour. On the whole, they were decidedly not unkind to him, and they took a most amusing pride in his abilities. They would speak admiringly to one another, and nod approval, when he cut out small objects with a very small fine-bladed penknife, which they regarded with admiration approaching to reverence.

These predatory gentlemen have a most unquerable aversion to the idea of death—a feeling rather difficult to comprehend, seeing that no state of existence could be much worse than their actual one; and their prisoner produced a powerful effect on their untought but not unintelligent mind by his indifference to all their threats of killing him. They had a pleasant way, whenever they were vexed, or tired, or unusually hungry—and two days at a time without food, as a matter of constant recurrence, are calculated to try the temper of the best constituted brigand—of discussing the propriety of sending his ears to his wife, in order to expedite the transmission of the ransom-money. Nothing of the sort had any power to disturb Mr Moens's equanimity; he would shrug his shoulders, and say: 'Se volete;' and the effect was most salutary—they did not injure him in any way; and 'se volete' became a favourite cant-word with the entire gang. Sometimes they would do him quaint kindnesses, after their fashion; and as their religious sympathies are very strong, however obscure may be their moral system, they regarded his devotional exercises with profound respect, which they extended to his prayer-book and a little cross which he carved for his wife. Their superstitious observances are partly absurd and partly poetical, and their effect on the mind of the prisoner must have indeed been strange. Here were these lawless beings, blood-stained, and living by robbery and murder, who reverently uncovered at the sound of

a church-bell, and halted their whole party that their captive might recover his prayer-book. There was a great deal of sociability among them at all times, and on one occasion the captain gave him a new wide-awake; the whole band collected to see the effect; and one brought him a scrap of looking-glass that he might 'admire himself.' They were indeed indifferent to his physical sufferings; but then they endured the same themselves, and always, so that their indifference cannot be altogether justly classed with deliberate cruelty. His bodily condition was dreadful by the time the release came; but theirs had only the superiority which induration to misery gives. All the details of the negotiation for his release are infinitely amusing; and one letter, written in the prisoner's interest to Manzo, by a famous brother-captain of brigands, is a unique document. There is a tone of courteous counsel, combined with lofty friendship, and a consciousness of exalted rank, common to both, in the letter, which would do honour to royalty. The chieftain calls on Manzo to be true to his own greatness of character, which has caused his name to shine above all others; to imitate a host of brilliant examples (brigands) whom he names; and especially the celebrated Telarico, who surpassed all in generosity. This illustrious individual called in person upon Mrs Moens, and expressed his warmest sympathy and regret that his position with regard to the government prohibited his active interference. Telarico is a gentleman of princely bearing, and remarkable for his personal attractions, particularly for his delicate and beautiful hands and feet.

The parting scene between Mr Moens and the brigands, when, the money having been paid, he is about to depart under the care of Manzo's brother and mother, was inimitably amusing. His late companions treated him not only with distinguished courtesy, but with demonstrative affection. There was much interchanging of small presents, and a general attempt at kissing, which Mr Moens resisted, compromising the matter with emphatic hand-shakings. The captain gave him five rings, and Manzo's mother was uncommonly proud of her son's generosity, and deeply regretted that the swollen state of the signor's hands prevented his displaying these magnificent testimonies of distinguished consideration. Mr Moens parted with the brigands with a whimsical mixture of feelings. He had transacted a good deal of business for them, appraised their purchases, and written their love-letters, and the geniality of the man's nature rendered him tolerant even of the mulct of money, and the terrible suspense and suffering which had rendered his Italian tour so memorable an event.

MIRK ABBEY.

CHAPTER XVI.—CONFESSION.

THERE is one serious disadvantage—which mistresses should do well to remember—at which waiting-maids are always placed in disputations with their domestic superiors; they cannot (except they are prepared for instant dismissal) either quit the room, and bang the door after them, or leave it open, and run down stairs 'saying things' at the top of their voices. Both these modes of procedure, so natural to the female when 'put out,' are denied to them, for the same reason that when on board ship they can't take champagne for sea-sickness as

their employers do; they cannot afford the indulgence.

Now, although Mary Forest was not debarred by mere pecuniary considerations from flinging herself out of her mistress's room when she cried, 'And I mean to stand to it,' there were other reasons which prevented her from suiting to her words that very appropriate and natural action. In all her blinding passion (and she was really very angry), she never quite lost sight of the respect she owed her mistress. Her devotion to her was such, that even while she listened to her most unpalatable arguments against the man she had accepted for her husband, her heart smote her with a sense of ingratitude towards the long-tried friend who, after all, she knew, was anxious for her happiness rather than for her own mere comfort; and when she seemed most obstinate, she had often been nearest to throwing herself upon her mistress's neck, and exclaiming: 'You are quite right, my Lady; and I believe I have been an old fool all along.' It was more with the desire of putting a stop to this most unpleasant dispute, than because her determination was absolutely adamant and inflexible, that she once more reiterated: 'Yes, my Lady, I mean to stand to it,' and fixed her eyes doggedly upon the floor, as though she would not even encounter another questioning glance.

'Mary,' said her mistress solemnly, and after a long silence, 'I am grieved beyond all power of words to tell at what you have just said; but the mischief may not yet be quite past mending. I have seen this—Mr Derrick—this very night, and therefore he will not receive your letter till, at earliest, to-morrow evening.'

'No, nor then neither, my Lady, so far as that goes, for I was late for the London post; I put the letter in the box for the very reason that I might not be persuaded to change my mind by'—

'Then it has not yet left the village post-office,' interrupted my Lady, hastily snatching up her bonnet from the table upon which she had wearily put it down on entering the room: 'there is time to stop it yet.'

'No, my Lady; I heard the postman's horn half an hour ago; and if it were otherwise, nothing would induce me to alter what I have already written—nothing—nothing!' repeated Mistress Forest, emphasising her two last words by beating with her foot upon the carpet.

'Alas, dear friend, you know not what you say,' replied my Lady very gravely. 'Give me your hand, Mary; nay, do not withdraw it coldly, for you will have need of comfort and support, almost as much, alas, as I—' *Mary, Mary, this man is married already!* The waiting-maid started from her seat with a shrill scream.

'I don't believe it, I won't believe it; it is false. How dare you tell a lie to me, Lady Lisgard, only to gain your ends?'

'Hush, hush, Mary; did you ever know me to tell a lie, my friend? It is true as that yonder moon is rising, that this man has a wife alive. Do not weep so passionately.'

'The perjured villain; the false, bad man; the wicked, wicked wretch!' cried the waiting-maid, her eyes flashing through their tears.

'Nay, above all, do not blame *him*, Mary, for he knows it not himself; he does not, indeed.'

'What? Not know whether he's married or not!' sobbed the unhappy bride-elect. 'I don't

believe *that*, at all events, even if I believe *you*. He has married so many, he doesn't know rightly who is his wife; that is what you mean, I see. Sailors are all alike. O dear, dear, dear, when Mrs Welsh comes to know of it! And the monster will have got my letter by to-morrow night, to shew about! How nearly have I been committing bi—bi—bigamy!

'Calm yourself, dear Mary, calm yourself. Your trouble is nothing to what I suffer, and must continue to endure for my life long.'

'Ah, my Lady, I daresay it is very bad to be a widow; but it's much worse to die an old—leastways, at forty-fi—or forty-four, rather—to lose — O dear! what an honest man he looked, and such a beard and eyes! I will never trust to appearances again. I daresay, it is very wrong, my Lady, but I fee—fee—feel as though I could tear Mrs Derrick's eyes out; I do, indeed.' Here the bottle of smelling-salts, which upon a certain occasion we saw used by Mary Forest for the recovery of her mistress, had to change hands. The unfortunate waiting-maid was taken with a very genuine fit of hysterics, and not of the quiet sort either; and if her senses left her, it could not certainly be said that she also lost the use of her limbs. At last, exhausted in body, but also more reasonable as to her mind, she whispered: 'Mistress, dearest, tell me all you know.' Then my Lady knew that the time was come for her first self-humiliation. Throughout the narrative that followed, they were sitting upon the sofa together, hand in hand, but each had her face averted from the other, and only now and then, by a convulsive grasp of the fingers, did Mary shew her sympathy with her unhappy mistress. At first, she was too full of her own trouble to interrupt by words, but soon the astounding revelation from my Lady's lips overwhelmed every faculty of speech within her, and she sat like a child who listens to a horrid story in the darkening twilight.

'We have known one another more than half our lives, Mary, said I, a while ago, and yet there has been a secret between us all that time. I have never kept anything else from you, but this was not mine alone to tell; it was Sir Robert's also. When he asked me to become his wife at Coveton, and you thought me so mad for first refusing him, and afterwards for demanding such a long delay, I had a reason for it, which he knew, but which you have never guessed. I was then the three-weeks' bride of another man.—You may well start, Mary, but that is the dreadful truth. The man, Ralph Gavestone, whom I mourned so deeply, as being drowned with my dear parents, and all the rest of the ship's company, in that great storm—which I would to Heaven had whelmed me in its waves—was not my half-brother, as Sir Robert persuaded me to give out, but my husband.'

'You had no wedding-ring, my Lady, when you came ashore,' murmured the waiting-maid half incredulously.

'That is true, Mary. I know not how it was, but perhaps the cold and wet of that dreadful night made my fingers shrink—you remember how wan and thin I looked—and the ring must have dropped off; I never saw it after I reached land. But I was none the less a widow—as I thought; and although friendless, save for you, Mary—homeless and penniless, I thought I could never take another husband to my arms, although the raging sea had worked that rough divorce between us. At first, I

replied: "No, Sir Robert, never;" you will bear me witness that I did. Then, when he pressed me still, I bargained for three years. I thought that he would tire of waiting for me, and get some fitter mate in the meantime; I did, as Heaven is my judge. I was true to my poor Ralph—he had saved me upon that spar at the risk, and, as I then believed, at the sacrifice of his own life—as long as I—nay, I was true to him in a sense for ever. Sir Robert was well aware of that. I do not need justification from man or woman; God himself absolved me, I think, so far. But that was an evil day, Mary, when I married. I was no more Sir Robert's wife than you were, Mary. Think of that. And he was not my husband. And our children, of whom he was so proud, are baseborn—bastards. Sir Richard—is it not terrible? do you not wonder that I live and am not mad?—he is not Sir Richard. And my dear, dear Walter, he is baseborn too. And Letty—for whom her eldest brother thinks nobody too high—she, too, is no Lisgard. If I had waited seven years instead of three, this would not have been so. There are law-books in the library which have told me so much; but I have no adviser—none; no friend—yes, you, Mary, I know—but not one who can help me. Is not this something worse than death itself which has fallen upon me!'

'And this man Derrick—he was Gavestone?'

whispered Mary Forest in a hoarse grating voice.

'Yes; did I not tell you so? I only found it out last Christmas Eve. I knew his voice, and I knew the carol that he sang. For one thing only do I thank Heaven—I who had reason, as I thought, to be thankful for so many things—that Sir Robert is not alive. His sleep in yonder churchyard is disturbed by no such ghastly dream. Ah, happy dead!'

'Mistress, beloved mistress,' cried the waiting-maid, in an agony of remorse—'forgive me that I have been thinking of myself these many weeks, while you have been so burdened and tormented. Henceforth, I am yours only. As I hope to get to heaven when I die, I will be true to you whatever happens. Let us think what that may be.'

'Nay, let us *not* think,' exclaimed her mistress with a shudder, 'or I shall lose my wits. Would you have me picture what this house would be should he come hither and claim me for his wife? Richard and he beneath the self-same roof, and he the master! Would Walter—though he herds with him, you say—brook this man as his equal? Would he not loathe him rather, and how soon, ah me! unlearn the love he owes to me—his wretched mother! I cannot bear to think of it, I tell you. Let us act; let us be doing something—something! How my brain whirls! Think for me, Mary—pray for me, for Heaven is deaf, alas, to my poor prayers!'

But even while she spoke, the gracious tears began to fill the furrows in her cheeks, which until now had been dry throughout her talk; and having told her friend, the weight about her heart was lifted off a little, and the tightness round her brow was loosened by the blessed hand of sympathy.

'I must write to him at once,' said Mary thoughtfully. 'How fortunate that he did not leave Mirk until to-night. The two letters will now reach him at the same time. He cannot write in answer to the one which—which I wrote first—without having read the other; that will be something saved.'

My Lady shook her head.

'There is but little hope in that, I fear; for he himself has this night told me—yes, I saw him face to face, Mary, only I was thickly veiled, thank Heaven—he told me frankly (thinking I did not wish to lose my waiting-maid) that he should lay it to my charge if your reply was "No," and should not take it as the answer of your heart. How much more, if he gets a refusal coming so quickly upon the very heels of this acceptance, will he decline to believe it comes from your own self. More likely, it would cause him, reckless as he is, to do something rash and vengeful—perhaps to return hither on the instant, and— O Mary, Mary, I would give five thousand pounds this day, if that would stop his coming to Mirk again!'

'Would that *not* stop him, mistress?' asked the waiting-maid with earnest gravity. 'Five thousand pounds is a fortune, is it not?'

'It would not stop him, Mary,' rejoined my Lady sadly. 'Ralph Gavestone, even in his youth-time, never valued money a fillip when weighed against a whim; and now his will is more a law to him than ever. I have never known Resolve so fixed as I read it in his eyes this night. And if he guessed the truth, Mary—oh, if he did but dream that I, his lawful wife, for whom he had gladly laid his own life down, whose memory he has kept fresh and green when all else has withered, whose loss has been his ruin, was playing him false!—he said himself, that on his reckless soul 'twas like as not there might be murder some day—and, Mary, I do believe him.'

White as the very moonbeams was my Lady's face, and the hand trembled which held the handkerchief she passed across her damp white brow.

'Not for myself, good Mary, is this fear,' gasped she, 'but for my dear ones—do you hear them yonder? is it not sad to listen to such mirth?—for this unhappy man being wronged, becomes a mad-man straightway. Not disgrace alone may fall upon us here, not only shame—think of that, Mary; but *only* shame upon Sir Richard and the rest! but even Crime may visit us. This house of dead Sir Robert—once the home of peace, and genial ease, and hospitality— But that shall never be; no, they shall never meet, my sons and he; I will die rather, and my corpse would part them wide enough.'

'O mistress, talk not so; you freeze my very blood. What was it we were saying before you began to look like this?'

'You talked of bribing this Ralph Gavestone—for how could I offer him gold save as a bribe! But if a bribe, what need was there to bribe him? Why should I wish him once more upon the other side of the world? Why pay him a younger brother's portion, to quit the courtship of my waiting-maid? No, Mary, this man is no mere rogue, that he should take his money without question, and be off; he is suspicious, keen—and ah, if wronged, as implacable as Death itself.'

'One moment, my Lady!' cried Mistress Forest leaping to her feet. 'I do believe I have a plan to get that letter back.'

'Ah, good Heaven! What is it, wise, kind heart?'

'See, madam,' and she began to reckon on her plump fingers, with her pleasant face aglow with mingled joy and astonishment at her own sagacity: 'the note was put in late for the London post from Dalwynch; it will therefore remain there, though

it has left Mirk, all to-night, and not be forwarded till the morning mail. If we drive over to-morrow early—starting, say, at six o'clock—we shall be in plenty of time to stop its going further. In the meantime, I will write another letter in its place.'

'You have saved me—for this time—I do believe, dear Mary; yes, we can drive to Dalwynch—I will give orders for the carriage to be ready at six—and still be back at the Abbey by breakfast-time. If we are pressed for the reason, we can give the true one—to a certain point, if needs must be—you had a mind to alter what you have written to your suitor.'

CHAPTER XVII.—CONTRARY TO THE REGULATIONS OF HER MAJESTY'S POST-OFFICE.

Sorely did the fat coachman, who had no neck, inveigh against that caprice of his mistress which compelled his appearance at the front door upon the ensuing morning at an hour so altogether unexampled. If he had but heard that it was all upon the account of Mistress Forest, and the outlandish fellow who wore little gold rings in his ears, and that curly beard, so like the door-mat of the servants' hall, it is doubtful whether he would have obeyed such a premature behest at all; but as it was, he was sitting on the coach-box with the sleek nags before him, at the foot of the great steps which led down from the entrance-hall, at six o'clock to a minute. It was broad daylight of course, so bright that it made him wink again, as it flashed upon the glittering harness and the shining skins of the pampered beasts; but still it was not a time for a man of his years and girth to be hurried up and made to toil. 'As late as you please at night, my Lady, and nobody ever heard Joe Wiggins utter a murmur,' muttered he; 'but there's no constitushun as can stand such wear and tear as *this*.'

However that might be with Mr Wiggins, Miss Rose Aynton seemed to make uncommonly light of early rising, for much to the astonishment of her hostess, she was up and dressed and in the breakfast-room when that lady made her appearance at half-past five.

'I happened to hear that you were going out betimes, dear Lady Lisgard,' said she with her sweetest smile; 'and getting up in these first summer mornings is *such* a treat to a poor London-bred girl like me; so, without saying a word to dearest Letty, I thought I would just fill her place for once, and make your coffee for you.'

'Thank you, Rose,' returned my Lady a little stiffly, for she had not intended that anybody, and far less one who was not a member of her own family, should have been a witness to her departure. 'I have unpleasant business on hand which takes me to Dalwynch before the morning train starts.'

'If you are going to London,' began Rose hesitatingly, as if intending to send something by my Lady's hands to her aunt, 'if it was not too much trouble'—

'I am not going to London,' replied Lady Lisgard quietly. 'I shall be back by the usual breakfast-hour, I have no doubt.'

Here my Lady sipped her coffee with the air of a connoisseur, and perceiving Miss Aynton was about to ask more questions, requested a little sugar; then a fresh supply of—no, not hot milk—some cream. Would the carriage never come round, and release her from this importunate girl.

'How glad the people will be to see you about again once more, Lady Lisgard,' observed Miss Aynton cheerfully. 'You can't imagine how curious they have been to know why you have shut yourself up so long.'

'I was not aware that my movements were any business of theirs, Rose,' returned my Lady with severity, 'nor, indeed, of anybody's except myself.'

'Very true,' answered Miss Aynton carelessly; 'that is what I always told them. Besides, it is not pleasant to run the chance of meeting a rude and perhaps half-drunken ruffian like this man Derrick, when one knows he has made up his mind to address one upon the first opportunity.'

'Indeed!' said my Lady scornfully, 'I assure you I was quite unaware of that dreadful menace.' She stole a glance over her cup, to see if there was anything to read in this strange girl's face; but there was nothing. As soon as she had finished her duties in connection with the coffee-pot, she had taken a piece of fancy-work in her hands, in the execution of which she seemed entirely wrapped up.

'O yes; of course it is most ridiculous, but that is what all the village has been saying for these five months, more or less; and now that you are going out for the first time, when he has but left the place overnight, they are sure to say'—

'How do you know, Rose, that this man left Mirk last night?' inquired my Lady, setting down her cup, and looking at the young girl fixedly. Could it possibly have been *she* whom she had beheld lurking about the churchyard wall, and perhaps listening to the conversation, in the course of which Derrick had announced his intention of going at that late hour to Dalwynch, so as to be in time for the first up-train upon the morrow?

A faint flush stole over Miss Aynton's face, but by no means such a blush as is called 'tell-tale'; it might easily enough have been caused by the mere directness of the question. 'Your son, Mr Walter, told me,' replied she simply—'he is a great ally of this man's, you know.—Here is the carriage. I am afraid you will find it very dull, Lady Lisgard, taking this long drive all alone. If I thought that my company'—

'Thank you, Rose,' replied my Lady hastily; 'it is most kind of you to offer it; but the fact is, I am going to take Forest with me. This visit to Dalwynch is mainly upon her account indeed. If the chariot held more than two, perhaps I should take you at your word; but as it is— See, I have a book for my companion.—Come, Forest; we have no time to lose.'

Mary had entered the room while she was speaking, and gave quite a start at seeing Miss Aynton at the breakfast-table. Her mistress was already cloaked, and had her bonnet on.

'To Dalwynch, my Lady?' said the footman, having put up the steps and closed the chariot-door.

'Yes; drive fast.

'Which part of the town, my Lady?' for there were two roads to the post-town, the relative length of which from the Abbey depended upon what part of the place was to be visited.

Miss Aynton was standing on the last flight of the stone steps, and could hear every word that was spoken.

'Take the lower road,' replied my Lady very distinctly; and the well-hung chariot—pleasantest invention save the fair-weather Hansom, which the

wit of coachmakers has yet sought out—rolled swiftly along the gravelled road.

'Then they are not going to the railway station,' exclaimed Rose aloud.

'No, miss,' assented the butler, as he stood at the open hall-door, regarding nature as though it were a novelty to him at that hour. 'I should say it must be the post-office. Perhaps my Lady wishes to get the letters this morning earlier than the Mirk's man can bring them.'

'Very likely, Roberts,' returned the young lady, a little disconcerted at her involuntary remark having been overheard. 'Let us hope she will have good news. But I should scarcely have thought it was necessary to have gone herself.'

'Well, I am not so sure, miss. Mrs Rudd, the post-mistress at Dalwynch, is a great stickler for forms and that, and she might have made some difficulty, particularly as she did not obtain her place through our influence.'

'Whose influence, Roberts?'

'Ours, miss, to be sure. The Lisgard interest, you see, was given last election to the losing side. Although time was, I can well recollect, when poor Sir Robert had everything of that sort at his disposal that was vacant in these parts; but them yallers, they have gone and spoilt it all this time.' And with a sigh of regret for the golden age of patronage, and a shake of the head directed against the levelling opinions at present in the ascendant, Mr Roberts went off to his breakfast.

No sooner had the wheels of the chariot begun to move, than Lady Lisgard observed to her companion: 'You have the letter with you that I dictated last night, have you not?'

'Yes, my Lady; here it is, though not sealed down, in case you might have thought of anything to add.'

'No, Mary,' said her mistress, perusing it; 'there is nothing here that I can better by thought, although I spent all night in thinking over it. A refusal could scarce be made shorter or more decided than this; there is not a trace of vacillation to give the most sanguine suitor hope.' Then, as if some other idea was expressing itself almost in spite of herself, she added: 'Do I not look deadly pale, Mary?'

'Very white and worn, madam, as you well may.'

'But bad enough for people to observe who did not know the cause?'

'For some people, madam. *She* saw it sharp enough, if you mean *her*, my Lady,' and the waiting-maid made a significant gesture in the direction of Miss Rose Aynton. 'Nothing escapes *her*, bless you—nothing; and the sooner she's out of the house, under present circumstances—and indeed under every circumstance, in my opinion—the better.'

'You never liked her from the first, Mary,' said her mistress in the tone of one who argues against her own conviction. 'We should not be uncharitable in our judgments of others, and particularly as respects young folks; we often set down as serious faults what in them is only thoughtlessness.'

'Miss Aynton is none of that sort, my Lady; she always thinks before she speaks, and takes a good long look before she leaps; and for all she seems as though butter would not melt in her mouth, she's as full o' schemes as a cat at a dairy-door. If there's cream to be got in this world, she'll get it, my Lady, I'll go bail, let the butter-milk fall to whose share it will.'

'I confess that I can't quite understand her,' said my Lady musing. 'I am sure, when she first came, she seemed simple and unobtrusive enough; while, on the other hand, in her manner towards me of late'—

'Downright impudence, I call it, my Lady, in such a chit as she.'

'Well, I don't say that; but she is certainly not so respectful as she might be. I shall be sorry to send her back to London just as the summer is beginning, to live with her cross old aunt, whom she appears to dislike so; but I confess I think she has been here long enough.'

'Much too long, my Lady, much too long,' answered Mistress Forest gravely; 'she has set more people in the house by the ears than you wot of. While Anne Rees, who used to be Miss Letty's maid, one would think Miss Aynton was her mistress now, so entirely has she got her under her thumb. She has ferreted out some folly of Anne's—Heaven knows how she did it, or what it is; but the girl's her slave. From whom but her did she learn that you were starting at this hour? And, again, why was not Miss Letty told as well as Miss Rose? Do you suppose she would have let anybody else make coffee for her mamma, if she had been aware of your departure? No, no. Then Miss Aynton will take credit to herself for not permitting Miss Letty to be called, and fatigue herself by getting up so early. Nasty, sly young hussy! That's just her way; uncommon civil, kind, and attentive until she gets the upper hand, and finds you under her thumb; then you begin to know her. We've found her out in the servants' hall, although she makes a fool of old Roberts yet. She actually told him, that at the last dinner-party at the Abbey she thought him the most distinguished-looking person in the room; but only wait till she catches him some afternoon at the Madeira! then he'll be her obedient, humble servant, without having any more pretty speeches. That's a bad, bold girl, ma'am, let her be ten times a lady born.'

Here Mistress Forest, indignantly tossing her head back, without making due allowance for her bonnet, came into sharp contact with the back of the chariot, and severely bit her tongue. My Lady was thereby enabled to interpose a remark.

'But why have you not told me a word of this before, Mary? I would never have permitted a guest of mine, and particularly a young lady to whom I stand in the relation of guardian while she is under my roof, first to ingratiate herself with my servants, and then to tyrannise over them in the way you describe. I never heard of anything more atrociously mean, and I think you have been wanting in your duty—let alone your personal regard for me, Mary—to have concealed the matter so long.'

'Begging your pardon, my Lady, you have nobody to blame but yourself for that,' observed the waiting-maid with asperity. 'The only harsh words you ever spoke to me were about certain of Mrs Welsh's doings, of which I complained with reason, though I do not wish to refer to them now. What you said was this: "Never abuse the affectionate relation in which we two stand, Mary, by causing me to side with you against your fellow-servants. I can deny you nothing, but do not vex me with tale-bearing. I hate all vulgar gossip, and despise those who bring it." After a setting-down like that, it was not likely that I should give tongue about Miss Aynton's ways, nor let you

know how she has made Anne Rees a spy upon us all. No, no; mind your own business, Mary Forest, says you; and I've minded it, my Lady, ever since.'

'Do not be angry with me, friend,' returned Lady Lisgard sadly; 'I dare say I was wrong; and even if not, I have no heart to argue with you now.'

'And no wonder, poor dear,' assented the waiting-maid, greatly mollified. 'I was a brute to bring it up against you just now in all this trouble; nor was it the right time, perhaps, to speak about Miss Aynton's goings on. Only you yourself said her manner was not quite what it used to be, and I was so afraid that she might be getting you, my Lady, under her thumb.'

'How could that possibly be, Mary? She surely cannot have the slightest suspicion of'—

'She sniffs something, my Lady, or she would not have been making your coffee this morning. However, let her sniff, only be you very careful to lock your desk; and when you want to say anything to me about you know who, come out of earshot of the keyhole of your own door.—Ah, wouldn't she, though? But I know better. A thief! No, I didn't say a thief, although, for the matter of that, she has a mind to steal from you, or I am much mistaken, something you value most on earth—your son. There now, I've said it.'

And the waiting-maid drew a very long breath, as though some oppressive weight was off her mind at last. She evidently expected her mistress to express astonishment, if not horror; and it was positively a disappointment to her when my Lady replied calmly: 'I know all about that, Mary; but you are doing Miss Aynton wrong. She might have been my daughter-in-law if she liked, and yet, to my certain knowledge, she refused to be so.'

'She refused?'

'Most certainly she did. My son made her an offer in my presence, and she rejected him.—But here we are at Dalwynch. Tell Wiggins to stop at the post-office. Thank Heaven, there is plenty of time to spare. How my heart does beat!'

The waiting-maid pulled the check-string, and delivered her mistress's orders, but quite mechanically, without knowing what she said. In spite of the importance of what she had now so immediately to do, her mind was entirely occupied with the wonder of what she had just heard, and she kept repeating to herself: 'And she rejected him? and she rejected him?' while her heightened eyebrows almost amalgamated with her hair. Perhaps some of this excessive astonishment was due to poor Mistress Forest's peculiar position; she thought it so strange that one of her own sex should reject any man—who was not already married to somebody else.

'Here is the post-office, Mary. Mind you speak very civilly to the woman, and make haste; I shall be in a perfect fever till I see you come back with that dreadful letter safe in your hand.'

One minute, two minutes, three minutes—each seeming an hour to my Lady, shrinking in a corner of the chariot, while the omnibus to the station passed and repassed, picking up she knew not what passengers, and bearing Derrick himself, for all she knew, within it. At last Lady Lisgard could endure the suspense no longer. 'John,' said she to the footman standing beside the door, 'what is Forest about? Why does she not return?'

'She is talking to Mrs Rudd, my Lady. I think there is some dispute about a letter; for they are both in the post-office department.'

'Let me out, John,' exclaimed my Lady impatiently; and the next instant she had entered Mrs Rudd's establishment. This was, for the most part, a grocer's shop; one-fifth of it only being reserved for the reception and dispatch of Her Majesty's mails. There were no customers at that still early hour; a young man who was sanding the floor with some ostentation, as though to imply that *all* the sand went that way, and none into the sugar, made a respectful pause as my Lady's silk swept by; and another, who appeared to be washing his hands in tea, assumed that sickly smile which is supposed by persons of his class to conciliate people of quality; but Mrs Rudd herself, intrenched behind her little post-office palisade, gave no sign of gracious welcome, and from out the pigeon-hole through which she distributed her stamps, her words poured forth in an undiminished stream of denial and severity; nay, I doubt whether the presence of my Lady did not intensify the bitterness of its tone.

'Whatever importance it may be to you to get this letter, Mistress Forest,' cried she, addressing poor Mary, who was looking very disconsolate, and not a little angry also, 'it is of much greater moment to me that I should keep it. It is as much as my place is worth to give a letter back which has once been given into my charge; and I am not aware that I owe that place to my Lady Lisgard, and therefore feel called upon to risk—I beg pardon, your Ladyship—but I did not catch sight of you before. What your servant has come to ask of me is something out of the question. I will post this second letter for her—although it is two minutes past the time, even with an extra stamp, for *that*—but as for returning her this other: yes, I have no doubt it's hers—although, for that matter, people's handwriting is often very like other people's—but directly it reached this box it became the property of the Postmaster-general. It is no more hers now than it is mine; and if I was to yield it up, it's a matter, madam, that might be brought before the assizes.'

'Mrs Rudd,' said my Lady quietly, 'I hope, although your late husband and my son were not quite of the same way of thinking as to politics, that you do not look upon me in an unneighbourly light. I do not wish to insult you by offering you a bribe; but I may say this much, that nobody ever put me under an obligation yet, without my endeavouring to recompense them to the best of my power.'

'Yes, my Lady—although I can't say as I have ever been overburdened with favours at your Ladyship's hands—I know what sugar and currants goes to the Abbey from Simmons' every week—enough for a regiment, I'm sure, and at such a price, too, and all because he voted blue'—

'Voting blue, Mrs Rudd,' interrupted my Lady, 'is nothing at all compared with the good service you would do me, if you could only oblige my maid in the matter of this letter. Her future happiness, I may say, is bound up in the mere fact of that little note arriving or not at its destination.'

'Mr R. Derrick, Turf Hotel, Piccadilly,' muttered Mrs Rudd, looking at the address over the top of her silver spectacles. 'I should like to have half the Abbey grocery custom very much, of course.'

'You shall have it,' whispered my Lady in broken tones.

'But I dare not do it,' continued the post-mistress. 'This might be held over me—if it ever came to be known—so that I should never be my own mistress again, which, now that Rudd is gone, I mean to be. When you have once done an illegal action, my Lady, you may just as well be a slave—until you have taken your punishment. Somebody is sure to get wind of it, and to put you under their thumb.'

My Lady gave a ghastly smile, for speech was not in her.

'Look here, Mrs Rudd,' interposed Mistress Forest softly, 'you are not asked either to destroy or to give up this letter—of the inside of which, if you please, I will tell you every word. It is written to my lover—that's the fact; and I am very, very anxious that he should receive it'—here she trod upon my Lady's foot with unmistakable emphasis—'should receive it by this night's post.'

'Well, so he will,' returned the post-mistress, 'in Piccadilly.'

'Yes, but Mr Derrick is *not* in Piccadilly,' urged the waiting-maid. 'The direction should be, "*Care of Mr Arthur Haldane*"—what court is it, my Lady?—Yes; *Pump Court, Temple*. If you would only let me write *that*, Mrs Rudd, upon the envelope, instead of the present address, all mischief will be avoided. Would it not, my Lady?'

'There seems no great harm in that,' said Mrs Rudd reflectively.

'No harm whatever, and a great deal of good to you,' murmured the waiting-maid, as with a rapid hand she crossed out the words already written, and substituted for them the address of Mr Haldane's law chambers. 'Thank you kindly. Now, please to stamp this other. I am so much obliged.'

'And I too,' said my Lady graciously. 'Be so kind, Mrs Rudd, as to let me take your list of groceries with me. What nice macaroni that looks—I find such a difficulty in getting it in the country pure.'

Mrs Rudd herself accompanied my Lady to her chariot, and courtesied to the ground as the chariot whirled away.

No sooner were they alone, than mistress and maid exchanged a hearty kiss. 'Thank you, thank you, dear Mary,' cried the former; 'without your presence of mind, what should we have done! I began to feel quite prostrate with despair, and even now I tremble to think how nearly we had failed. I could not go through such a scene again, I believe, even if my life depended upon it.'

'Ah, yes, you could, my Lady; and I only trust it may not be necessary for you to do so. There is nothing more, however, to be done at present, save to wait and hope—except the telegraph message. I ventured to tell John, "To the Railway Station."'

'Telegraph to whom and about what, Mary?'

'We must let Mr Arthur know what he is to do with that letter, my Lady; otherwise, he may endeavour to forward it to the person to whom it is addressed.'

'Very true, dear Mary. I do believe that my wits are leaving me. By all means telegraph "Burn it." I wish I could repay you for your prudent thought, as easily as I can recompense Mrs Rudd for her complaisance.'

'Do not think of repaying me, my dear,' replied the waiting-maid fondly. 'It is a heartfelt pleasure

to find that I am not altogether useless in this strait. I am yours—yours—yours—my beloved mistress, and will be though every friend on earth should stand afar off, and you were forsaken by your very kith and kin.'

'But God forbid that should ever be the case, Mary!' ejaculated Lady Lisgard solemnly.

'Amen, my Lady—amen, I'm sure; but when the worst happens that can happen, you will please to remember you have Mary Forest still!'

SUMPTUARY LAWS.

EXTRAVAGANCE is doubtless an evil, and a great one too. Some well-meaning folks among us still lay the flattering unction to their souls, that men may be made sober and economical by act of parliament; but statesmen, taught by experience, have long since discarded such ideas, and relegated sumptuary enactments to the limbo of obsolete law. Fashion, like love, is not to be controlled by advice, even if the adviser comes armed with pains and penalties wherewith to punish those who obstinately remain deaf to the charmer that charms so wisely. Vanity, pride, and appetite are a stubborn triumvirate, not to be subdued by the devices of legislators, however astute. Law has again and again tried its hand at suppressing luxury and self-indulgence; with what avail, it is needless to ask. The old lady mopping away at the Atlantic, achieved as lasting results as her prototypes, who, with intentions equally laudable, wielded their legal brooms against the ocean of extravagance. These old instruments of social reform are, however, curious enough to repay examination. Here is an ancient weapon forged—for the special behoof of lovers of eating and drinking—when the Plantagenets were monarchs in the land. It is an act of parliament passed in 1336, and has at least the merit of being brief and to the purpose. Thus it runs:

'Whereas, heretofore through the excessive and over-many sorts of costly meats which the people of this Realm have used more than elsewhere, many mischiefs have happened to the people of this Realm; for the great men by these excesses have been sore grieved, and the lesser people, who only endeavour to imitate the great ones in such sorts of meats, are much impoverished, whereby they are not able to aid themselves, nor their liege lord, in time of need, as they ought; and many other evils have happened, as well to their souls as to their bodies; our Lord the King, desiring the common profit as well of the great men as of the common people of his Realm, and considering the evils, grievances, and mischiefs aforesaid, by the common assent of the prelates, earls, barons, and other nobles of his said Realm, and of the commons of the said Realm, hath ordained and established that no man of what state or condition soever he be, shall cause himself to be served, in his house or elsewhere, at dinner-meal or supper, or at any other time, with more than two courses, and each mess of two sorts of victuals at the utmost, be it of flesh or fish, with the common sorts of pottages, without sauce or any other sort of victuals. And if any man choose to have sauce for his mess, he may, provided it be not made at great cost; and if flesh or fish be to be mixed therein, it shall be of two sorts only at the utmost, either flesh or fish, and shall stand instead of a mess, except only on the principal feasts of the year, on which days

every man may be served with three courses at the utmost after the manner aforesaid.'

The law first took to regulating the clothing of the people in 1363, when parliament prescribed what apparel might and might not be worn by knights, esquires, clerks, merchants, burgesses, servants, handicraftsmen, yeomen, and ploughmen. The intention seems to have been to render a man's rank palpable at a glance, for the act descends to the minutest details of costume, and we suspect was unendurable by reason of its perfectness; at any rate, it had but a short life, for it was repealed by an act passed twelve months afterwards, ordaining that 'all people should be as free as they were before.' For just a hundred years, Englishmen and Englishwomen were allowed to dress themselves as their fancy and the fashion prompted; but in 1463, the ruling powers discovered that they indulged in excessive array, to the great displeasure of God, the impoverishing of England, the enriching of strange realms, and the total destruction of husbandry. To obviate the evil consequences of this terrible state of affairs, it was decreed that no man under the estate of a lord should wear saffres, cloth of gold, or purple cloth. Knights were forbidden to array themselves in 'cloth of velvet upon velvet.' Ermine, velvet, satin, and its imitations were not to be used by any person under the rank of knight. Those whose income was below forty pounds a year, were debarred from wearing myniver or martens furs, foreign silks or girdles garnished with gold or silver. Fustian, scarlet cloth, and all furs save white and black lamb, were forbidden articles to persons possessing less than forty shillings per annum; while no husbandman or artificer was permitted to use any cloth of higher value than two shillings a yard. Short garments were held to be indecent when worn by any but noblemen; so gowns, cloaks, and jackets were ordered to be made of a certain length, under pain of forfeiture; and none but lords were permitted to wear boots or shoes having peaks above two inches long. To make assurance doubly sure, any tailor or shoemaker supplying the means of infringing the law, was liable to punishment as well as the actual offender. Certain legal and official dignitaries and the officers of the royal household were exempt from the operation of this act, and a special clause also declared that it was not to apply to henchmen, heralds, pursuivants, sword-bearers, messengers, minstrels, and 'players in their interludes.' Henry VII. further infringed on the liberty of the subject by issuing an ordinance fixing the quantity of material to be used in the making of masculine gowns. Dukes, marquises, and archbishops were allowed to use sixteen yards of cloth or other stuff in their gowns; earls had to be content with a couple of yards less; viscounts were limited to twelve yards; barons to eight; and knights to six; while five yards was considered quite enough to make a garment for any one of less degree. Surely the proverb ancient cutting one's coat according to one's cloth must have originated with this curious bit of paternal legislation.

'I will tell you,' says Camden, 'how Sir Philip Calthorp purged John Drakes, the shoemaker of Norwich, in the time of Henry VIII., of the proud humour which our people have to be of the gentleman's cut. This knight bought on a time as much fine French tawny cloth as should make him a gown, and sent it to the tailor's to be made. John

Drakes, coming to the said tailor's, and seeing the knight's gown-cloth lying there, liking it well, caused the tailor to buy him as much of the same cloth, and bade him make it of the same fashion that the knight would have his made of. Not long after, the knight, coming to the tailor's to take measure of his gown, perceiving the like cloth lying there, asked whose it was. Quoth the tailor: "It is John Drakes' the shoemaker, who will have it made to the self-same fashion that yours is made of." "Well," said the knight, "in good time be it; I will have mine made as full of cuts as thy shears can make it." "It shall be done," said the tailor. Whereupon he made haste to finish both the garments. Now John Drakes, busy with his customers, had no time to go to the tailor's till Christmas-day, when he had hoped to wear his gown. When he perceived the same to be full of cuts, he began swearing at the tailor. "I have done nothing," quoth the tailor, "but that you bid me; for as Sir Philip Calthrop's garment is, even so have I made yours." "By my latchet," quoth John Drakes, "I will never wear gentleman's fashion again!"

This same 'proud humour' of his people gave great offence to King Henry, who accused his subjects of indulging in robberies and extortions in order to maintain their extravagance, and sought to curb it by stringent 'Acts of Apparel,' of which four were passed in his reign—with what result may be guessed from the preamble of the latest one, complaining that, spite of good laws, 'the oulteragious excess has rather increased than diminished, either by the occasion of the perverse and froward manners and usage of the people, or for that errors and abuses once rooted and taken into long custom be not faciele and at once with some moderation for a time relinquished and reformed.' These well-intentioned enactments were framed upon the principle that every man should dress according to his means and station in life, and were in fact statutes of limitation, declaring, by prohibitory clauses, that such and such articles and materials of costume were only to be used by certain classes of the population. Thus, none but members of the royal family were allowed to dress in purple cloth or silk, or wear black furs. A duke might array himself in gold of tissue, an earl don a suit of sables, and a baron flaunt in cloth of gold or silver; but if the last clad himself in sable, or the earl indulged in golden tissue, their infraction of the privileges of their betters entailed a fine of twenty marks. No man of less rank than a lord or Knight of the Garter might wear a coat of crimson or blue velvet, or any garment of foreign woollen cloth. Velvets and furs were forbidden luxuries to any under the degree of knight, unless they were members of the Royal Council, or filled certain offices, of which the London mayoralty was one. Satin and damask were prohibited to any excepting lords' sons, and gentlemen possessing a hundred a year. Chains and collars of gold were ornaments none beneath knightly rank could wear, and only gentlemen born dared indulge in buttons of silver or gold. Serving-men were forbidden to wear 'any gown or coat or such-like apparel of more cloth than two broad yards and a half in a short gown, and three broad yards in a long gown; or cover their legs with guarded hose, or hose of finer cloth than that sold for twenty pence a yard; but they were permitted to wear the cast-offs of their masters, guarded or unguarded. Servants, yeomen, and

others with an income of less than forty shillings a year, were forbidden to wear gold or silver in any shape, either on their hats, caps, or shirts; and any agricultural servant guilty of the extravagance of paying more than two shillings a yard for the cloth he used, was made an example of, by being put in the stocks for three days!

The church, hardly molested by earlier enactments, was brought within reach of the law by the act passed in 1532, which forbade the inferior degrees of the clergy from wearing costly furs, or any article of foreign manufacture. A few years afterwards, Cranmer touched them in a tenderer spot, by issuing an ordinance for the better regulation of clerical tables. This unwelcome mandate allowed an archbishop's table to be served with half-a-dozen different dishes of flesh or fish, but limited bishops to five, deans and archdeacons to four, and the lesser clergy to two dishes only, 'provided also that the archbishop may have second dishes four, the bishops three, and all others under the degree of a bishop but two; as custard, tart, fritter, cheese or apples, pears, or two of other kinds of fruits.' When one of the lesser clergy entertained a superior, he was allowed to provide a dinner in accordance with the rank of his guest; and if he was fortunate enough to be able to invite an ambassador to his table, he might be as prodigal as he chose. To guard against cunning evasions of the ordinance, it was provided that cranes, turkeys, swans, pike, haddock, and tench, should be served one in a dish; and capons, pheasants, conies, and wood-cocks two in a dish. Three black-birds were thought sufficient for a dish; but bishops might have four, and archbishops six; while a dozen larks or snipes were allowed to all, whatever their degree. The money expected to be saved by this dinner-table economy was ordered to be spent in providing plain food for the poor. Leland supplements his quotation of Cranmer's ordinances with the significant 'Memorandum—That this order was kept for two or three months, till, by the disusing of certain wilful persons, it came to the old excess.

One of the first acts passed after Mary's marriage with Philip of Spain was a sumptuary law, 'not extending to any person of or above the degree of a knight's son or daughter,' by which persons possessed of less than twenty pounds a year were forbidden to wear any silk in their hats, bonnets, girdles, night-caps, hose, shoes, scabbards, or spur-leathers, under pain of three months' imprisonment, and a fine of ten pounds for every day the interdicted material was worn; and as if this was not enough, it was enacted that any one keeping a servant in his service who had broken the law, should pay a fine of one hundred pounds. This short and severe act concluded with the curious proviso, 'that women may wear in their caps, hats, girdles, and hoods, as they or any of them might lawfully wear before the making of this act.' It was destined to be the last of its well-meaning but useless tribe—the last sumptuary law to be enrolled among the statutes of England. Not that Elizabeth, much as she delighted in a costly and overflowing wardrobe of her own, was one whit less anxious to restrain the extravagance of her subjects than her sister and father before her; but she was satisfied with the laws they had made, and contented herself with trying to persuade or frighten the people into obeying them.

Her majesty commenced her crusade, soon after her accession, by issuing a Royal Proclamation,

gently reminding all whom it concerned of the existence of certain Acts of Apparel, and advising her loving subjects to dress themselves accordingly. This proving of no avail, it was followed by another, which, after declaring that the chief offenders were the meaner sort of people, who were least able to maintain such excesses, appointed officers to arrest all persons coming to court in illegal attire; directed the corporation of London to choose four substantial and well-meaning men in each city ward, to see that the statutes were obeyed; and strictly enjoined the authorities of the Inns of Court, and the mayors, bailiffs, and justices throughout the realm, to seek out and punish all who did not conform to the law. This proclamation also regulated the length of swords, rapiers, and daggers, and forbade any hosier or tailor (under pain of being forbidden to carry on his occupation) using more than a yard and three-quarters of any stuff in the making of a pair of hose. Three years afterwards, this quantity was still further reduced, and the wearing of hose with upper-stocks of velvet, satin, or material of equal value, forbidden to any one below the degree of a baron's eldest son. That no one might plead ignorance of the law, a tabular summary of the Acts of Apparel was appended to the proclamation, by which any one could see at a glance what he might or might not wear.

Spite of the queen's efforts, matters did not mend; and in 1575, a fresh proclamation was published, setting forth the evils caused by the daily increasing excess, 'particularly the wasting and undoing of a great number of young gentlemen, otherwise serviceable; and others seeking by show of apparel to be esteemed as gentlemen, who, allured by the vain show of those things, do not only consume themselves, their goods and lands, which their parents have left unto them, but also run into such debts and shifts, as they cannot live out of danger of laws, without attempting of unlawful acts, whereby they are not in any way serviceable to their country, as otherwise they might be.' Her majesty then proceeds to remind her obstinate people that the law has provided severe punishment for such as refuse to obey it; but entreats her loving subjects to reform themselves, and not put her to the pain of punishing them. Justices of the peace are directed to keep their eyes open, to arrest all who treat the queen's orders with contempt, and to make a return twice a year of the results of their official activity.

In 1579, Elizabeth proclaimed her dislike of long cloaks and great ruffs, and ordered that all persons should, 'in modest and comely sort, leave off such fond, disguised, and monstrous manner of attiring themselves, as both was insupportable for charges, and indecent to be worn.' We suppose it was to enforce this edict that the two members of the Ironmongers' Company, and two freemen of the Grocers' Company, were stationed at Bishopsgate, from seven in the morning to six in the afternoon, to examine the habits of all persons passing through the gate.

Mr Fairholt tells us that the sumptuary laws were all repealed at the beginning of James I.'s reign, but the Scotch Solomon was not so much wiser than his predecessors as he would have us infer. He was mightily indignant at the excess and strange fashions indulged in by the 'prentices of London, and the inordinate pride of servant-maids; and sent precepts to the Wardens of the various

city guilds, enjoining them to harangue their members upon this heinous offence. The result was that the Common Council considered the subject, and issued a code of regulations concerning the material, fashion, and quality of every article of dress worn by the offending classes. 'Prentices were to wear no hat costing more than five shillings, and their hat-bands were to be made of cheap linen, without any ornament save a plain hem. The collar of the 'prentice's doublet was to be innocent of point, whalebone, or plait, fashioned close and comely, and, like his breeches, made either of cloth, kersey, fustian, sackcloth, canvas, or any English stuff not exceeding half-a-crown a yard in value. His stockings were to be of kersey or woollen yarn; and he was especially warned against wearing 'Spanish shoes with polonied heels,' and having his hair in tufts or locks. The serving-maids were forbidden to indulge in lawn, cambric, tiffany, velvet lawns and white wires on their heads; and their ruffs were not to exceed four yards in length before the gathering of it in, or to be of greater depth than three inches. The farthingale was prohibited altogether, as was 'any body or sleeves of wire, whalebone, or other stiffening, saving canvas and buckram only.'

If the Common-councilmen were successful in their attempt to control the subjects of their court, they were luckier than James himself. Their majesties had been left nearly alone in their glory at Whitehall, during the performance of a masque by the gentlemen of Gray's Inn, by reason of the passage into the room being blocked up by some ladies, whose farthingales prevented them either advancing or retiring. James thereupon issued a proclamation declaring that no lady or gentleman should be admitted to any future entertainment at Whitehall who wore 'this impertinent garment.' As a matter of course, the ladies replied by increasing the size of the obnoxious farthingale, and the proscribed article of apparel held its own as long as James lived. After this, kings and parliaments left dress alone, the only interference with it since being George IV.'s decree, banishing the hoop-petticoat from court, and thereby supplying us with a solitary instance of successful sumptuary legislation.

We have dwelt at such length upon the sumptuary laws of England, that we have no space to say anything of similar experiments elsewhere; suffice it to state, that there is scarcely a civilised country in which such experiments have not been made, with exactly the same result.

A DESERT-STORM ADVENTURE.

It is now several years since, that I was attached to the West Coast Squadron. It was a monotonous, almost dreary life we led—floating at easy sail over those tropic waves, our sole employment watching the dimly-seen African shores, and the yet more distant horizon; our only excitement, when some low-lying craft, scarce visible between sea and sky, would strive to break our blockade, and steal out on her unholy errand; or when some boat-expedition was ordered up one of the many rivers, to defeat a rumoured attempt at embarking slaves in the interior.

On one occasion, we had despatched, with this object, two boats up the Gomrie, and lay off and on near the river's mouth awaiting their return. But the expected limit of their absence came and

passed, and yet we saw no signs of the missing boats; and as the days went by, we sorrowfully began to lay to heart that the fatal West Coast fever, from which we were tolerably exempt at sea, lurked in every bend of those breezeless rivers, and that rarely did a boat return from those torrid shores but some familiar face or warmly-clasping hand was missing.

Darker and sadder grew our conjectures, until at length we could endure the suspense no longer; and on the seventh day they were overdue, the volunteer officer of a volunteer crew, I started in the largest boat remaining to us to seek for our absent comrades.

We were a strange, wild-looking party, as, with the dim morning twilight gleaming on our white blanket-clothing, we took leave of our shipmates, replying to their warm yet subdued farewell by a longer and quicker sweep of the oars, which were to send us on an undertaking we knew would be not only arduous, but attended by an unusual amount of peril, since not only the main channel of the stream must be traversed, but its wooded tributaries and pestilential creeks thoroughly explored. However, the men were heart and soul in their task, pressing unwearily up the sunlit river, forcing their way through water-courses almost choked by rank vegetation, and penetrating to the depths of lagoon-like inlets, whose stagnant waters breathed fever and death.

Their very devotion, however, seemed to preserve them, for there was neither sickness nor heaviness among them; and when the day's toils were past, and they sat round the fire upon the shore boiling their coffee, and cooking the morrow's rations, still eager and earnest, they discussed wild, impracticable schemes of wider exploration and more stringent search. Meanwhile, we diligently pursued our quest up-stream; but the few dull-witted natives to be found along its dreary banks were unable to furnish us with any information, while the occasional blackened remains of a fire was the only indication that travellers of any sort had ever passed that way.

It was the tenth day of our fruitless voyage, when we came to a wider and more navigable creek, and we resolved to seek through it better fortune. It was a pleasant change, after the glare of the hot river, to float in the rustling shade of the luxuriant bamboos, which swept over us in a continuous arch, while the large white lilies gleamed from the dark water around their roots, and the bright tree-lizards darted like moving jewels along their stems.

At length, a distant sound began to mingle with the shrill cries of the lorics and the winnowing of the overhanging boughs, swelling and increasing, until it echoed in our ears the reverberation of falling water; and soon after, the banks between which we rowed sweeping suddenly round, left us on the margin of an extensive river, and not two miles below the spot where, leaping, tossing, and jostling in a mass of foaming billows, its waters came rolling down in a gigantic tumble. An exclamation of astonishment and admiration at the wild beauty of the scene burst from every lip, and was repeated, as glancing around, we looked on the swift-rushing river, chafing against its enclosing barriers of lofty rock, capped at intervals by tropical forests of waving palm-trees, at others, by huge masses of creepers, surging over them like green cascades. But it needed more than a second look

to discover some break in the rocky walls where we might land to light our fire and stretch our limbs.

At last, a crevice-like inlet rewarded our search; then, as the boat touched its narrow ledge, and the oar-blades were held erect in the usual salute, I sprang on shore. But scarcely had my foot touched the rock, when there was a rattling crash and a startled exclamation, caught up by the neighbouring echoes, and turning quickly, I perceived that an oar had escaped from a sailor's hand, and falling among those of his unprepared companions, scattered them around, and mostly overboard. A rush was made to the side to recover the floating sweeps ere the current should bear them off; but the boat rolled almost gunwale under with the unequal weight. In all haste, the men retreated, but it was too late; the sudden movement had torn from the rock the detaining boat-hook, the boat itself received an impetus, and almost ere we comprehended the fact, the powerful eddy had caught the unfortunate craft, and was fast sweeping her out into the open channel. The men at once resorted to their two only remaining oars, but they were evidently powerless to stem the arrowy flood. Each wave bore her further out from the land, and she was soon in the midst of that wild river, and, despite her crew's almost superhuman efforts, slowly but surely yielding to its impetuous rush, while it needed but one glance at the beetling precipices on either hand to banish the thought of swimming to land.

Never shall I forget the horror of finding myself in safety, and seeing the brave, faithful fellows, who had cast in their lot with mine, thus carried away most probably to death. Could I have made an effort for their rescue, even at the peril of my own life, it would have softened the intensity of my regret. But I was entirely powerless, and when a thrilling cry of dismay and terror rose in my poor Kruboy's voice, I could only echo it in unavailing sorrow; and, when scaling the cliff, I gained the height above, and looking far along the course of that iron-bound river, I could see neither break nor bend in its frowning ramparts, nor slackening in its own impetuous current, my heart sunk lower than ever.

Still I strove to keep up with the hapless voyagers, leaping from rock to rock, and hillock to hillock, along the brow of the cliff, while ever and anon I waved my hat, and tried to inspire them with a hope I could scarcely share. But the sole response was a sad and negative gesture, gradually deepening into despair, as, tossed wildly among the surges of that fearful river-race, the almost carless boat sped swifter and more helplessly than ever on her fatal course; and when, at length, night closed between me and the little bark, I felt, with an inexpressible pang, that I had looked my last on those kindly faces, and that darkness would be added to the horrors of the unknown yet terrible way by which my poor friends must pass out of the world.

But as I sat crouched upon the brink, my fancy pictured vividly its rushing rapids, its seething eddies, and its final and fatal leap; and it was not until day broke on that long miserable night that, looking round on the vast tropic wilderness in which I stood alone, and without any appliance either of civilised or savage life, I remembered how great was my own desolation, and that my ultimate chance of life was little better than that of those I mourned.

To the westward, some hundred and twenty miles distant, lay the coast along which my ship and squadron continually cruised, and that I must endeavour to reach; and turning sorrowfully away from the grand and picturesque river, which had been the scene of so terrible a disaster, and whose course towards the sea appeared too devious for me to follow, I addressed myself to my new undertaking of travelling overland, though all I knew of my journey was its direction, and that it must be beset with innumerable difficulties, and attended with many hardships. Thus I set forth, climbing long ranges of crumbling sand-hills, where half my toil was labour lost; forcing my way through rugged ravines, filled with dense, thorny jungle, and infested by puff-adders and cobras; and travelling over vast treeless plateaux, where the tropic sun flashed down on my unsheltered head like living fire, and the burnished silver of the equatorial moonbeams threatened me with night-blindness; my sole provision a few scarce edible roots and berries, such as I had seen the Krumen gather, and I was truly thankful when I could wash them down by a draught from a stagnant water-hole.

Yet, worst of all, was the unbroken solitude, the inexpressibly weary, dreary sense of loneliness which each hour seemed to augment, and beneath which the remembrance of my lost comrades grew daily into a deeper sorrow. Nevertheless, I progressed steadily, travelling early and late, and resting in the burning noontide, until, on the fifth evening, I fancied that half my journey must be achieved. But on the sixth morning, the faint southerly air, which had alone rendered the heat endurable, died utterly away, and was succeeded by the fierce, scorching breath of the Great Desert, which first in feeble puffs, and then in the strong respiration of a giant, came rushing over hill and plain on the wings of the north wind.

In that low latitude on land, the sirocco is a word of dread and peril, and for a moment I stood appalled; but the next, I remembered that if I would live, no time must be lost in seeking refuge from its violence. I looked eagerly around the broad sea-like expanse for some rock, or shrub, or even mound, which might serve to shelter me; but none was visible. Again and again, I strained my eyes, as I hastened over the dreary waste; but no spot even so large as a man's hand stood up against the lurid sky; and as the furnace-like gust swept hotter and hotter by me, and my strength failed rapidly beneath their baneful influence, it was impossible to resist the dispiriting conviction, that ere long I must sink down upon the sand, and yield passively to my fate. At length, when my lagging limbs and faltering feet could proceed no further, the smallest of dwarf palm-trees shewed itself above a slight depression of ground; and in the excitement of that new hope, I made a great and final effort, and, reaching the spot, crept thankfully into its welcome covert.

Then almost immediately the desert storm burst over the plain with terrific fury, howling and shrieking as it rushed devastatingly on like a torrent of viewless fire, filling the air with great whirling sand-clouds, drying up the pools, withering the herbage, and prostrating the few living denizens of that torrid wilderness fainting and breathless on the ground.

Never at sea have I witnessed a wilder tempest, and as I lay crouched helplessly beneath my narrow

palm-shade, half buried in the loose rolling sand-wreaths, and labouring for every breath in that burdened atmosphere, while those fiery blasts darted through me like burning arrows, and my skin cracked and shrivelled in the parching heat, no words can describe my sufferings; while as the time passed, and my lips, tongue, and even eyes burned and swelled almost to bursting beneath the stifling oppression, and tortured me with a consuming, distracting thirst, which there was nothing to assuage, my agony grew well-nigh insupportable, and a wild importunate cry burst from my fevered lips for death to hasten to my relief.

At length, as the third day closed, the force of the sirocco was spent, and the fresher west wind rolled up from the ocean, diffusing new life upon its path. But for me it came too late, and I could only welcome it as an unhelped-for but tender friend, who would cool the bleared and burning eyes closing for ever in the desert, and hover over the lowly pillow of sand on which I was fast sinking to my last repose.

Nevertheless, that west wind was yet to save me. Ere it had blown many hours, a party of natives, who had been awaiting its coming to carry their merchandise of palm-oil and sago to the coast, passed near the spot where I was lying, and attracted by the hovering of a vulture, sought out what it might indicate, and by the mercy of Providence, discovered me before my weakness had deepened into death. Beneath their care I soon revived, and was able to be borne on a rude litter to the coast, where a cruiser was ere long found to receive me, and reward my kind preservers.

After a time, we encountered my own vessel, and, to my great joy, on board her not only the two missing boats' crews, but the lamented companions of my own disastrous expedition, whose boat, sweeping down a succession of rapids, had reached the sea in safety. Years have passed since then, filled with the wild chances and perils of a sailor's life, but none recall so vivid a remembrance of distress, misery, and intense suffering as that Desert-storm Adventure.

PHARAOH'S SERPENTS.

From the little cone of silver foil
That fizzes and fumes with a fretful fire,
There oozes a serpent all yellow and ribbed,
That rolls and thickens, and curls still higher.
The magic thing, as if by a spell,
Suddenly ceases its sluggish crawl;
Its fiery breath has quite burnt out
And leaves a coil of dust—that's all.
The wise man's toy is a type of life;
And all our struggles for paltry things;
Our diplomatic treaties and talk,
Tangled and bound with red-tape strings;
Our spiders' webs, and our subtle plans;
Our love and joy, and our brittle dreams;
Our poor ambitions, that fleet away
Fast as the winter-torrent's streams;
Alexander's conquests, Cæsar's spoils;
All that we hate, and all that we trust;
The beggar's fears, and the rich man's hopes—
All end at last in the pinch of dust.

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A DRAWING-ROOM DIFFICULTY.

CONSIDERING the number of rich and idle people in the world of fashion, and the magnitude of the 'staff' which is incessantly employed in catering for their amusement, how very few agreeable means have been discovered of passing an evening. Independently of cards, music, and dancing—against each of which there are often serious objections—what can drawing-room people do? That the want of some new indoor game is felt, is evident by the inventions that are forthcoming every week, all of which profess to teach us how to spend a pleasant hour, but with a result that is the reverse of satisfactory. Can anything be more humiliating than to be set down to play at *Squails*—the very name of which has something medicinal and horrid about it; who that has any self-respect would willingly make one of a party at *Cockamaroo*? or is *Frogs and Toads* (notwithstanding that we are told it is the Chinese Imperial game) an attractive amusement for persons of condition? How can that be a 'fascinating game' which is said to be 'played on a leather board with twelve reptiles?' and, moreover, who will put up with being called 'a reptile,' when he goes out to spend the evening in his best clothes?

The game of *Hard Lines* is one which so many of us have experienced in real life (or seem to ourselves to have done so), that I can scarcely fancy its namesake being popular as an amusement; and as for the *Armstrong Gun*, I would like to see anybody practising that little game among the articles of *virtu* in my drawing-room. The same remark applies with even greater force to the relaxation called *Puff and Dart*, wherein life and limb, as well as property, seem to me to be most seriously endangered. All games that affect to be instructive as well as amusing—dealing with abstruse matters of History or Geography and the like—are simply fatal, after dinner, to all persons whose digestion is not that of the Ostrich. The best thing, in short, that the poor pleasure-seekers have had done for them seems to be the adaptation of their eternal croquet for dining-room tables. After a whole

afternoon's 'knocking about the balls' on the lawn, they proceed to kill their enemy, Time, in the evening, with the self-same lethal weapons reduced to duodecimo size. Queen Titania might have amused herself with her pocket-myrmidons, Peasblossom, Cobweb, Moth, and Mustardseed, at indoor croquet; and if Oberon had complained, like many a mortal Paterfamilias, of the expense of the Board, she would doubtless have hailed the last new patent, which, it appears, is to enable this fascinating pursuit to be played upon any table, if you do but happen to have a table-cloth which is of no great value. How Master Jacky will neglect this proviso when home for the holidays, and will mutilate the best damask after it has been laid for a dinner-party, and make his 'loose croquets' on to the champagne glasses, are things that it is easier to imagine than to defray the cost. But there are some people too old to indulge after dinner in contests compared to which 'the athletic game of cribbage' is easy work, and others who wish to have an opportunity of exhibiting their intelligence rather than their want of dexterity. For these, then, there are the time-honoured games of *How, when, and where*, of *Proverbs*, and of *Oral Tradition*.* Now, of the first of these ingenious inventions, I may say, that it would not be so miserable a failure if it were a little more definite. The plan is, as most persons in this vale of tears must have been made aware, first to send some clever member of the company out on the landing, and then to fix upon some word with as many meanings as possible attached to it, which he is to guess by the Synthetic method.

Thus, suppose the word *Rap* or *Wrap* is chosen, then the clever person is admitted, and straightway begins to inquire of each member of the company, *How* they like it, *when* they like it, and *where* they like it; and from the answers given he is supposed to evolve the word. In reply to the

* There is also that very ambitious game of Rhyme-writing, with which nobody who is not a born poet has, in my opinion, any business to concern himself, and the general result of which is such painfully evolved doggrel, as is humiliating to the human species.

first question, folks tell him with effusion that they like it Hot and Single and Double (this last has a dim connection in the young lady's mind who utters it, not with a thick shawl, but with a post-man's knock, and means she is fond of getting letters). To the second question of *when* they like it, they reply with much less enthusiasm, that they like it *when* it's Hot, *when* it's Single, and *when* it's Double. So that the poor wretch, who goes about like another Socrates propounding these ridiculous inquiries, has no more data to go upon than he had at first. When he arrives at '*where* they like it,' the ingenuity of the company being quite exhausted, they content themselves with such vague replies as '*in winter*' and '*at night*,' or with the bold but totally inapposite statement, that they don't like it at all. In the end, the clever person has to confess that he knows no more about the word than when he set out upon his investigation, and they put him outside the landing again, and fix on another.

Now the game of Proverbs enjoys a much higher share of public favour than the above amusement, while in some families, on account of the similarity of its name, I suppose (for I can conceive no other reason), with one of the books of Holy Writ, it is even permitted to be played upon a Sunday. I have played at it myself in the domestic circle upon a Good-Friday, without feeling very much the worse for it; and, indeed, if it is one of those pleasures which fall upon one rather soon, it is certainly not on account of any extravagant excitement that it produces. The clever person is sent out on the landing as before, and then a well-known proverb, such as, *Sufficient for the day is the evil thereof*, is fixed upon; somebody who has a foreboding that that is the only chance he will have of distinguishing himself, cries out *Come in*, and then the performance commences. The clever person asks any question he pleases of any member of the company, and receives a reply in which the first word of the proverb—*Sufficient*—must of necessity be mentioned; he then goes on in rotation, so that everybody knows when his turn is coming, and what word he will have to bring in, and you see him obviously employed in making as much of his answer as he can construct without knowing what he will be asked; just as a guest at a public entertainment who knows he will have to return thanks for something or other applies himself to composition during the courses. The unfortunate person who has got the word *thereof* to introduce in a natural manner, wishes in vain that a telegraphic message would arrive to say he is wanted at home, or even that he could make his nose bleed without exciting public observation, as an excuse to leave the room. However the clever person is inexorable, and the thing has to be got through. As a matter of fact, if he is really clever, he takes care, both in the former game as well as in the one of which I am now speaking, to put his ear to the keyhole, while he is on the other side of the door, and so to possess himself of the sacred secret. It is astonishing *how* clever he can make himself appear by this simple device; not only by guessing the proverb just at the right time, so as to extort admiration without exciting suspicion, but also by putting the most embarrassing questions to those who have got the most difficult words to mention in their replies. Many a drawing-room reputation

has been made by this unprincipled conduct, against which nothing is a sufficient safeguard—such is the innate love of display in the human heart!—save a good thick curtain over the door. There is almost always somebody either deaf or stupid to whom the proverb has to be confided at the top of the voice. This homely game is said to have been a favourite one with the late Premier at Broadlands; and I have been told that to see him wheeled out of the room (when gout forbade his walking) to bide his time until he was sent for by the company, was a very pleasant sight indeed; he carried the heart of a child under that care-laden yet unanxious breast. It was rarely indeed that he failed to guess the proverb; and in the case of such a very clever person as himself, it is possible that he did not use that stratagem already referred to, which occurs so naturally to folks of inferior ability.

Oral Tradition is a diversion founded with the philosophic view of shewing the absurdity of second-hand narrations. The clever person of the company, whom we will call 'No. 1,' is provided with pen and paper, and concocts a 'statement,' which he purposely makes as ridiculous and improbable as he can. He then goes out of the room, and a member of the company, No. 2, is sent to him, to whom he privately reads the document in question; then it is placed in his pocket, and nobody is permitted to look at it; the clever person returns, and another member of the company is sent out to receive by word of mouth as much of the statement as his predecessor can remember; No. 2 returns, and No. 4 receives from No. 3 what remains in his mind of the original narrative, and so on to the very last. This last person then comes in, and delivers the information that he has derived from No. 1 through oral tradition; after which No. 1 reads the written statement. It is the discrepancies between these two last which form of course the legitimate fun of the whole proceeding; but, besides that, this is a very popular game with young gentlemen and young ladies, a pair of whom, finding themselves outside the door together, will sometimes pleasantly prolong their duties as listener and narrator, or even introduce into the statement much agreeable but irrelevant matter.

The great objection to all these games, however, is, that people in general are not intelligent enough to play them, or at least to play them well: the majority of a drawing-room company, like that of all companies, being composed of dull folks, who cannot invent, nor even remember what is required of them. Of course this remark ought to have no weight when directed against that most charming of drawing-room amusements, Acting Charades, for it is only a few select members of a company who are ambitious enough to undertake that matter; and it is only charitable to suppose that they do not overrate their own abilities. To play a character at all, demands of course considerable intelligence, but to invent appropriate dialogue at the same time is a tax upon the mental powers which very few capacities are prepared to pay in full; a dividend of a penny in the pound, perhaps, would be the average of what could be screwed, for that purpose, out of ordinary individuals. There are more drawing-rooms, therefore, suitable for scenic representation (that is, with double doors or a curtain) than can furnish the fit *dramatis personæ*: the room is commonly much

better than the 'company,' so that Acting Charades is a rare treat.*

After all, indeed, I am not sure whether of drawing-room games that very simple one of *Ivory Letters* is not the best, as it is certainly the most suitable for all degrees of intelligence; for, in spite of the Civil Service Commissioners, I must express my belief that most persons in society are able to spell. A difficult word engages everybody's ingenuity; and the amount of haphazard that is involved in the arrangement of the letters goes far to equalise the chances of sharps and flats. It is strange to see how resolute some people grow to get over their literal difficulty, and how furious at any well-meant offer to afford them assistance by giving them the leading letter; and again how other unassuming souls are thankful for any hint towards the elucidation of the mystery, and have no sort of proper pride at all. We have known great wits, and men of 'letters' too, as puzzled over a word of three syllables as any child, and quite as subject to loss of temper; and I must personally acknowledge to having used some violent expressions, when—having toiled in vain for many days at one of these enigmas, not only during leisure moments, but just at the times when mental concentration upon other matters was most needed—the pretty cousin who had propounded it to me wrote me a few heartless lines to say that she had by mistake given me a *t* too many. That *t* might have been Green, since the excess of it cost me two sleepless nights.

The most embarrassing combination of letters with which I have ever had to do is that which spells the word *Rateably*, and another word, which I will let my readers find out for themselves, after the fashion of those old pocket-books which used to ask riddles without answers, in hopes that people would buy a copy of the next annual issue for the sake of satisfying their minds. I may add, as an attraction to loyal subjects, that the letters in question are understood to have had the earnest attention of Her Majesty the Queen, who at last managed to arrange them in their proper order. I cannot say that this present writer was equally fortunate or sagacious; for, after prolonged study, he suffered the humiliation of having to 'give it up,' and be 'told.'

MIRK ABBEY.

CHAPTER XVIII.—AN UNCHEERFUL PICNIC.

By the time Lady Lisgard returned to the Abbey, notwithstanding that the sleek bays had devoured the road with all the haste of which their condition permitted, it was long past the breakfast-hour, and her absence from that meal provoked no little comment from the members of her family. Nobody was able to allay their curiosity as to what could have taken mamma to Dalwynch, but Miss Aynton did her best to stimulate it.

'She has gone upon Mary Forest's account,' said she—'that is all I can tell you. I never knew any one take such trouble about her maids as dear Lady Lisgard.'

* The wittiest Acting Charade I have ever heard of, is the device by which a word of six syllables is conveyed to the audience in a single scene. One of the actors meets another and says: 'Good-morning, Doctor.' This being interpreted ingeniously, means *Met-a-physician*.

'Yes, Rose,' replied Letty warmly; 'but it is not every maid who has lived with her mistress thirty years. I believe Mary would lay down her very life for dear mamma, and indeed for any of us. Whenever I read those stupid letters in the papers about there being no good old servants to be seen now a days, I long to send the editor a list of our people at the Abbey. Mary, indeed, is quite a new acquisition in comparison with Wiggins and the gardener; but then she is almost faultless. I have heard mamma say that there has never been a word between them.'

'Not between them, indeed, Letty,' returned Miss Aynton laughing; 'for Mistress Forest has all the talk to herself.'

Sir Richard smiled grimly, for Mary had been in his bad books ever since her attachment to 'that vagabond Derrick.'

'Good, Miss Rose!' cried Walter—'very good. I wish I could say as much for this so-called new-laid egg. Why should eggs be of different degrees of freshness? Why not all fresh? Why are they ever permitted to accumulate?'

'My egg is very good,' observed Sir Richard sententiously; 'how is yours, Miss Aynton?' and he laid an emphasis upon the name, in tacit reproof to his brother for having been so familiar as to say 'Miss Rose.'

'Well, Sir Richard, I am London bred, you know, and therefore your country eggs, by comparison, are excellent.'

'I wish I could think,' said the baronet with stateliness, 'that in other matters we equally gained by contrast with Town, in your opinion.'

'I believe London is the place to get everything good,' remarked Walter sharply.

'We are going to-day, Miss Aynton,' continued the baronet, without noticing the interruption, 'to offer you something which really cannot be got in town, and which hitherto the state of the weather has forbidden even here'—

'Ah, for shame, Richard!' interrupted Letty, holding up her hands. 'Now, that was to be a surprise for Rose.—It's a picnic, my dear. I dare say now you scarcely know *what* that is.'

'I can tell you, then,' ejaculated Walter with acidity: 'it's packing up all the things you would have in the ordinary course at luncheon in a comfortable manner—except the bread, or something equally necessary, which is always left behind—and carrying them about six miles to the top of an unprotected hill—in this particular case, to a tower without a roof to it—there to be eaten without tables or chairs, and in positions the most likely to produce indigestion that the human body can adapt itself to.'

'I have always been told that being in a bad humour is the most certain thing to cause what you eat to disagree with you,' observed Letty demurely.—'Never mind what Walter says. I am sure you will be delighted, dear Rose; we are going to Belcomb, a sort of shooting-box belonging to us, about five miles away, and built by grandpapa.'

'Commonly termed "Lisgard's Folly,"' added Master Walter.

'Not by his descendants, however, I should hope, with one exception,' observed Sir Richard haughtily.—'I will thank you, Walter, not to cut my newspaper.'

Master Walter had seized the paper-knife as though it had been a more deadly weapon, and was engaged in disembowelling one of the several journals which had just arrived by post.

'I did not see it was yours,' returned he. 'Goodness knows, nobody wants to read the *Court Journal* but yourself. The idea of not liking one's newspaper cut!'

'Yes, I must say, my dear Richard,' said Letty, playfully patting her elder brother, next to whom she sat, upon the shoulder, 'that is a most singular objection of yours. I think it certainly proves that you will always remain an old bachelor.'

Sir Richard maintained a frowning silence. Master Walter twirled his silken moustache, and looked up at Miss Aynton with a meaning smile.

'What is your opinion upon the subject,' said he, 'Miss Rose?'

'Insolent!' exclaimed Sir Richard, rising so hastily that he knocked over the chair on which he had been sitting. 'How dare you ask such questions in my presence?'

'Richard, Richard!' cried a reproving voice; and lo! at the open door stood my Lady, hollow-eyed and pale, and with such a weariness and melancholy in her tones as would have touched most hearts.—'Am I ever to find you and Walter quarrelling thus?—Yes, I have heard all, and think you both to blame; but nothing can excuse this violence. If I have any authority in this house at all, not another word, I beg.'

Sir Richard bit his lip, but resumed his seat; Walter went on quietly dissecting the *Illustrated London News*, with an air of intense interest; Miss Aynton very accurately traced the pattern of her plate with her fork; Letty, the innocent cause of the outbreak, shed silent tears. Altogether, the family picture was gloomy, and the situation embarrassing. My Lady reaped this advantage, however, that nobody asked her a word about her expedition to Dalwynch.

'Do not let me detain you at table, my dear Letty,' said she, breaking a solemn pause. 'Miss Aynton was so good as to make my coffee this morning, and therefore it is only fair that she should perform the same kind office now.'

Glad enough of this excuse to leave the room—a movement felt by all to be very difficult of imitation—Letty rushed up stairs to indulge in a good cry in her own bedroom, 'the upper system of fountains' only having been yet in play. Sir Richard gloomily stalked away towards the stables; Walter lounged into the hall, lit a cigar, and paced to and fro upon the terrace beneath the windows of the breakfast-room, with both his hands in his pockets. Whiffs of his Havana, and scraps of the opera-tune which he was humming, came in at the open window, to those who yet remained. My Lady had much too good taste to dislike the smell of good tobacco, and the air which he had chosen was a favourite one with her; perhaps Master Walter hummed it upon that account. He was to leave the Abbey next day to join his regiment—although not immediately. It was only natural he should wish to spend a few days in London after he had had so much of the quiet of Mirk, and yet my Lady grudged them. How

pleasant everything about him was; how dull the Abbey would be without him; what a sad pity it was that he and Sir Richard got on so ill. If she were to die, would they not turn their backs on one another for ever, and be brothers no more; and if something worse than Death were to happen to her—No, she would not think of that. Had not all that could be done to avert such utter ruin been done that very morning? There was surely no immediate peril now—no necessity for such excessive caution and self-restraint as she had been obliged of late months to exercise; it was something to have breathing-space and liberty.

'I hope you are coming with us to the picnic, Lady Lisgard, now that that horrid man has gone?' said a cold quiet voice.

My Lady, looking out of window at her favourite son, and lost in gloomy depths of thought, had entirely forgotten that she had invited Miss Rose Aynton to bear her company. She did not venture to look upon her questioner's face, though she felt that it was fixed on hers, reading Heaven knew what. How had she dared to think of liberty with this domestic spy under her very roof! What should she answer to this dreadful question? Something this girl must know, or must suspect, or she would never have ventured thus to allude a second time to the man Derrick, after her rebuff in the morning. Above all things, she would follow Mistress Forest's advice, and get Miss Aynton out of Mirk Abbey. She had intended to speak to her respecting what had just occurred at the breakfast-table; that would also offer an opportunity to say something more.

'Yes, Rose, I am going with you to Belcomb. It is a very favourite spot of mine—very. It was about that expedition, partly, that I wished to speak with you. I was about to ask you to be very careful in your conduct towards my sons this day. It is the last time they will be together for weeks, perhaps. Be kind to my poor Richard. Of course, Walter knew nothing of what has passed between you and his brother; but the bow which he drew at a venture sent home a barbed shot.'

Miss Aynton bowed her head.

'You were sorry for that, Rose, I know. You cannot fail to see how irritable he has lately grown, poor fellow. The fact is, he has overestimated the strength of his own powers of self-constraint. Your presence is a perpetual trial to him.' My Lady paused, anticipating some reply to a hint so palpable; but Miss Aynton, who carried her fancy-work in her pocket, continued to develop a pansy in floss silk; and the flower opened in silence.

'Under these circumstances, dear Rose,' pursued my Lady, 'do you not think it would be better—I know how embarrassing it would be to you to propose it, and therefore, although your hostess, I relieve you of the task—do you not think it would, on the whole, be wiser for you to leave us a little sooner than you had intended?'

The humming of the opera tune, and the odour of the Havana, were growing more distinct, and the elastic footfall on the gravel was coming very near.

'If I consulted my own feelings,' returned Miss Aynton, in firm clear tones, 'I should certainly have left Mirk before this, Lady Lisgard.'

'Hush, Miss Aynton, for Heaven's sake!' cried my Lady; 'the window is open.'

'But unless Sir Richard himself,' pursued the girl in more subdued accents, 'releases me from

my promise to remain until after his birthday, I must, with your permission, madam, do so; otherwise, he might possibly imagine that his presence is too great a trial for me, and I should be loath indeed to have my departure so misconstrued.'

There was bitterness in the tone with which she spoke, but determination too.

'I am to understand, then,' returned my Lady flushing, 'that contrary to my advice and wish'—

'Mother, dear, here comes the Break,' cried Master Walter, from the terrace beneath, in his ringing cheerful tones. 'I hope you have told Roberts about the prog.'

'Yes, dear, yes,' answered my Lady, lovingly even in her haste; then turning to the young girl, she whispered almost fiercely: 'At least, Miss Aynton, you will shape your behaviour this afternoon as I requested. There is no time now to discuss the other matter.' And indeed the butler entered the next moment with: 'The Break is at the door, my Lady.'

Now, the Break was a very roomy vehicle, with accommodation within it for three times the party who were now about to occupy it, beside two seats at the back, like flying buttresses, for footmen. Yet Sir Richard chose to sit upon the box beside the driver, a place only selected (unless for smoking purposes) by persons with 'horsey' characteristics, who prefer coachman's talk to that of their equals, and among whom the baronet could not be justly classed; but the fact was, the young man was in an evil temper, and desired no companionship but his own. He would have seen the whole expedition at the bottom of the sea—a metaphor open to the gravest objections, but which he used while arguing the matter with himself aloud—if it were not that that fellow Walter was going—and—and—he was not going to let him have all the talk to himself, that was all. True, Sir Richard had given up the idea of transforming Miss Aynton into Lady Lisgard; but still it was not pleasant to see another man making himself exclusively agreeable to her. He was annoyed with himself at having exhibited such passion at the breakfast-table, for the more he thought of it, the more he felt convinced that Walter's remark, although doubtless intended to be offensive, had not been made with any knowledge of his own rejected suit. Still, he was in a very bad temper, and listened to the conversation going on behind his back with a moody brow, and every now and then a parting of the lips, through which escaped something the reverse of a prayer.

It was Walter, of course, who was talking.

'Inhabited!' said he in answer to some question of Miss Aynton's; 'O dear, no. Belcomb never had a tenant but once, and I should think would never have another. One Sir Heron Grant and his brother took it two years for the shooting-season; a brace of Scotchmen whose ancestors dated from the Deluge, but so dreary a couple, that one wished that the family had started from a still earlier epoch, and been all washed away.'

'I thought Richard rather liked Sir Heron,' observed Letty simply.

'Yes, because he was a baronet; and birds of the same gorgeous plumage flock together, you know. There was nothing remarkable about him but his feathers, and he scarcely ever opened his mouth except to put food in it. It is said that in the old stage-coach times, he and his brother travelled from Edinburgh to London, and only uttered one

sentence apiece. At York, the younger brother saw a rat come out of a wheat-rick. "By Jove," cried he, "there's a rat!" The next morning, and after an interval of about eighty miles, Sir Heron replied: "Ay, if Towser had seen that rat, he would have made short work of him."

'Well, it appears, they agreed, at all events,' returned Rose coldly. 'After all, even a foolish remark is better than an ill-natured one.'

'The scenery is getting well worth your attention here,' observed Sir Richard, turning graciously round towards Miss Aynton. 'Belcomb is a complete solitude, but for those who are contented with the pleasures of the country, it is a pleasant spot enough.'

'Can we see the house from here, Sir Richard?'

'No, not until we reach this Windmill, on the top of the hill. The private road branches out from the highway at that spot; and the mill is the nearest inhabited house to Belcomb.—By the by, mother, Hathaway must be spoken to about those sails of his—there, you saw how even old Jenny started at them—it is positively dangerous for horses to pass by. He must build up that old wall a foot higher, and put a gate up. Any stray cattle might wander in and get knocked down—the sails are so close to the ground.'

Master Walter had not at all relished Miss Aynton's rejoinder to his story; still less had he liked his brother's striking into the conversation; least of all did he approve of this landlord talk about repairs and alterations, which reminded him of his being a younger son, and having neither part nor lot in the great Lisgard heritage.

'There's the Folly,' cried he suddenly, with a view of changing the subject; 'upon that cliff-like hill yonder above that belt of trees.'

'What, that beautiful ivied tower!' exclaimed Rose.

'Yes; without a roof to it.'

'Well, at all events, it's very pretty,' said Miss Aynton reprovingly. 'I am sure, Mr Walter, you ought to be grateful to your grandpapa for building so picturesque an edifice.'

'He might have made a road, however, to it,' observed Walter satirically; 'a road and a roof, I do consider to be indispensable.'

'There's a beautiful winding path through the wood, Rose,' said Letty, 'fifty times better than any road; and is not the piece of water charming? It is the only one with any pretension to be called a Lake in all the county.'

Certainly Belcomb deserved praise. A small but comfortably furnished house, embosomed in trees, through which were the pleasantest peeps of hill and dale, and spread before it quite a crystal tarn, with rocky islands so picturesquely grouped that they almost gave the notion of being artificial. It was as though a segment of the Lake country had been cut off, and inserted into the very midst of Wexhamshire.

It was as lonely, too, to all appearance, as any Cumberland mere. An old man and his wife, who were in charge of the place, came hurrying out with respectful welcomes, and the latter was about to remove the shutters of the drawing-room, when my Lady interposed.

'No, Rachel; we will not trouble you to do that. We are going to picnic at the Tower. You seem quite surprised to see us so early. I suppose nobody has been here yet upon the same errand.'

'Well, no, ma'am; nor is it likely, after your orders'—

'Oh, the fact is, mother,' interrupted Sir Richard with a little stammer, 'I forgot to tell you about it; but Rinkel informs me there has been considerable damage done by parties coming here from Dalwynch and other places, and therefore he has put up a Notice to prohibit the whole thing in future.'

And, indeed, upon the path leading to 'the Folly,' which could be approached by another way than that in front of the house, they presently came upon a board recently erected, which threatened Trespassers with all the rigour of the law.

There was a bitter sneer upon Captain Lisgard's handsome face, at this assumption of authority upon the part of his brother, and it did not soften when my Lady thoughtfully remarked: 'Ah, well; that will certainly make the place very private.'

A curious reply, as Letty thought, at the time, for her mother to make, who was always so eager to oblige her neighbours, and who well knew how popular Lisgard's Folly was with the humbler class of townfolk in the summer months. But she was destined to be vastly more astonished before that day was spent.

The little party, so strangely out of accord with one another, took their lunch, indeed, beneath the shadow of the Tower; but all those harmonious elements which are so absolutely essential to the success of a picnic were wanting. There were no high spirits, no good-humoured badinage, and not the ghost of a laugh. My Lady, singularly silent even for her, gazed around her on the familiar landscape, or regarded the shuttered cottage with a mournful interest, as though they reminded her of happier times. Miss Aynton, careful of what my Lady had enjoined, was studiously urbane to Sir Richard, but without obtaining the wished-for result; for while the baronet was thereby only rendered tolerably gracious, the captain grew intensely irritated. Poor Letty, who was the only one prepared to be agreeable, or had any expectation of enjoying herself, felt immensely relieved when the repast was concluded, and the horses were ordered to be 'put to.' As for strolling about the grounds, and pointing out their varied beauties to Rose, as she had counted upon doing, that was no longer to be thought of. Sir Richard, as usual, offered his arm in stately fashion to his mother; but Master Walter, lighting a cigar, stood for a few minutes looking down with knitted brow upon the lake, then sauntered after them, without saying a word, and with both hands in his pockets.

'Dear Rose,' cried Letty, who watched these proceedings with little short of terror, 'what have you said to make Walter so cross? I never saw him behave like that in my life. He did not even look at you. Would it be very wrong if you just ran after him, and said a word or two before we got into the carriage? I am so dreadfully afraid of a quarrel between him and Richard.'

'Just as you please, Letty,' returned Miss Aynton, looking pale, and a little frightened too; and forcing a laugh, she tripped down the zigzag path in pursuit of the exasperated captain.

Letty waited a reasonable time, watching the footman collect the débris of the entertainment, and pack the plate, and then, supposing their difficulty had been adjusted, followed upon the track of her friend and Walter. The path was

not only of considerable length, but so very steep, that one little zigzag overhung another; thus, as she descended, she perceived through the thin Spring foliage the two young people standing beneath her, although they were quite unconscious of her approach. She caught the last words of something Rose was saying; those were: 'Walter, dear.' She marked the girl stretch her arms towards him, as though she would have clasped them round his neck; and then she saw Captain Lisgard, of her Majesty's Light Dragoons, put her roughly by, shake himself free of her with a movement expressive almost of loathing, and turn upon his heels with an oath.

CHAPTER XIX.—THE FINESSE IN TRUMPS.

It is the Night before the Derby. The West End is thronged with men. The streets are perceptibly more thronged with well-dressed males than at any other time in the year. The May meetings brought enough of parsons and sober-coated laity to dull the living tide—to almost make us Londoners a mournful people (which we are, naturally, *not*, despite what Frenchmen say); but those grave ones have either departed from us, or are now lost and undistinguishable in this influx of gay company. All the new-comers are in their most gorgeous raiment, for is not this the great 'gaudy' week of the Wicked? Half the officers of cavalry in her Majesty's service have obtained leave of absence for eight-and-forty hours upon urgent private affairs; and a fourth of the infantry have done the like; they have come up from every station within the four seas to see the great race run, which is to put in their pockets from five pounds to fifty thousand. Over their little books they shake their shining heads, and stroke their tawny moustaches in a deprecating manner, but each one has a secret expectation that 'he shall pull it off this once;' for, upon the whole, our military friends have not been fortunate in turf transactions. There is a fair sprinkling, too, of respectable country gentlemen, who rarely leave their families to occupy their old-bachelor quarters at *Long's* or the *Tavistock*, except on this supreme occasion. Every fast university-man who can obtain an *exeat* upon any pretence whatever—from sudden mortality in the domestic circle down to being *subpenaed* by a friendly attorney in the supposititious case of Hookey (a blind man) v. Walker—is up in town resplendent, confident, Young. Every sporting farmer, save those in the north, who have a private saturnalia of their own in the mid-autumn, has left his farm for two nights and a day, and is seeing life in London. Besides these, an innumerable host of well-dressed scoundrels—for whom the word 'Welcher' is altogether too commendable—have come up from country quarters, where they have been playing various 'little games,' all more or less discreditable, to work together for evil with their metropolitan *confères* for four days.

Every haunt of dissipation is holding highest holiday. The stupid, obscene Cider Cellars find, for one night at least, that they have attractions still; the music-halls are tropical with heat and rankest human vegetation; Cremorne, after the crowded theatres have disgorged their steaming crowds, is like a fair. The strangers' room at all the clubs has been bespoken this night for weeks. In the card-rooms, the smoking-rooms,

the billiard-rooms, there is scarcely space to move, far less to breathe in; yet there is everywhere a babblement of tongues, and the words that are most banded about from feverish mouth to mouth, are first, *The King*, and secondly, *Menelaus*. The tout had kept his word—either from fear or nicest honour—until the stipulated week had elapsed, and then the news of the trial-race began to circulate: from his outsiders' place, to that of fourth favourite, then of third, and at last to that of second had 'the French horse' gradually risen. A curious and illogical position enough—but then the turf people are illogical—for if the news that he had beaten *The King* was true, he ought to have been first favourite; and if the news was not true, he had no reason to find favour at all. As it was, however, *The King* had come down half a point as if to meet him, to 9 to 2; while *Menelaus* stood at 5 to 1.

And Had that trial-race really taken place or not? and if so, Was it on the Square? was the question which was just then agitating the Houses of Lords and Commons (nay, it was whispered, Marlborough House itself), and all the mess-tables in her Majesty's service, more than any other subject in this world. There was also a vague rumour that the favourite's 'understandings' were not as they should be; that there was a contraction that might be fatal to his prospects; that the idol's feet were of clay. Ralph Derrick had 'put the pot on' his *Many Laes*, and would be a millionaire if he won; but Walter Lisgard had put more than the pot. If the French colours did not shew in front at the winning-post, the captain, still to use the elegant metaphor of the sporting fraternity, would be in Queer Street. So infuriated had the young man grown, that he had absolutely hedged even that one bet which insured him a thousand pounds in case *The King* should win the race. Notwithstanding his coyness in accepting the first offer of a loan from his uncultivated friend, he had borrowed of him twice since, in each case giving his I.O.U., whereby he endeavoured to persuade himself that he was liquidating all obligation; yet, unless he considered his mere autograph was worth the sums for which it was pledged, I know not how he succeeded in this. For if *Menelaus* did not happen to win, he not only would not have enough to discharge his debts of honour for nearly two years—when he would come into possession of his patrimony of five thousand pounds—but even a great portion of that would be bespoken. Thus, of course, he had placed himself, through mere greed, in a most unpleasant position; but at the same time it must be allowed that he had yielded to a great temptation, such as would probably have made the mouth of any financier water, had the opportunity offered in his particular line; for with the exception of mere outsiders, *The King* had beaten every horse that was to contend with him on the morrow; and *Menelaus*, to Walter's certain knowledge, had beaten *The King*.

Equinely speaking, then, it was a certainty that the French horse should win the Derby, in which case the young man's gains would be prodigious; for not only had he taken advantage of the original position of the animal in the betting, but as the odds grew less and less, had still backed him, until his possible winnings reached, on paper, to five figures; on the other hand, by this last piece of imprudence,

his possible— But no, it was not possible 'Things surely wouldn't go so devilish cross with a fellow as that;' or to put the captain's thought in other words, the Government of the Universe being founded upon just principles, would never permit such a stupendous misfortune to overwhelm him; or, it might be, the gallant captain believed that Fortune was indeed a female, and would therefore hesitate to inflict calamity upon so pretentious a fellow as himself. At the same time, the events of the morrow was so big with fate, that it was not pleasant to dwell upon it; and anything which could have prevented his mind from recurring to the same, would have been welcomed gladly. But there was but one thing that had the power to do this. His anxiety was far too deep to be flattered away by the smile of Beauty, or lost in the sparkle of Wine. The homœopathic treatment, *similia similibus*, he felt was the only one that could now give him relief, and he therefore sought for rest from the cares of the race-course in the excitement of the gaming-table. Do not, however, let it be supposed that the captain sought out any of those convenient establishments for the immediate transfer of property, which are guarded by iron doors, and always liable to the incursions of the police, who, upon breaking in, discover four-and-twenty gentlemen (one of whom has swallowed the dice), sitting round a green baize table in conversation about Music and the Fine Arts. Master Walter was rash in his speculations, but he was not madman enough to play chicken-hazard against foxes.

'I think I shall try my luck with the *Landrails* to-night,' observed he to his companion Derrick, stopping short in flaring Piccadilly, and biting his nails. The two men had been occupying lodgings in the same house, the *Turf Hotel* being full; the younger finding a species of comfort in the society of the part-owner of *Menelaus*, who was even more confident of the success of that noble quadruped than himself.

'By all means, my lad,' returned the goldfinder simply, 'although I don't know what they are and so as you take me with you, I don't care.'

Three weeks ago, such a proposition would have staggered the captain, or rather, he would have rejected it point-blank. To be seen in public with his uncouth and flashily-attired friend, was at that time a considerable trial to the fastidious light dragoon; but the immense interest which they had in common, had rendered the familiarity of the once-odious Orson at first tolerable, and eventually welcome, and even necessary. He had taken him with him into quite exclusive circles, and, except on one occasion at the *Rag*, where Derrick, having drunk more champagne than was good for him, had offered to fight Major Pompus of the Fusiliers for what he liked, nothing unpleasant had taken place in consequence. Men observed: 'What a deuced rum fellow Lisgard brought with him the other night;' but the said stranger had lost his money very good-naturedly at the whist-table, and it was understood that he had more to lose. Under such circumstances, the gentlemen-players were very charitable. Mr Ralph Derrick did not play a first-rate game at whist; very few persons who have not been brought up in good society do; but his performance was not so inferior as to make success impossible for a night, or two, however certain the ruin that would have overtaken him in the long-run. Moreover, he was

never 'put off his head' by the largeness of the stake, his habitual lavishness in money-matters rendering him indifferent to that matter. Captain Liscard, on the other hand, though an excellent player, considering his tender years, was liable to have his nerves disorganised at any crisis of a rubber upon which an unusual amount depended.

'Yes,' repeated Master Walter, 'I'll try my luck at the *Landrails*, and you shall come, too, Ralph. Any member has a right to introduce whom he likes.'

'Even a miner from Cariboo—eh, Master Walter, provided he's got money in his pocket? Well, I'm their man, whether it's for whist or all-fours.'

'All-fours!' repeated the captain with irritation. 'Who ever heard of a gentleman playing at that game? Do, pray, be particular in what you say to-night. Whatever you do, call a knave a knave, and not a *Jack*. The *Landrails* is a very select place, Ralph, where men who like to play their whist more quietly than at the *Rag* look in for an hour or two rather late.'

'Heavier stakes, I suppose?' observed Derrick bluntly.

'Yes, rather. You see, there's always some row with the committee, if play gets beyond a certain height at the regular clubs. Now, this is a sort of friendly circle where the points are quite optional, and the bets too. Yes, I think I shall try my luck for a pony or two.'

'I don't think you look quite fit for whist, my lad, to-night,' returned Derrick, gazing gravely into the young man's haggard face. 'To-morrow will be a trying day, remember; I think you had much better get to bed.'

'I couldn't do it, man!' replied Walter vehemently—'I dare not. I should never sleep a wink, and perhaps go mad with thinking before the morning. Look here, how my hand trembles. I have not nerves of iron, like you.'

'Poor lad, poor lad!' ejaculated the other with affectionate compassion. 'Nothing, as you say, ever makes me tremble—except D. T. Ah, Heaven, but that is terrible! Never drink, lad, never drink;' and something like a shudder throbbed through the speaker's brawny frame.

'The *Landrails* meet here,' said Walter, stopping at the door of a private house in the neighbourhood of St James's Palace; 'it is past eleven, and I dare say play has begun.'

'Who owns this house?' asked Derrick carelessly, surveying the unpretending tenement in question—'or rather, who pays the rent?'

'Well, I hope we shall, Ralph, this evening. The fact is, the hire of the rooms, the attendance, and even the cost of the refreshments, are all defrayed each night by the winners in proportion to their gains. Money does not change hands until the ensuing week, but the secretary enters all accounts in his ledger, and sees that they are duly squared. I am answerable for your liabilities to-night, so do you be careful with the liquors.'

As the youthful Mentor administered this wholesome piece of advice to his senior, the door opened, and they were admitted. It was a most respectable house, neither very large nor very small, and neatly but inexpensively furnished. The butler was a man who might have been the body-servant of an evangelical bishop, and whose conscience was troubled by the spiritual shortcomings of his right reverend master. To come upon so grave and sad a man upon the eve of the Derby Day, was quite a

homily in itself. Through the open door of the dining-room could be seen a cold collation, at which men dropped in from above-stairs if they felt so disposed; but there were light refreshments in the drawing-room also, and a great variety of pleasant drinks. The *Landrails* were thirsty folks, and imbibed gallons of iced hock and Seltzer water; but they had not, as a rule, good appetites. There were three tables for whist, and one dedicated to piquet or *écarté*. All these had massive candlesticks screwed into their woodwork—perhaps only to prevent their falling off; but it also put a stop to any possible use of them as a weapon or missile, and I think that contingency had been also taken into account. A candlestick comes uncommonly handy to the fingers when luck has gone pertinaciously against one, and the man who has won all the money is personally hateful. Above all things, it was important, in that quiet, friendly circle, to repress all ebullition of temper, and to steer clear of all disputes. Nobody, one would hope, who was in a position to be admitted to that society would stoop to cheating; but a little strap was inserted at the opposite corners of each table for the convenience of marking the score, wherein, when the counters were once placed, they could not be accidentally removed by the elbow.*

The spacious room—for it was a double drawing-room—was by no means brilliantly lit up; a couple of bare wax-candles stood upon the refreshment-table, where, by the by, there was no attendant, each man helping himself at pleasure; but the other four pair in the room had shades over them, which dulled their radiance, although it caused them to throw a very bright light upon the tables themselves. When the new-comers entered, which they did quite unannounced, the sight struck one of them at least as a very strange one: three shining isles of light—for one whist-table was not in use—amid a sea of gloom; ten thoughtful faces with a sort of halo round them, and one or two sombre ones standing by like their evil genii, and watching the play. There was not a sound to be heard at first, except the dull fall of the pieces of pasteboard, but presently a hand being finished in their neighbourhood, a sort of hushed talk began about what would have happened if somebody had under-played the diamond.

'What are the points?' whispered Derrick in his companion's ear.

'What are the points to-night, Beamish?' inquired Walter of one of the four, a very unimpassioned-looking young man, who replied with a most unpleasant and ghastly smile—as though he had cut his throat a little too high up: 'Fives and fifties, my gallant captain, with the odds in ponies; so, being a younger son, I advise you to go to some other table.'

'Never mind, I am going to make a good marriage,' returned Walter coolly. Mr Beamish had been a penniless government clerk until he wedded the widow of an opulent builder with half a town for her jointure. 'If you are not full,' added the captain, 'I declare in here, for myself and friend.'

All four looked up for an instant at the threatened stranger; for your good player, intent

* Persons who are acquainted with the game of whist have informed me, that it is sometimes better—in the case of holding two by honours, for instance—to be at three than four.

on gain, detests the introduction of an unknown hand. Somehow or other, although the odds are two to one, 'it's always his cursed luck to have him for a partner.' General Prim, who had been a martinet in the Peninsula, and as offensive to his fellow-creatures as less favourable circumstances had permitted ever since, gave a ferocious grin, and shook his single scalp-lock of gray hair like a malignant pantaloons. The Hon. Pink Hawthorne, attaché at the court of Christiana, but absent from that lively capital upon sick-leave, wrenched his fair moustache this way and that, and frowned as gloomily as his foolish forehead would permit. The dealer, a Mr Roberts, an ancient bencher of one of the Inns of Court, paused with the trump card in his fingers still unturned. 'Does your friend know what the Blue Peter means, Lisgard?'

'I've been a sailor half my life, sir, and it's devilish odd if I did not,' returned Ralph Derrick grimly.

'What the devil did the fellow mean?' added he to Walter as the game began, and all the four became at once automatons.

'It's the new system of asking for trumps,' answered Walter peevishly. 'The same thing that they called the Pilot the other night. How ridiculous you have made yourself. See, there's another table up. Bless the man, not there, that's the piquet place.'

Ralph had quietly seated himself next to Major Piccalilli, of the Irregular Cavalry, Cayenne Station, Upper India, and had already disturbed his marking-cards, whereby that gallant officer was reduced to the verge of apoplexy with speechless rage.

'Stay, you shall stick to this one,' continued Walter in a low voice; 'that fellow Beamish is hateful to me—and I will cut in yonder. There is not a muff-table in the room—all these beggars play too well.' With these words, the Captain hurried away; and as soon as the rubber he had been watching was finished, Derrick was admitted of the conclave, to the exclusion of General Prim, who cursed that circumstance very audibly, and for a man of his advanced years, with considerable emphasis and vigour. Derrick fell as a partner to the lot of the gentleman who had inquired as to his proficiency in the art of asking for trumps.

'If you would only hold your cards a *little* more on the table, I should be able to see them myself,' remarked Mr Roberts with severity.

'If they look over my hands, sir,' returned Derrick reassuringly, 'I'll forgive 'em: that's all.—If you won't take that old gentleman's bets'—referring to the general, who seemed extremely anxious to back their adversaries—'then I will; and he did it—and luck went with him. There was nothing stronger than champagne to be got at in that respectable place of business, so Ralph kept his head, and won—a hundred and fifty pounds or so. Then, the table breaking up, he rose and stood over his young friend, to see how the cards were going with him.

'Bad,' muttered Derrick to himself, as he watched Walter running through his hand with eager haste, as a woman flirts her fan. His beautiful face was dark with care, his eyes flashed impatiently upon the man whose turn it was to lead.

'Our odds are in fifties, eh, Lisgard?' drawled his right-hand adversary, Captain and Lieutenant Wobegon of the Horse Guards' azure.

'The same as before, I suppose,' returned the young man haughtily.

Ralph gave a prolonged whistle. His young friend had a treble up, and the others nothing, so that he must be betting two hundred and fifty pounds to one hundred; and 'the same as before' too! Within the next minute, the cards were thrown down upon the table, and the adversaries scored a treble likewise. 'That's been my cursed luck, Ralph, all to-night!' cried the young man with a little grating laugh. 'Four by honours against one every deal.'

'You must have been doing something devilish bad, Lisgard,' observed the Guardsman.

'Yes, I have—playing!' answered Walter bitterly. 'But no fellow can play with sixes and sevens; it demoralises one so.'

'All cards do, my grandmother says,' answered Wobegon, who for a Guardsman was not without humour. 'She made me promise, when she paid my debts, my first Derby, that I would never back anything again; and I never have, except my luck and bills.'

Captain Lisgard had naturally a keen appreciation of fun, but he did not vouchsafe a smile to the facetious Guardsman, who himself joked like an undertaker, and had never been known to laugh in his life. The fact was, that nothing could just now commend itself to Master Walter except winning back his money.

Reader, did you ever play for more than you can afford? Pardon me the inquiry; there is no occasion to be Pharisaical; for it is even possible to do worse things than that in your own line: moreover, the question of what is more than you can afford is such a large one, and affords such opportunities for a nimble conscience to escape. I remember in Lord Houghton's *Life of Keats*, that that gallant nobleman, in defending the poet from the charge of dissipation and gambling, remarks that it all arose from his having lost ten pounds upon a certain evening at cards. Now, considering that the author of *Hyperion* had no income, nor any bank except his Imagination to apply to—and it was notorious that he could never put a cheque even upon that—I take his Lordship to be a very charitable peer. Ten pounds must have been, for Keats, a large sum. But, undoubtedly, the matter is one for a man to decide for himself; the whole question is relative; and if you are apt to lose your temper, then remember you play for more than you can afford, although your stakes are but penny-stamps. Captain Walter Lisgard had lost his temper and his money also. There was a numbed sense of misfortune pervading him; it seemed to him as though he was Predestinated to lose. I am much mistaken if he had not a sort of humming in his ears. One of the most religious men whom it has been my fortune to meet, has informed me that, in his unregenerate days, when he was a gambler and everything else,* he once *prayed to win* at cards.

'Then it strikes me,' said I, 'in addition to your other backslidings at the time you speak of, you were just a trifle blasphemous.'

'No, sir,' said he; 'I think not. All that I possessed in the world was depending upon the result

* 'Every sin, sir, in the Decalogue, I am glad to say, have I committed'—meaning that the present change in him was rendered thereby all the more satisfactory—'with the sole exception of murder.'

of a certain game at écarté. If I had lost it, I should have been a beggar. If I won it, I resolutely resolved never to touch a card again—never to run the risk of experiencing a second time the mental agony I was then undergoing. I am not ashamed to confess, sir, that in such a strait I prayed to win; and I *did* win.'

'All I have to say, sir,' replied I, 'is this: that it was uncommonly hard upon the other man.'

Good resolutions are indeed by no means uncommon among tolerably young persons in positions of pecuniary peril, such as that of Captain Lissard. They vow their candles to this and that patron saint if they should but escape shipwreck upon the green baize this once. Master Walter's bid was confined to a few 'dips,' if one may use so humble a metaphor, of which about fifty went to the pound, and even those were not offered in a penitent spirit. He would never play whist with the *Landrails* any more. He would never lay the long odds beyond 'counters'—a foolish word he and his set used for sovereigns. He would never back himself at all when playing with 'that fool Pompus'—his present partner. He would become, in short, exceedingly wise and prudent, if he should only 'pull off' this present rubber. There was 'life in the Mussel' yet. They were at 'three all' when Pompus led his knave instead of his ten, from ten, knave, king, and only got the trick when he should have got the game.

'We shall never have another chance now,' sighed Walter, as his left-hand adversary turned up the queen. But privately he thought that fortune would not be quite so cruel as all that came to; moreover, he had an excellent hand. His fingers trembled as he arranged the long suit of clubs, headed by tierce major, and saw that he had four trumps to bring them in with.

As the game went on, however, Pompus exhibited his usual feebleness, and things began to look very black indeed. In the third round of trumps, Master Walter's memory left him sudden as an extinguished taper. It is sad to have to say it of so excellent a player, but he recollected nothing whatever, except that, if he lost that rubber, it would be an addition of three hundred pounds to the sum he already owed Captain Wobegon. It was his turn to play, and he was third hand. He had the king and ten of trumps. The ace had been played; ay, he remembered that after a struggle, and the knave too. Yes, his left-hand adversary had played the knave. Should he finesse his ten or not? That was the question, upon the decision of which depended some five hundred pounds. Whist is not always a game of pleasure. Master Walter finessed the ten. 'Thousand devils!' cried Derrick with a tremendous imprecation, 'why the queen was turned up on your left, lad: you have thrown away the game.' And it was so. Walter Lissard did not speak a word; but having compared his note-book with that of Captain Wobegon, retired into a little office out of the back drawing-room, where the secretary of the *Landrails* entered the members' somewhat complicated little accounts with one another in a very business-like looking ledger. 'You have had a bad night of it for you, sir,' remarked this gentleman quietly; 'you generally hold your own.'

'Yes. What is the cursed total?'

'Eighteen hundred.'

'Ralph Derrick,' said Walter Lissard, as the two walked up St James's Street towards their lodgings

for bath and breakfasts, but scarcely for bed, since the morning was already far advanced—'if any horse but *Menelaus* wins the race, I am a ruined man.'

THE RURAL ECONOMY OF SWITZERLAND.

THERE is perhaps no country in Europe which allures to itself so many travellers as Switzerland. From far and near, north, east, south, and west, an annual tide of visitors cross its boundaries, and spreading themselves over this favoured land, bask in the sunshine of its smile.

Though of small circumference, and insignificant as compared with the powerful states by which it is surrounded, Switzerland yet possesses characteristics which have established its social position, and left it in some respects unrivalled among nations. Like one of her own smiling valleys, embedded in walls of solemn grandeur, Switzerland lies ensconced within the heart of Europe, her Alpine heights and mountain fortresses determining the boundary-line of her dominions; and secure in these, her native fortresses, she has hitherto repelled the attacks of political aggression.

Notwithstanding, however, the number of travellers who visit Switzerland in summer for its scenic attractions, but little of its rural economy is yet known, nor perhaps is this to be so much wondered at, for the impression made on the mind of man by the sublime scenery through which he passes, is of so overpowering a kind, that under the first blush of enthusiastic admiration, there is no room left for the more practical questions which labour and necessity invoke. The inflated mind, as it drinks in the beauties of creation, forgets that in those mighty Alps which rise in majestic confusion around, we read of a convulsed and ruined world; in the wild poetry of the rugged rocks, the groans of a desolate creation; and in the stunted firs which fringe the frozen surface of the heights, the cry of a barren vegetation.

True, nature associates with these harsh outlines softer influences, for rich forests, verdant slopes, and graceful vineyards colour the landscape, each adding its quota to form one glorious whole, while the very dispositions of the soil and climate furnish rich stores of wealth, which repay laborious toil by certain gain.

The productions of the country are not limited to such as correspond to man's bodily wants only, for innumerable treasures, suited to satisfy the hunger of the soul in its search after knowledge, lie either embedded in its soil, or scattered over the surface of the earth. There the painter, the naturalist, the geologist, the botanist, all, in fact, who feed their mind on nature's boundless stores, may find endless work and endless themes for praise. It is in the mountains especially that the rural economy of Switzerland is best understood, for there, by a personal acquaintance with the peasantry, and a close observation of their industry and hardihood, one learns the practical value of every portion of that earth, which, seen at a distance, seems but an arrangement of nature to captivate the eye and elevate the soul.

The rude quarry, the distant mountain-heights, the verdant slopes, the dark forests, and sloping vineyards, each furnishes to the Swiss people the

means of livelihood; and severe and rigorous are the lives led by those mountaineers whose existence depends on the cultivation of the high pastures, or the still more dangerous labour involved in felling the woods and transporting the timber for fuel to the plains below. In studying the rural economy of the Swiss cantons, they must not, like other countries, be classed by their geographical position on the globe; their vegetation depends not on their situation, but on the difference of their respective altitudes. By these altitudes the climate is determined, and on the climate depend the vegetation and produce extracted from them.*

The various altitudes which distinguish the cantons of Switzerland are divided by agriculturists into three distinct zones, each having its own peculiar characteristic and pastoral value. The first of these zones corresponds with the level of the hills, commencing at 643 feet, beginning at the border of Lake Maggiore, in the canton of Tessin, and at 1156 feet on the shores of Lake Lemman, and rising 2500 feet above. Upon these levels are cultivated wheat, barley, and other crops of grain, the vine, which is an abundant source of profit to Switzerland, and rich supplies of fruit. The second zone includes the lower mountain-ranges, and within its limits the larger portion of Switzerland is found. Its altitudes are from 2500 to 5000 feet; and one of its principal features is the large and thick forests of pine, beech, and larch which adorn its heights.

Above this rises the Alpine zone, upon the steep slopes of which rich pasture-grounds are found, where thousands of cows are annually fed. This zone ranges from 8000 to 10,000 feet, till it reaches the boundary-line where vegetation ceases, and eternal snows and glaciers take its place. Although agriculturists have thus defined the different heights according to the especial characteristics of each zone, they are often found to intertrench on one another.

Within the various heights are found three distinct geological formations, the nature of the rocks being in uniformity with the heights to which they attain. In the lower range of the country—namely, that of the hills which extend over the great basin lying between the Central Alps and the Jura chain—the rocks belong to the peculiar formation called *molasse* or limestone. In the mountains which rise above these hills, even some of the heights of the Bernese Oberland, the constitution of the rock is entirely calcareous. Again, above, in the chain of the Valais Mountains, the groups of the Bernina, Albula, and Selvetta, crystalline and metamorphic formations, such as granite, are found.

The most characteristic feature in the rural economy of Switzerland is decidedly that of its pasture-lands, which, forming a stable source of profit to the country, are cultivated with praiseworthy industry. Wherever the eye can detect the smallest patch of verdure, there some hardy mountaineer will be found ready to drive up his cow to the solitary spot, for the sake of the feed; or if beyond the reach of the four-footed beast, he will himself ascend, mow the grass, and binding it in bundles, either carry it down on his back, or

drag it to the nearest precipice, and roll it over into the plain below, where he can secure it on his descent. Many of these grass-plots are in such inaccessible nooks, that it is quite a service of danger to reach them, yet the heights around are annually scaled, and the tiny crops of hay secured by the intrepid peasant for winter forage.

It is calculated that, including cows, horses, sheep, and goats, no less than a million and a half of cattle are annually fed on the mountain pastures of Switzerland. In certain cantons, there are very strict rules in connection with the grazing of these animals; legislation determining the exact number of beasts that may be sent to feed on each separate pasturage.

As the wealth of each mountain canton is calculated by the number of cows nourished on its heights, it becomes an object of watchful care to prevent if possible the intrenchments made on the pasturages by the fall of avalanches, which, burying in their course fragments of rocks, stones, and loose earth, cover the ground, and destroy all vegetation. These avalanches frequently occur in spring, and the devastations they make are only prevented by such precautions as raising barriers to divert their course, and especially in guarding from the woodman's axe those forests which, situated above, serve as a natural protection to the green swards beneath. These forests are, however, frequently destroyed in order to procure fuel; and then the climate below having depended on their warmth, becomes colder, and reacts on the vegetation, which directly seeks a lower level.

Notwithstanding every care, great inroads are annually made on the pasturages, and during the last century, they have considerably diminished in number. In certain statistics published by the federal government, the Alpine pasturages appear formerly to have covered an extent of seven hundred and twenty-nine thousand hectares. The heights above cannot resist atmospheric effects; and the action of constant rain and damp, added to the snow, have caused large portions of granite and rock to separate, and these falling heavily, have buried whole districts under their ruin; so that many a green-sward, on which the industrious mountaineer formerly led his flock, or gathered his winter's provision of hay, is now converted into sterile rock, or an eternal glacier. Popular legends abound in this country relative to the disappearance of these pasturages, and the following is one preserved, and in many cases believed, by the simple peasants of Oberhasli, in the Swiss Oberland. I give it as a specimen of many others. 'In the district where the glacier of Gauli now raises its white pyramids, there was once a large Alpine or field which belonged to a rich and beautiful shepherdess called Blümlisalp. Her manner of life was not, however, in accordance with her beauty or position, and she accordingly incurred the displeasure of Heaven. One day, when Blümlisalp was wandering on her Alpine, accompanied by her favourite dog, Rhin, an avalanche descended, and swallowed up herself, her dog, and her herds, leaving no trace even of the pasturage where they dwelt. From that date, the mountain goes by the name of this unfortunate shepherdess; and even to this day the peasants pretend to hear, mid storm and rain, the silvery tinkles of her *troupeur's* bells, the howling of her dog, and her own voice crying to them to take warning, for that she and her dog, Rhin, are condemned to wander through

* The writer is indebted to Monsieur Emile de Lavelere's newspaper *Notes on Switzerland* for much of the information in these articles on the rural economy of that land, many parts being free translations from such abstracts.

all eternity as prisoners on the icy fields of her own rich *Alpago*.

The entire limits of Switzerland extend over four million hectares; and are thus divided: three thousand parts of the entire country are appropriated by lakes, rivers, and insurmountable rocks and glaciers; three thousand six hundred parts are consecrated to pasture-land; the forests occupy one thousand eight hundred; whilst the arable land, including the vineyards, only comprise one thousand five hundred parts. In no part of the globe, therefore, is there so large a portion of the earth devoted to grazing purposes as we find in Switzerland, and as we have before mentioned, one million and a half head of cattle are annually nourished on the heights. These have, however, to be fed during the long winter, when, for at least six months, the fields are buried from four to six feet deep in snow, and it is necessary to provide for the wants of both seasons. The Swiss people divide their pasture-ground into three distinct allotments, encouraging the growth of grass on one for hay; and driving their cattle on another, as soon as the snow melts, to feed during summer. These pastures, on which the grass is left to grow until the mower's scythe is brought into action, are generally found around Alpine villages, and are interspersed with groups of trees and chalets, affording shade and shelter to the peasantry.

In the early spring, these fields are of an exquisite emerald green; they bear an abundant herbage, and after mowing, have the appearance of the most carefully-cultivated lawns. The care bestowed on them is of a uniform description; they are well and thickly manured, and abundantly watered, for in these districts there is generally a good supply of water from the glaciers above, which is conducted, wherever it is needed, by simple wooden pipes laid along the fields.

In a few pastures, where this supply has not been close at hand, an immense amount of labour has been expended on irrigation, and most willingly contributed by the people, on account of the increased richness of vegetation which it produces. The Canton de Valais, for instance, has shewn itself most enterprising in this respect, for a place called *Venthône*, which was very arid and sterile, was successfully irrigated by turning the course of a little river over the land, which flowed many miles off. This was effected by conduits of wood, now attached to the rocks, now laid down across the land, finally inserted through the mountains, till they reached the desired spot. One cannot walk along the fields, in Switzerland, without meeting with little streamlets, half-hidden by the grass, but recognised by the murmuring sound their waters make as they flow down slope after slope, refreshing the earth in their gentle course.

Since, every year, the grass-fields are manured, and vegetation much increased by the process, it has become a difficulty, in the present day, to procure sufficient manure for agricultural purposes, which has led to quite a traffic in that article; and reservoirs are made in which all kinds of decayed matter are hoarded and encouraged, in order to supply the market.

From the immense number of cattle which are housed during the winter, the quantity of straw grown on the arable lands is not sufficient to meet the wants of litterage; and dry leaves and branches of fir-trees are used in large quantities for this purpose. These, of course, also make manure; and

the fields, when spread over with it, look quite black for a time, though a beautiful fine grass springs from under its warmth. The celebration of the hay harvest takes place in the autumn, and is made quite a fête-day among the peasants of these pastoral valleys. It being the only harvest they have to celebrate in the year, and one on which their maintenance depends, the mowers meet in companies, the peasants dance and sing, cider and wine flow abundantly, whilst songs of triumph proclaim, that come what may—winter, storm, and rain—their cattle and themselves are provided for till mowing-time comes again.

The hay made from the Swiss pasture-lands has a most delicious and aromatic smell, and, owing to the ardency of the sun and dryness of the atmosphere, it is so quickly made, that it retains a far greener colour than with us. It is housed in the numerous chalets and dependencies, which are dotted so thickly over the valleys and slopes, and affords many a soft bed to Alpine travellers.

In some few districts in Switzerland, where there are no high pasturages, dire necessity compels the shepherds, when their winter forage is ended, to allow their cows to crop the early blades of grass during the month of May. This, however, invariably spoils the first harvest.

The mowers have a wonderful adroitness in the way in which they perform their work; and to look at one of these fields of grass, directly after it has been mown, it is invariably so even and closely shorn, that one might imagine the razor of some giant barber had passed over the field. The first crop is gathered in June, and the second in August; and unless the season has been bad, the Swiss look to procure from these lower pasturages the wherewithal to feed their cattle during winter, supplemented only by a scanty crop from the *Alps de Mai*, after the cattle have left them for higher ground.

Before, however, we proceed to notice the higher pasture-grounds of Switzerland, we will take a cursory glance at that proportion of the land which is devoted to other than feeding purposes.

Switzerland, after Norway, is the country in Europe which gives the least attention to agriculture in its literal sense. Taking into consideration the culture of the vine even, only one-fifteenth part of the entire land is devoted to industry. It is true that the lower pasture-fields, which embrace an extent of four hundred and eighty-six hectares, might be successfully planted with corn; but as the Swiss depend more on their cattle for profit than anything else, these fields are used in preference for winter forage. In some cantons, no bread-corn whatever is grown; a few small fields of barley and a little Indian corn sown at the bottom of the valleys, serve as an apology for harvest; whilst to meet the deficiency of grain, and supply the nation with what is required for its consumption, public granaries, fed by foreign import, are supported.

Independent of the all-absorbing interest which the pastoral lands involve, there are other reasons which have hitherto militated against the increase of husbandry in Switzerland. The Swiss people are proverbial for their attachment to ancient customs, among which the Levitical system of tithes has until lately been strictly adhered to. This diminution of profit on the produce of arable land, though justly acknowledged, militated against any great competition in husbandry, especially when

more was to be gained by cattle-farming. Again, Swiss agriculturists used formerly to adhere strictly to the ancient triennial rule in the cultivation of land—namely, the succeeding periods of a year of winter harvest, a year of spring harvest, and a year of rest—in which the ground was allowed to run fallow—named in the Old Testament. This system naturally led to a scanty produce; but latterly there has been a more general enlightenment on the subject of agriculture, which has been introduced in the schools and colleges.

The greater portion of the arable land of Switzerland is found in the cantons of Bern, Vaud, Zurich, Argovia, Thurgovia, Soleure, Fribourg, Lucerne, Schaffhausen, and Bâle; and within the last twenty years, it may be said that great ameliorations have certainly taken place in respect to the cultivation of arable land in these districts, besides many useless old customs having been abolished. In Thurgovia, in the valley of Lake Constance, and in the Lower Rhine, the triennial system still, however, continues. In Tessin, on the contrary, thanks to the fertility of the soil, and the impetus given to vegetation by the ardent heat of the sun, the Italian style of culture is adopted; and after the first harvest has been gathered in, the fields are re-sown, and a second *récolte* either of buck-wheat, maize, or millet encouraged.

Up to the present time, the quantity of grain produced is not equivalent to the natural goodness of the soil, or rather what the land might produce, if there were sufficient pains taken to enrich it. The pasture-lands and vineyards require so large an amount of manure, that there is not sufficient left for the agricultural purposes of those lands which are tilled, and the result is a poor and scanty harvest. At present, Switzerland also is far behind other countries in its implements of husbandry, very few of the newer inventions having as yet found their way into the mountain farms; nay, save in a few exceptional cases, the spade and other primitive tools are still used instead of the plough.

No other nation, not even excepting England, will be found on inquiry to be in so dependent a position for the staff of life. The fact, however, speaks for itself as to the industrial interchange of goods that the Swiss must needs carry on with other countries in order to supply their own land with bread; the manufactured articles of Switzerland being found all over the continent of Europe.

During the last century, the potato has been an object of much cultivation among Swiss agriculturists. It is found to bear the mountain climate very well, and, being of rapid growth, is well suited to the short summers of an Alpine country. The peasants use it for food almost as freely as the Irish, and cook it in various ways.

Among other plants, in Switzerland, devoted to industrial purposes, flax and hemp may be noticed; the former especially occupies some portion of every little farm, its bright-blue blossoms forming a pleasing contrast to the green vines or verdant fields between which they bloom.

A great deal of tobacco is grown in the cantons of Fribourg and Vaud, though not nearly enough for the consumption of the country, which, in comparison with its population, is enormous. Switzerland is also rich in fruits, which form no unimportant part of its produce in the spring; and as Swiss experience has decided that the trees do not injure the grass-lands, every available

meadow within reach of surveillance is planted with cherry, pear, apple, and plum trees. These trees grow at elevations as high as two thousand eight hundred feet, and in the Engadine Valley to three thousand six hundred feet.

Of all the fruit-trees in which Switzerland abounds, the vine plays by far the most important part, and is looked on as by far the greatest agricultural product of the country; whilst the produce of the wine is estimated at 200,000 hectolitres (equal to twenty-two English gallons), giving forty-four gallons to every hectare, or two and a half acres of vineyard ground. The cantons in which the vine is most cultivated are those of Vaud, Zurich, St Gall, Argovia, and Schaffhausen.

The woods and forests of Switzerland occupy about eighteen per cent. of the entire country, and the cut wood forms a large portion of product, it being used almost exclusively for building purposes and fuel. It was by studying the formation and growth of the forests, that little by little the effect was remarked which the different altitudes have in determining the vegetation of the country.

AT A FENIAN TRIAL.

THE way to Green Street is a narrow way, and of the Whitechapel type. Old clothes are sold there, and costermongers obtain largely. The court-house is grim as ancient Newgate. Over the front is a sort of balcony, with a contrivance for carrying out the extreme penalty of the law, which has a hungry, and, let us be thankful, a rusty look. Nobody has been hung there these twenty years. And now, having passed the sentinel police, who have all an air of ponderous detectiveness about them ever since Mr Stephens put on his hat and walked out of jail, come with me into a snug berth of which I am tenant by courtesy of the gentlemen of the press. You are struck with the curious 'public' of which the open court is composed. Lay spectators are regularly sandwiched by constables; and those guardians of the peace are everywhere but on the bench.

There is a strange contrast in appearance between the judges—one is lean, with the Gladstonian order of face and manner, colder a little, but not less precise than he, and equally fascinating in the charm of that lucid style, and that agreeable certainty of diction, which causes you always to feel easy about his safe arrival at the end of a sentence; the other is stout and full-blooded, with plenteous waistcoat, but with a massive clever head. The bar is like what the bar is everywhere. The professional carelessness with which everything is done strikes you as curious, when you consider what is to be won or lost by the prisoner. Glancing into the jury-box, I experience a sudden sensation of pain, which, however, is on a personal score; in fact, my tailor is at present upholding the hem of the palladium of liberty, and I am afraid he is under the impression I owe him for several suits; but let that pass. The prisoner is reading the informations sworn against him before the magistrate. He is very good-looking, about thirty years of age, dressed in black, and wearing fashionably-coloured gloves, and a splendid beard and moustache. His trial has occupied the whole of the previous day, and the Solicitor-general

is now concluding on behalf of the crown. He is a terrible little man, that Solicitor-general! He it was who cross-hackled Major Yelverton, and elicited from that gallant officer his private opinion on things in general. Listen to him, and see with what gradual but fatal art he draws away the frail planks upon which the prisoner might hope to escape. You think there is something almost vindictive in the force with which he drives home every telling point, and demolishes the case set up on the other side; but no, he simply does his duty, and any heat he displays comes from that warmth of advocacy which is natural to him, and which has been the prime cause of his success. He speaks at considerable length; and at one portion of his address, the prisoner suddenly leans over the dock, and beckons to his attorney, who, after consulting with his client, whispers to the junior counsel, who stretches across to his leader, who gets up, and begs the Solicitor-general's pardon, but he must correct him in an important date. The Solicitor-general admits the mistake, and the prisoner looks at the jury triumphantly. This occurs twice; and then the court adjourns for half an hour, after which we shall have the judge's charge.

The reporters talk of the case as a surgeon would of a good subject. 'He's likely to make a speech when convicted,' said one gentleman to me, 'and they must keep back our third edition until I return, so I hope it will be over early.' Their Lordships resume their seats; silence is called; the jury become attentive, and the prisoner for the first time appears anxious, and moves to the front of the dock, where he turns his head, as if not to lose a word of the charge. It is delivered by the thin judge.* He commences by going through the story of Fenianism; telling the jury the object of it was to dethrone the Queen, and establish a republic. His Lordship speaks slowly and measuredly, until he comes to mention Stephens, when his tone at once changes, and becomes perceptibly emphatic.† He calls Stephens the arch-conspirator. Talking with him at any time for the last six years was almost as good, or as bad, as penal servitude to all who enjoyed the doubtful privilege of his acquaintance. He went to work to establish a paper on the principle of Fletcher of Saltoun; he could teach the people to defy the law, by inoculating them with seditious ballads, and putting a seditious newspaper into their hands, and of this newspaper the prisoner was a constant, and, it was alleged, an editorial, contributor. It was shewn by documentary evidence that the prisoner was 'Shaun' of that journal, whose verses had so Tyrtean a twang. It was proven that he presided over the mysterious column for correspondents; and that he very often propounded questions to himself of a far from innocent character, for the purpose of having the answers spread abroad. He was Ollamh Fodha, who recommended the early bottling of vitriol, or the timely use of drill-books to the Ollamh Fodha in general. He was the 'Waterford Farmer,' who, it appeared, was anxious to add a Croppy pike to his stock of agricultural utensils; he was the 'Boyne Boy,' who was inquisitive on the score of contemporary history to the extent of requiring the number of troops stationed in Ireland

to be told him; and he was the 'Tipperary Man,' who wanted to know whether he was obliged to stand being spoken of from the altar by Father Benedictus, who hebdomadally anathematised secret societies.

The documentary evidence was irrefutable, and was brought home to the prisoner in a strange, and almost romantic way. A prayer-book was found in his possession containing an entry of his mother's death in most affectionate terms. The judge alluded to the fact as very creditable to the prisoner, whose cheek flushed, and whose eyes quivered at the mention of this. But this very memorandum sealed his fate. On being compared with the manuscript in the *Irish People* office, the handwriting was found to be identical. Then the prisoner's sister, who was produced in her brother's behalf, swore so delicately, nervously, and truthfully, and yet refused to swear the manuscript was *not* in her brother's handwriting, that her testimony, if it bore any way, certainly bore against the accused. And now the judge addressed himself to the case for the prisoner, according to a golden rule, that as the crown spoke last to the jury, the judge should refresh their recollections on the points urged for the defence. He put them fairly, and with a noble leaning to the man in the dock. The man in the dock is nervous enough at this moment; he has taken off his gloves, his fingers are locked together, and from time to time he shakes his head, with a despairing sort of gesture, at some friends near him, especially at one with a silly face, who appears deeply, but stupidly, interested in the proceedings. It is agreeable to follow, towards the conclusion of the charge, the course of the clear judicial intellect through all the devious passages of testimony, of argument, and of law, separating, arranging, untwisting, and sorting it all, for the convenience of the twelve gentlemen in the box. His Lordship finishes at last, having spoken for a full hour, and the jury retire to consider the verdict.

The lamps are lit by this time, and give the court a garish theatrical appearance. The prisoner is conversing earnestly with his attorney, and seems to be dissatisfied with something that had been done, or left undone, for him. And so half an hour goes by, and a sort of fog hangs about the roof of the court,—in which there are many dark and light Rembrandtish corners—and the prisoner is casting such impatient, feverish glances towards the door from which the jury will re-enter, that it pains one to look at him. Another quarter of an hour, and the reporters think they will have to leave without the expected 'sensation' for the last edition. Hush! here they are!

There is an oppressive silence while the clerk of the crown receives a large sheet of paper from the jury, and reads it to himself slowly and deliberately. I look at the prisoner, who is very pale, and catch the two jailers at either side of him nodding to each other, and edging closer to their charge, with a movement of taking possession, as it were, which makes my skin creep.

'Gentlemen, you say the prisoner is Guilty on all the counts!'

The foreman replies 'Yes.'

Then the prisoner is asked, amid a profound stillness, whether he has anything to urge why sentence should not be recorded against him, and is about to answer at once, when the judge compassionately cautions him to be careful, as he may,

* The cases are taken by the judges alternately.

† Stephens was tutor at one time to his Lordship's children.

by injudicious statements, aggravate his punishment. The reporters gaze at him with a hungry interest. One gentleman shoves a pencil hurriedly into my hand, and asks me to sharpen it for him, to provide for an accident, or the exhaustion of the instrument with which he is at present setting to work. The prisoner grasps the bar of the dock, and commences a set speech, which is in every respect a failure. You feel he is trying to cut a figure, and that he had neither education nor capacity for the performance. He becomes so incoherent and reckless, that you wonder at the patience of the judge in submitting to the boisterous tirade in which he assails the government, the Attorney-general, and indeed almost everybody. You find yourself gradually getting very disgusted with him, and rather relieved when the judge at last interrupts him, though not before the wretched man, in a desperate, unmeaning shout, has proclaimed his own guilt.

The judge then proceeds to sentence the prisoner, who relapses into a sullen silence, and only raises his head at the words: 'And the sentence of the court is, that you be kept in penal servitude for ten years.' Whereupon the man with the silly face grasps the prisoner's hand, as if he were congratulating him at having fallen in for a legacy; and half-a-dozen others immediately near the dock bid him good-bye, which I am glad to see they are not prevented from doing by the police or the jailers. He gives away his gloves and his handkerchief, and then disappears to the cells under where he is standing, there to be fettered before his removal to Kilmainham jail.

HORSESHOES.

IF, as old Gwillim asserts, the horseshoe is a type of servile subjection, the horse escaped the indignity of bearing the badge of servitude long after he knew what servitude was. Deborahs might sing of the hoofs of the war-horse being broken by his prancings, and less warlike individuals lament over the ruined feet of their useful servants; still, for ages, the domesticated horse could boast, like his untamed brethren, of 'feet that iron never shod.' In fact, the horseshoe, or at least what we call a horseshoe, appears to have been a thing utterly unknown to the wise men of antiquity. Some antiquaries—we beg pardon, archaeologists—we know, contend to the contrary, but the balance of evidence is decidedly against them. Homer, it is true, sings of 'brazen-footed' steeds, but he also sings of the 'brazen-voiced' Achilles; and we might as well infer that the Greek champion had a metallic tongue, as accept the poet's epithet as a proof that Greek horses wore shoes of brass. Had horseshoes been in use, we should hardly have Xenophon recommending stable-yards to be strewn with round stones, that the horses might strengthen their feet and harden their hoofs while taking their exercise; nor would Mithridates have been compelled to dispense with using cavalry at the siege of Cyzicus because the hoofs of the horses were worn out, as those of Alexander's army are said to have been, by incessant travelling. Moreover, as Greek writers make no mention of the horseshoe, so Greek artists have failed to represent it; and since they were in the habit of giving bronze bits and bridles to their marble steeds, the sculptors would surely have used the same material on their hoofs, if the horses of their time had worn shoes.

Roman writers on agricultural and veterinarian matters insist upon the necessity of choosing horses with hard hoofs, and advise owners of horses to see that their stables are floored with hard oak timber, in order to harden the hoofs of the animals; but not a word do they say about shoeing them. Suetonius indeed tells us that Nero's mules were shod with silver; and Pliny says Poppea had golden shoes for her mules, so that we must admit that shoes of some sort were worn by those animals; but they seem to have been only used occasionally, and made so as to slip on and off with ease, being generally of leather, fastened on with bands, and resembling those still to be seen in the streets of Jeddo.

The earliest horseshoe known, resembling our modern ones, was discovered in the tomb of Childeric, who died in 481; but similar shoes have been found in German and Vandal graves of probably greater antiquity. Iron horseshoes are mentioned in documents of the ninth century, but even then they could not have been in general use, as the French historian Daniel says his countrymen only shod their horses in frosty weather and on particular occasions. In truth, there seems no getting to any satisfactory conclusion respecting our subject. Meyrick asserts, as positively as though it were an incontrovertible fact, that the Conqueror introduced the art of shoeing horses into England; but if he be right, how are we to account for the presence of horseshoes among relics of an undoubtedly older date? In Lothbury, and again in Fenchurch Street, small horseshoes were found with fragments of Roman pottery; and a couple resembling them in shape and size were dug up in Wiltshire, and these not only had nail-holes like our modern horseshoes, but some of the nails remaining in them bent in such a manner as to shew they had been clenched after passing through the hoof of the horse. In the same county, the halves of two iron horseshoes were discovered in a British barrow. In Norfolk, an iron horseshoe turned up among a lot of Roman urns and spear-heads; this, too, had nail-holes, but was of a somewhat peculiar form, being round and broad in front, and narrowing very much backward, with its extreme ends brought close together; and at Battle-flats, where Harold met and defeated the Norwegian invaders, numbers of horseshoes have been found from time to time; these are chiefly remarkable for their smallness; but as the breed of horses then used in England were nothing like our modern equine race in size, it is just as likely that the diminutive shoes belonged to Harold's cavalry as to that of his foe.

Whether William was the introducer of horse-shoeing or not, he at any rate honoured the practitioners of the art. The family of De Ferrers owed its name and fortune to the Conqueror's Master of the Farriers, and the first earls bore six horseshoes on their shield in memory of the fact; the horseshoes' sable have disappeared from their place of honour on the shield of the Ferrers family, but one of their supporters yet bears the ancient symbol on his shoulder. From the same monarch, one Simon de Liry received the town of Northampton and the hundred of Falkley, on condition that he supplied shoes for the royal stud. Henry de Avering held the manor of Morton in Essex by the tenure of finding one man, one horse, four horseshoes, a sack of barley, and an iron buckle for the use of the king whenever he went with his army into Wales;

and Gamelhore held broad lands in Nottinghamshire on condition that he shod the four feet of the king's palfrey as often as his majesty visited his manor of Mansfield—the king finding all the materials. If the tenure-holder shod the palfrey properly, putting in all the nails, he could claim as a fee a palfrey with four marks of silver, or, if he preferred it, the royal palfrey itself became his on payment of five marks; but if, in performing the operation, he happened to lame, or even prick the horse, he was fined five marks for his clumsiness.

Edward I. fixed the prices to be charged by the London shoemiths, or mareschals, as they were called, at three-halfpence per shoe of six, and twopence per shoe of eight nails, with an extra halfpenny for each shoe removed. Coursers were to be shod for twopence per shoe, and chargers for threepence, with one penny per shoe for removal.

The old friendly wish, 'May the horseshoe never be pulled from thy threshold!' was the offspring of a superstition as common as it was unaccountable. When Butler's conjuror undertook to

Chase evil spirits away by dint
Of sickle, horseshoe, hollow flint,

he only offered to do for his patrons what thousands did for themselves. Misson was puzzled by the number of horseshoes he saw fixed at the entrance of English houses, and when he asked the motive of such an extraordinary style of decoration, received divers answers to his queries. But the majority of his informants agreed that the shoes were intended to keep the witches from entering their domiciles, and working their evil charms to the confusion of their households. Aubrey assures us that the practice was common enough, most of the houses at the then west end of London being thus protected against witchcraft; he adds, that to be efficacious, it was necessary that the shoe should be an old one, accidentally picked up by its possessor. He saw one fixed under the porch of a country church, a proceeding he considered utterly superfluous, as the holy-water alone ought to have sufficed to keep the witches from playing any pranks there. When the banker Coutts and his actress-wife went to live at Holly Lodge, they were silly enough to mar the beauty of their marble steps by having a couple of old horseshoes fastened to the topmost one of the flight.

If Hecate and her sister-hags still ride on the midnight air, there is one spot in England where their foul charms, however firm and good, will prove of no avail. The little capital of the little county of Rutland, thanks to its wealth of horseshoes, may set the entire race of weird-women at defiance. These strange trophies are collected in one of the oldest mansions in the kingdom, for Oakham Hall was built by Walkelin de Ferrers, son of the first earl of that name, who received his patent of nobility from the worthy king who has had the cost of his nether garment immortalised in song. Evelyn writes in 1654: 'I took a journey into the northern parts. Riding through Oakham, a pretty town in Rutlandshire, famous for the tenure of the barons, who held it by the taking off a shoe from every nobleman's horse that passed with his lord through the street, unless redeemed with a certain piece of money. In token of this are several gilded shoes nailed on the castle gate.' Gough says the bailiff of the town had power to take a shoe off the horse of any man of noble birth

who declined to pay the tribute-money; the amount to be paid being left to the equestrian's generosity, while his liberality regulated the size of the horseshoe inscribed with his name and title, which was set up to commemorate the event. How this curious custom originated, is a mystery, for we can find no evidence of any such tenure as that spoken of by Evelyn; we can only guess it sprang out of a still older custom of levying toll upon travellers, a practice in which the authorities of Oakham seem to have indulged till they got themselves in trouble thereby.

Of the horseshoes seen by Evelyn, three at least remain—those bearing the names of Earl Gainsborough, Henry Montagu, and Lord Gray. Among the more notable ones of later date are those presented by the Earl of Cardigan (1667), Lord Ipswich (1687), Lord Guildford (1690), and Lady Percy (1771). Thirty-three years ago, Queen Victoria acknowledged the right of Oakham, as her uncles the Prince Regent and the Duke of York had done before her, an example followed soon afterwards by the Iron Duke. The law itself has sanctioned this unique species of taxation, Lords Denman, Campbell, and Wensleydale having followed the precedent of the famous Lord Mansfield. The day upon which Lord Campbell's horseshoe was added to the collection of trophies, was a red-letter one in the chronicles of Oakham Hall, for on that day it recovered its long-lost 'golden shoe.'

This was not really a golden horseshoe, but a gilt one, that had done duty on the hoof of Lord Willoughby d'Eresby's favourite horse *Clinker*. Deceived by its appearance, or misled by its popular designation, some rogue stole *Clinker's* shoe. This happened in 1846, and for twelve years the pride of Oakham Hall was conspicuous by its absence; but in 1858, the bailiff of the town was astonished by receiving the long missing golden shoe per rail, accompanied by some humorous verses; but the Thief was never discovered.

Lancaster still does honour to the memory of John of Gaunt, after a curious fashion. As the great warrior was riding one day through the streets of the town, his charger cast a shoe, which was picked up by one of his admirers, and fixed in the middle of the street. When the original was worn out, a new shoe was placed there, to mark the spot; and this memorial of time-honoured Lancaster is renewed every seven years, at the expense of the townsmen living near Horseshoe Corner.

BEFORE THE SPRING.

THE Earth is burying her dead;
The trees like bending mourners stand;
A tender serious light is shed
From the brown lane and meadow-land;
But treasures new are in the mould,
That soft dark lap of birth and death,
As violets, daisies, crocus bold,
And every mouth of fragrant breath;
The falling of the leaves hath stirred
The winged maids of sleeping Spring;
And stealthy they as tree-hid bird,
Full-handed watch the Winter King.

The Earth is burying her dead;
But others come as fair instead.

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THE LOST ART AT CLASSICAL SEMINARIES.

AMONG the many wrongs that I suffered during my school-time—a period which it is only the poets who venture to misrepresent as agreeable—I set down as the most mischievous this wrong, that my handwriting was ruined. The seminary at which I was a pupil was unfortunately a Classical or Fashionable one. No young gentleman was supposed to be in a position that so vulgar an accomplishment as caligraphy could possibly become necessary to him in after-life. If you gave them the ideas and a dictionary, there were few of us who had not the 'faculty divine' of constructing Latin verses; but as for the hand in which they were transcribed—you might think it had been an ingenious effort of our little toes. In a school preparatory for Eton, however, such learning as how to write was no more to be expected than the art of book-keeping by double entry, and therefore Parents and Guardians were not disappointed. Once in a term, indeed, we each indited an epistle to our friends at home, under the surveillance of Dr Swishem and his crew of ushers; but it was felt on all hands to be a very unsuccessful affair. The composition, it is true, was elaborate and ornate, and about as unlike what a Boy would write, if left to himself, as can be conceived.

MY DEAR [M. or P.]—I write to inform you that the school-term will be completed on the 29th inst., upon which day, please to make arrangements for sending for me, if you can conveniently. Dr and Mrs Swishem request me to convey to you their best compliments. Hoping you are in good health, I remain, dear [M. or P.], your Affectionate Son.

It would not be credited by Messrs Piesse and Lubin, perfumers, how execrably those 'holiday letters' were permitted (in so fashionable a seminary) to smell of india-rubber. But the fact is that not only had the parallel lines, without which our communications would have been more or less diagonal, to be rubbed out, but also an immense amount of dirt, produced by tears, perspiration,

jacket-cuffs, and other matters all incident to this tremendous ordeal; not to mention that half-a-dozen blades of penknives were used up in the work of erasures. The delicate manner (we called it 'gingerly') in which the second *r* in 'arrangements' (omitted in the original) was inserted by the doctor himself, in as good an imitation of the writer's own style as his sense of propriety would permit, and the final flourish in which the signature was enveloped, as at the conclusion of some pyrotechnic display, were efforts which would have excited our admiration, if boys had such a tribute to give. They were really wonderful to us, most of whose native hieroglyphics would have defied the subtilty of Colonel Rawlinson or any other decipherer who had been only accustomed to deal with cuneiform inscriptions. I say *most* of us, because some of us had been very respectable writers before we came to Dr Swishem's, and owed our subsequent failure entirely to him and his system. I myself, for instance, remember the time in my early boyhood when I could read with tolerable ease any sentence that I had once written, no matter though forty-eight hours might have intervened; whereas, as an adult, such a feat has been utterly impossible. The learned serjeant in the *Pickwick Papers* who is described as so indifferent a penman, that his best efforts could only be read by his clerk, his moderate ones by himself, and his usual ones by neither, was yet better than I; for after a day and night have elapsed, I can make absolutely nothing of my own writing. It was a 'Caligraphic Mystery' long before the Stereoscopic Company patented *theirs*; and were it not for my wife, to whom the gift of interpretation has been revealed, and who copies out all my manuscripts for the press, the general public would know nothing of their favourite author. But stay, I am anticipating. It was never supposed at Minerva Lodge that any pupil would subsequently so far degrade himself, and it, as to endeavour to make a living by his pen. The possibility of such a misfortune—to do my revered master justice—never entered into the doctor's brain. We were all country gentlemen's sons, and

it was hoped that we should remain in that position of life in which it had pleased Providence to start us.

But even a country gentleman has sometimes to write an invitation, and even an Address to his Constituents, if he aspires to sit in St Stephen's (and does not get it written by somebody else), and therefore I contend that Dr Swishem should have taught us how to write. Perhaps he imagined, as the advocates of classical education maintain in the case of History, Geography, and the Modern Languages, that Writing is too contemptible a subject for the intellect of youth to grapple with, and may be safely left for subsequent acquisition. But, at all events, he need not have spoiled 'the hands' of those who *had* hands. This, however, was effected most completely by his system of punishment by Impositions. If I was caught 'out of bounds,' or eating sausages in bed, or putting slate-pencil into a keyhole, or (worse than all) if nature, overburdened by an early dinner, gave way during the doctor's sermon, and I fell asleep at church, there ensued an imposition; that is, I was compelled to copy out, from a classical author, a certain amount of lines, varying from a hundred to one thousand. In the case of a very flagrant outrage—swigging the doctor's table 'ale' (it never wore Mr Bass's triangle, I am certain) upon the sly—I say, in the case of that depraved young gentleman, Maltworm *minor*, I have known an imposition of *Two Thousand Lines* of the poet Virgil to be set in punishment. There was not much in common between Dr S. (who was a foolish little round man, given up to heraldry) and the bard of Mantua, but they were always hereby connected in our minds, and hated with an equal rancour. How our fingers scurried over those odious hexameters, until they grew stiff and sore, and refused to form the letters! How we scratched and scrawled, and dug into the paper, with those execrable steel pens! What strange inventions were made use of (though never patented) to shorten the cruel mechanical toil—surely almost as bad as the Crank of our model prisons—by tying half-a-dozen pens together, and imputing the vice of repetition where our author had never been suspected of it before!

In short, although of the positive results of my education at Minerva Lodge I have but little to boast (for I soon forgot how to compose Latin verses), that little was more than balanced by the fact, that my handwriting was utterly ruined by its Imposition system. Excessive speed was the only virtue which it nourished in the way of penmanship; we soon got to write 'running-hands.' But as for the art of writing, as a means of communicating information to others, it lapsed altogether, and was lost from amongst us, as completely as the method of staining glass is said to have disappeared from the whole human family.

'Spirit-hands,' to judge from the few specimens of the penmanship of the other world with which we have been favoured, are not particularly adapted for setting 'copies,' and, indeed, much

remind one of the wanderings of a spider, recently escaped from an ink-pot; but 'spirit-hands' are as copperplate specimens of calligraphy compared to *my* hand. To people who can't spell, a bad handwriting is some advantage; for in cases of doubt—such as, whether the *i* or the *e* come first in Believe or Receive—they have only to make their customary scrawl, and the possible error becomes undiscoverable; but the nature of my profession has compelled me to acquire this accomplishment (no thanks to Dr Swishem), and I have rarely any occasion for concealment.

There was one person who discovered ground for congratulation upon this my shortcoming, and only one. He was a gentleman who lived a life of leisure, and he confessed that my letters gave him greater pleasure than those of other friends, because they 'lasted him so long.' The first day upon which he received one, he would discover, after half-a-dozen perusals, a glimmering of what was intended to be conveyed; the next day, some interesting detail would crop out; and by the end of a week, if some sentence did not emerge with a flash which altered the entire complexion of the affair, he found himself (with the assistance of his family, and any ingenious friend who happened to be enjoying his hospitality) in possession of all that I had wished to say. But this gentleman's case was an exceptional one. When my wife was unable to copy my deathless works, the Compositors murmured and rebelled. They only knew English, they said; not Sanscrit. My *Essay on the Assyrian Bull*, for instance, with some Remarks on its Treatment under Rinderpest, as suggested by the Nineveh 'Friezes,' cost my publisher seventy pounds in printer's charges for 'erasures, and alterations' alone. I am so ashamed of my own performance, that I dare not save my fingers by employing a 'multiplying machine' even for business-letters. My small children make me blush for my inferiority when they shew me their 'pothooks and hangers,' and I shall not easily forget that moment of embarrassment, when one of them, in the absence of her governess, asked me to set her 'a copy.' 'Dear papa, please write me out a line of Es.' I could as easily have written down the genealogy of Pharaoh, king of Egypt. Even the two ingenious 'blind men' at the Post-office were unable to decipher me except by mutual consultation. My envelopes took ten times the period that other Illegibles did in passing through their hands. They doubtless puzzled over the efforts of all those who had, like myself, been educated at Minerva Lodge, but the profession of literature—the trade of the constant scribbler—had in my case so thoroughly completed the evil which Impositions had begun, that I was *facile princeps* among even them: the most infamous of all bad writers. Literature needs have no such effect as this, if the previous training has been good. Some foolish persons think it is a mark of genius to write ill, but this is a great mistake. I look over my own epistolary treasures, and see with shame how quite otherwise is the case.

Place aux dames. This neat little microscopic hand, every letter of which is legible, belongs to the authoress of *Our Village*; and these bold and well-formed lines are from the same fingers which wrote *Deerbrook* and the *Crafton Boys*.

This free and manly hand (the best I know) is that which set down the *Domestic Annals of Scotland*; and this, perhaps the next best, so firm, distinct, and yet so flowing, is the same which has

moved mankind at will to tears and laughter, from the days of *Pickwick* until now. To judge by this bold running-hand, the *Woman in White* was no Dead Secret to the printer; and here is the clear legible work of those dead fingers which shall paint, alas, no *Colonel Newcomes* for us any more.

Had I possessed the genius of all these writers combined, I should yet have been as one who preaches in an unknown tongue, edifying no Reader (and least of all 'the Reader' who is employed by the printer), but for the fair Interpreter of whom I have spoken; and even she was useless to me in some things. There are letters which one cannot get one's wife to write for one; and my correspondents grew rebellious, and threatened to cut off all communication with one who gave them so much trouble. A business-friend in the City, declaring that 'my telegraph-hand was much better than my writing-hand,' insisted upon hearing from me by the wires only. Finally, a 'round-robin' was addressed to me from the members of my own family, requesting that I should take writing-lessons of a professor, and enclosing thirty shillings to defray his charges for the first six lessons. I make it a rule never—under any circumstances—to return people's money, and, at the same time, I am too well-principled not to apply what I receive to the purpose for which it is intended. At the age of forty-five, therefore, I began to learn that science which I had acquired at eight years old, and lost during my residence at Minerva Lodge.

'Impositions, eh?' remarked the professor as soon as he set eyes upon a specimen of what the painters would call my 'latest style.'

'Yes,' said I, 'that was the beginning of it; but Literature was the finishing school.'

'Don't believe it, sir,' returned he. 'I have had hundreds of adult pupils, who all write like this—only certainly not quite so badly. Not one school-boy out of ten who has been brought up on classical principles can write a legible hand. The head-masters ought to be flogged all round.'

'Or even where the boys are flogged,' suggested I; but he didn't understand this allusion.

'You will require to take a dozen lessons instead of six, sir,' continued he severely.

And he spoke within the mark, for before I left his establishment, *cured*, I had to take eighteen. I consider that if the law of England was framed upon equitable principles, it would enable me to 'recover' the sum of four pounds ten shillings from the executors of the late Dr Swissem; but I need not say that such is not the case.

My friends, of course, with the exception of the Gentleman of Leisure, were delighted with the result attained; and the composers who have the pleasure of setting up this paper can scarcely believe their eyes. But I am by no means altogether freed from the consequences of my late deformity (for that's the very word). A most respectable tradesman, to whom I gave my first cheque after this wondrous change, was, upon presenting it in person at my banker's, at once taken into custody upon the charge of forgery. He has brought an action against the firm for defamation of character, and I am subpoenaed as a witness in the Central Criminal Court. My old cheque-book will be there produced, and the signatures (?) contrasted with the way which I have recently acquired—including a beautiful flourish like an Eagle—of subscribing my name. It will

not, therefore, be necessary to humiliate myself by further confessions, since, for the culmination of this sad history, readers may consult the public papers for themselves.

THE SHEEP-PASTURES OF SWITZERLAND.

ABOVE the mountain-ranges appropriated to the cows as their summer domain, rise another tier of heights, which are only reached by such rugged and impracticable paths, that the horned cattle, accustomed as they are to climb the mountain-sides, dare not attempt their ascent. Jagged peaks, steep precipices, tiers of naked rocks, overhanging unfathomable depths, are the principal features they exhibit. Yet even amid this wild heterogeneous array of nature, the earth is not entirely barren; first and other hardy shrubs ornament the steep slopes, and fringe the edges of the summits. These acclivities are recognised as the Schaf Alpen; and here, regardless of fear, the sheep and goats make paths for themselves across the slippery rocks, and browse upon such stunted vegetation as they may find there. For at least nine months in the year, these Alps are not available for either sheep or goats, being entirely carpeted with thick snow; and it is only in the beginning of July that it melts in those parts most exposed to the sun, and the shepherds are able to mount with their flocks. Even then, the verdure is very weak and straggling, and the plants quickly run to seed, concentrating all their strength in the roots, which sink deeply into the moist earth. The different species found in these elevations are represented by dwarf varieties; even some of the trees, which are also found in the peat-grounds of Lapland, hardly attaining the height of a few inches. The only habitations found on these solitudes are the slanting-roofed chalets, constructed for the use of the shepherds; and these are so far apart, that it often happens a peasant will go up for the summer with the sheep committed to his care, and remain at his post for weeks without seeing any human being. There is no shelter provided for the sheep, except that which nature affords; and in bad weather, they may be seen crouching together under overhanging rocks, and in crevices or sheltered nooks, waiting till the fury of the storm has passed over.

In the Bernese Oberland, at the foot of the giant mountain Eiger, whose white head rises about nine thousand feet above the sea, there is a well-known sheep Alpage, very difficult of access, and lying at a great distance from the Valley of Grindelwald. Here the shepherds annually conduct their flocks, and remain for two months isolated from the rest of the world, their only visitors being those occasional travellers who attempt the difficult path of the Straleck, which lies over the surrounding glaciers. In some spots, the sheep are entirely left to themselves, and scramble at will over crag and slope, becoming as wild as ever they were before they were made serviceable to man; the only provision made for their need being a supply of salt, which

some hardy peasant periodically carries up to them. This abandonment of the flocks happens in the pastures of the valley of the Zermatt, and above the grand glaciers of Alsech. Amid the Alpine pastures devoted to sheep, some are so extensive that several thousands of these animals find nourishment on their heights. An excellent idea of the value and size of these sheep *Alpages* may be had by taking the *Gaulschiaberg*, in *L'Urthenthal*, as a specimen. Here a large revenue is gained from the tax on the flocks sent to graze there.

Although sheep form one of the sources of profit to Switzerland, feeding as they do off almost inaccessible vegetation, and furnishing in return both butcher-meat and coarse wool, which fetches a fair market-price, they are not made the subject of much special care by agriculturists, and consequently their race presents nothing remarkable in fineness or beauty of breed. There has latterly been an attempt to improve the breed by crossing it with that of other countries; but the rigorous lives and unsheltered weather to which these animals are exposed on the heights, and the little attention they can receive when there, prevents much success. The valley of *Frütigier* alone stands out as an exception in sheep-farming results; here the race is of a decidedly superior kind, and the wool of a finer and better description. This is carded and prepared by the peasants themselves, who use it for their winter-clothing. The extent of the high pastures is generally proportionate to that of those below; not so, however, in the canton of the *Grisons*, for in most parts of this country, the valleys are very contracted, whilst the plateaux on the heights are extensive. For this reason, the inhabitants, not being able to feed, for lack of hay, during winter, as many animals as they could nourish on the heights in summer, adopt the alternative of letting out the pasture-lands to the *Bergamesque* shepherds of the province of *Lombardy*, who lead their sheep to the *Swiss Alps* during the short time that these promise to afford them food. To arrive on these Alps, the shepherds and their flocks have to pass through the valley of *Engadine*, in the *Grisons*, one of the highest inhabited valleys on the Alps, being sixty miles in length, and its elevations varying from 3234 to 5600 feet. This valley is surrounded by icy barriers in the form of tremendous glaciers, and at its highest parts, possesses a most ungenial climate. Its soil is hard, and crops of barley, rye, and grain are very stunted and limited, yet, from the wealth derived from the sheep-pastures above, it ranks among the most opulent valleys of the Alps. It is celebrated especially for the architecture of its houses, and the picturesque designs of its *châlets*. Poverty is rare among the inhabitants, and beggary unknown; whilst those who are Protestants are creditably distinguished for their morality and industry. Since they let their land to others, their own labour is not sufficiently needed at home, and the sons of the valley therefore spread themselves all over the continent, and learn many

trades, especially that of confectionary, for which they have a great liking. Many make fortunes, but invariably, when they have done so, they return to their native valley, and enrich it with their gains. At the season when the *Bergamese* shepherds pass through this valley with their flocks, an encounter with them is as picturesque a scene as can well be imagined.

The men who inhabit the Italian side of the Alps are in appearance a dark, scowling race, with long black hair, hanging in tangled curls around their necks; their faces, bronzed by the sun, appear under their large flapping hats, wild and fierce; their dress is a rough, brown, home-spun cloth; and over their shoulders they carry a white blanket. To judge by appearances, one might set them down as *Sicilian* robbers, transported for some offence to the centre glaciers of the north. Their exterior, however, belies them, for they are in reality a hardy and honest race of men; by nature, gentle and peaceable; of extremely abstemious habits, being contented with the simplest fare, and indeed living on water, pollenta, maize, and cheese of their own making. Their sheep, which they drive before them, have as little claim to beauty as themselves: lean and meagre, after a toilsome march and winter's scanty fare, with long hanging ears, they linger at every blade of herbage or vestige of food that crosses their path. A mule, laden with necessary provisions, accompanies the troop; and thus may they be seen in July, winding through the ascents and slopes of the valley of *Engadine* to the pastures above. There they remain for nearly three months, the shepherds frequently spending day and night in the open air with their flocks, which become considerably benefited by their summer sojourn, and return fat and fleecy at the end of September, ready to supply the important wool-market, which is held at a town called *Borgofesio*. It is estimated that, in the canton of the *Grisons*, there arrive annually in the month of July, from the province of *Bergame*, no less than forty-five thousand sheep, for which the commune or corporation of the valley receive one franc per head. Great damage, however, being done to the forests by the sheep nibbling the young shoots of the trees, a violent opposition is just now being made by the wood-proprietors against the invasion of these foreign troops, and already some pastures have been deserted in consequence.

Besides the sheep-pastures which we have named, there are still some few grass-plots to be found still higher, but situated on slopes so perilous, that the sheep dare not attempt to reach them. Undaunted, however, by the perils of the path, and led by the necessity to provide for the one cow, sheep, or goat which almost every peasant owns, the hardy mountaineer, scythe in hand, scales these heights, and gathers up the wild harvest (*weid heu*) which he finds between the rocky steeps. These elevations are too high for either the commune, the parish, or any other power to bring within the grasp of their rights of possession. The herbage

that grows there is public property—the prize of the industrious and the daring. There is a legal enactment that no one shall be permitted to mow the grass on these heights until the 13th July, on account of the dangers attending these *récoltes*, if the passes are attempted too soon, as well as to insure the full growth of the crop, and a fair start for the fields. But on this day in July, those who are willing to make the ascent, start with the implements of labour in their hands, and strive who shall be first on the heights, possession being the law of proprietorship; for whoever first secures a footing on the grass-plot, remains master of the field, and cuts the hay for his own special benefit. Although the competition is great, few quarrels ensue; the assistants generally start overnight, or before morning breaks over the earth; and at sunrise, each victor may be seen clinging to the height he has surmounted, and making the rock ring with the sound of his Alpine horn, or boisterously shouting forth his song of triumph, as he waves triumphantly his cap to his companions in the chase.

In order to perform their dangerous labour, these *wild heuers* have attached to their boots large iron nails, in order to prevent their feet from slipping on the rocky precipices they have to climb. When arrived at the top, they take off these boots, for perhaps there is scarcely any one danger of Alpine climbing so great as that of traversing steep grass-slopes, unless with unshod feet. But notwithstanding these and sundry other precautions, many fatal accidents occur. Sometimes, it is only by the non-appearance of a father or brother from some of these heights, that the relatives below understand that an untimely death has been the consequence of his temerity. On a spot well known to the mountaineers, three of one family, whilst helping to start the hay over the rocks, missed their footing, and were all dashed to pieces below.

It does not take much time to make the grass into hay, both from the scantiness of the crop and the dryness of the atmosphere; but when made, it is necessary to bring it down to the cattle below. If the grass-plot happens to lie on the border of a precipice, nothing is easier than to get it down. The mower binds his hay in bundles, and dragging them to the brink, he hurls them over; and then descending himself by the shortest cuts he can to the spot where the hay has fallen, repeats the process until it is near enough home to be gathered in. If the grass-plots lie far from the precipices, and are hemmed in by crags and cliffs, then the mower must place his bundles under the best shelter he can make for the occasion—probably a stone foundation, over which he piles branches of fir, for the paths by which he has ascended are far too perilous for him to descend when laden with his gains. He then returns home, and waits quietly until winter has fairly set in, when, as soon as the slopes are covered with snow, and rendered hard by the frost, the intrepid mountaineers sally forth again, laden with small wooden sledges, and tracking a path for themselves up to where their treasure lies stored, they place the bundles of hay on the sledges before them, and precipitating themselves, their vehicle, and its

burden from the declivity of the mountain, descend with the speed of an avalanche. Much risk and danger, both to life and limb, naturally attend such a mode of descent; but, nevertheless, great excitement attends these sledge expeditions, and the young men look forward to them as a favourite winter amusement. The hay, too, thus procured is much valued for the sake of the very dangers encountered in securing it.

Without these high and almost inaccessible minor Alpines, many would be almost beggars, and the price of sheep and goats would rise considerably. But certainly great praise is due to a class who are willing to carry their labour so far and at such a risk to maintain their independence, instead of becoming pensioners on the charity of the commune. It is estimated in Switzerland that the amount contributed by the cows on the Alpine pastures to the general milk of the country is in proportion of twenty-seven francs for every *fuchart* (an area of fourteen English yards square), without counting the nourishment likewise afforded during the summer months to one hundred thousand horses and half a million of sheep; but taking this into consideration, they may be presumed to produce nearly one hundred francs per hectare. This must be considered a large produce for land in so exceptionable a position, where vegetation is only seen during four months of the year. As in these mountain cantons the pasture-fields offer peculiarities not found elsewhere, the organisation of law rights and property have certain characteristic features which need a few words of attention.

Property is so divided in Switzerland into small proprietorships, that it is very rare to find any one pasturage belonging to a single landowner. It is generally the parish, commune, or joint-proprietors who hold graduated rights over them. But there is great distinction made between such lands as belong to the parish and of those which represent the united interests of several parties.

By far the larger proportion are parish property, for there is no commune (a name corresponding with our town corporations) which does not possess a large extent of pasture-land within its rights of trust, and these are included in three distinct compartments, recognised according to the negotiations under which they are cultivated and engaged. One division is exclusively reserved for the poor, or such as are considered so, and they alone have the right to lead their cattle on these slopes to graze. This is one of the forms benevolence takes in Switzerland; and certainly, if it be a criterion of the prosperity of the country, one may envy the Swiss their social position, for if the poor need such assistance for their flocks alone, they must be far removed themselves from the misery which, in other lands, craves a dole of bread to support human life.

The engagement of the next division of the grass-lands is reserved for the members of the corporation themselves—a politic body, each of whom has the right to send on these lands such domestic animals as he keeps during the winter at his own expense. Probably this was formerly the general rule for all the inhabitants alike; but with the increase of population, the number of herds likewise increased to such a degree that rigid rules became necessary to avoid contentions, and also not to overburden the land with more animals than could find nourishment from its produce.

From this period also dates the third division of the pasturages, the different runs of which are reserved for such persons who are proprietors of a certain amount of land in the valleys. The hay-fields on the Lower Alps, and the higher pasture-lands reserved for grazing, are divided, as near as can be, into appropriate fields or districts, each of which is calculated to nourish a corresponding number of animals in winter and summer. The calculation is then made of the number of cattle possessed by each proprietor of the valley, and being known to have kept them during winter from the produce of his hay-fields, he is permitted to send the same number to graze and fatten on the rich verdure above. But in no case can he purchase in the summer and send up with them one single head of cattle more than he has had during winter, and a lynx-eyed jealousy over one another guards these rights from violation. The pasturages not being of equal richness, a strict attempt at impartiality is made, by preventing the flocks belonging to the same person from being sent to the same Alpage two following seasons. The proprietors change about, taking their turn in regular rotation for certain well-known rich pasturages; while, for fear of impoverishing the land by an unfair amount of beasts, the number of horned cattle or sheep which each field can nourish is strictly limited.

Such grass-lands as belong to private parties are also reckoned to contain a given number of cattle, and then divided according to the portion of land belonging to each co-partner, who has the option of using it himself for grazing purposes, or letting it out to his neighbours, under the same restrictions as to the quantity of animals fed on it.

The partners of a pasture meet once a year to select a manager, and to regulate the work required to be done on the land; the Alps being each under legislative rules, to which the proprietors are bound to submit.

A practice very prevalent in many of the communes is, that no stranger in the town or village can be permitted to send his cattle on the mountains; and they excuse themselves for this apparently selfish act on the score, 'that the mountains will only receive those who belong to the valleys.' This is, on the whole, a wise principle; it is absolutely necessary to have some corresponding level of rights between the heights and the plain, for if the inhabitants of a commune were deprived of the liberty of their cattle-runs on the Alps, they would be obliged to devote their summer grass to their cows, and thus have nothing whatever on which to keep them during the winter. Hence, without all this organisation of lands, the herds would decrease, and on them depend the prosperity and well-doing of the Swiss farmers. The peasants also, without the protection they receive from the commune, would never be able to keep the cow which literally keeps them, but must emigrate, and thus the population would diminish.

The present well-digested rules keep all above want, dividing, as near as may be, the natural produce of the land according to the position of the people, so that extreme poverty can hardly exist in the mountains, since the means of providing for the necessities of life are open to all who will work.

Any cultivation that can be effected on the Higher Alps depends on the *Föhn*, or south wind, the same current of air which has its birth

in the burning sands of Sahara, and alarms the caravan travellers in Africa under the form of the *Simoom*, which subsequently passes over the Mediterranean Sea, and at certain periods enervates and lays low the Italian population, who curse it as the *Sirocco*. Travelling onwards towards the Alps, it finally spreads itself over Switzerland, where the mountaineers eagerly look for and bless its approach. The word *Föhn* is derived from the same root as the Latin word *Favonius*, whose praises Horace himself was used to sing; and it now produces the same effect as in his day, melting the accumulated snows with marvellous rapidity, which the long winter gathers in prodigious masses both on the mountain and in the valley. The instant it is felt, the air softens, tempered, as it were, by enchantment; its gentle gales blow over valley and height for four or five days consecutively, and during that time, the atmosphere is of an exquisite purity. Little by little, the thick crust of ice, which has covered the earth during winter, melts, and a thousand silvery streamlets are set in motion, which percolate through the earth, and flowing down the sides of the rocks, swell the beds of the torrents, whose waters, after a long and mournful silence, begin to flow again, and refresh, by their murmuring voice, the ear of the peasant, who then knows spring has returned. Soon the white veil is lifted from the earth, and an exquisite green verdure takes its place; bud and leaf simultaneously burst into life, and flowers open to the genial warmth, enamelling the grassy slopes. The villagers, relieving the tethered cattle from their imprisoned position, hasten with them to the heights. The *Föhn* may well be courted, for it does more in one day to melt the snow than the sun does in a week. Nor is it alone in spring that its favours are felt, for in autumn it ripens in like manner both fruit and grain, and dries, when in shade, the hay-crops and cut fruits preserved for winter use. It is quite certain that, without the aid of this wind, the mountains would retain their covering of snow winter and summer alike. The glaciers also without it must necessarily increase, and gradually swallow up the valleys beneath. At some period more or less remote, gigantic glaciers did fill the valleys of the Rhine, Rhone, Aar, and Reuss, even as far as the Jura chain of mountains, carrying before them, to immense distances, enormous blocks of stone and granite, known to geologists and travellers under the name of *Blocs erratiques*. It was the *Föhn*, the inhabitants say, which delivered Switzerland from its tomb of ice; and, at any rate, it is to this wind the country owes its rich green pastures; and it may fairly be looked upon as the good genius of this land. On the other hand, like an arbitrary power, it produces powerful ravages, blowing at times with an alarming violence over the heights, and bearing down into the southern valleys with a terrific force, snapping the stems of huge trees, raising roofs, laying bare crops, and lashing the smooth surface of the lakes into furious waves—its burning breath, at such times, dries up all vegetation, and flowers fade, plants droop, and timber cracks and takes fire at the slightest spark. From this cause, the entire town of Glarus was reduced to ashes in 1861. As soon as there is notice of its approach, in the parts most exposed to its influence, all fires are ordered to be put out, the inhabitants not even being allowed to cook their food while it lasts. These regulations

are proved to be necessary, and the people are not inclined to dispute them, for they gain too much benefit from the Foein not to humour and succumb to its anger for the short time it lasts.

MIRK ABBEY.

CHAPTER XX.—MR WITHERS WITHDRAWS HIMSELF.

WHEN Derrick and the captain met at the breakfast-table upon that Derby morning, there was a note for the latter waiting by his plate. It had been brought over from the *Turf Hotel* with apologies, having been detained there by mistake, 'through everybody being so busy,' for at least a week. As he turned it moodily over without opening it, Ralph saw that it had the Mirk postmark.

'You have a letter from home I see, lad; lucky dog!'

'Yes, very lucky,' replied the young man cynically, as he ran his eye over the contents; 'worse than my infernal luck of last night, and only less than the misfortune I am looking for to-day is the news in this letter.'

'How is that, lad?'

'Well, you will hear some day.'—Here he took the note, and slowly tore it lengthways into thin strips, and then across, so that it lay in a hundred fragments.—'But it's a secret, at least it was until a week ago, but being in a woman's hands, of course she let it slip;' and Master Walter looked as near to 'ugly' as it was possible for his handsome face to go.

'I fancied your folks at home were unaware of your having intended to be at the *Turf Hotel*, and rather thought you were with your regiment, like a good boy.'

The captain returned no answer; but Derrick, who was in excellent spirits notwithstanding the anxieties of the coming day, continued to address him in that healthy and cheerful strain which is the most intolerable of all manners to one who is melancholy, and what is worse, in dread suspense. 'Now, for my part, Walter, any letter in a woman's hand, as I think yours is—nay, you foolish lad, if you hadn't stuffed it into your breast-pocket so quickly, I protest I should have thought it had come from your mother or your sister. Why, you don't mean to say that that pretty little gate-keeper down at Mirk writes letters to handsome Master Walter?'

'And why not?' asked the captain defiantly. 'If it had come from Mistress Forest, then, indeed, you might have taken upon yourself to object, although I understand that even there you have not yet obtained the position of bridegroom-elect.'

'No,' returned Derrick drily. 'I was about to say that I should have welcomed any letter in a woman's hand, especially if it began: "My dearest"—'

'What the devil do you mean by looking over my letter?' exclaimed Master Walter, starting up in a fury.

'Nothing,' answered the other, purple with laughter and muffin; 'I never dreamed of such a thing. But since you said it came from the gate-keeper's daughter, I thought I'd make a shot. The idea of my wanting to read all the pretty things the little fool writes to a wicked young dog like you; it's no fun to me to watch a moth at a candle. But what a spoiled lad it is! Why, here

I have had no letter at all from Mirk, and yet I am content. Silence gives consent, they say; and particularly in this case, when I know nothing but your lady-mother prevents Mary writing "My dearest Ralph" to me. Indeed, if she wrote "Dear sir, I can have no more to do with you," it would not have the smallest effect. What I have made up my mind to do, generally comes to pass. Where there's a *will*—that is, supposing it is strong enough—there is most times a *way*.'

'I know you're a devil of a fellow,' sneered Master Walter, rising and gazing out of window at the bustling street already astir with the Derby vehicles; 'but I am afraid your *will* can't win me this race.'

'It's done a great deal towards it, Captain Liscard. It brought about the trial-race with the "crack," although my Lord did give himself such cursed airs, and not only let you in for a good thing, but lent you the money to take advantage of it to the uttermost.'

'That's true,' said Walter frankly, and holding out his thin white hand. 'I daresay you think me an ungrateful beast, but I'm worried by a matter that you know nothing of; besides!—'

'Not another word, lad—not another word; I am a rude rough creature, and I said some unpleasant things myself.—Here is our Hansom, and with light-green curtains of gauze. I'm cursed if I go down to Epson with the colours of *the King* on my cab. Why, the beggar must have done it to insult us.'

'Stuff and nonsense, Ralph; it's only to keep off the dust. If you have no curtains, you must wear a veil, that's all. Look there, in yonder barouche-and-four, every man has a green veil on. By Heaven! that Wobegon's one of 'em. He's got my I.O.U. for fifteen hundred pounds in his waistcoat-pocket; and there's that ugly devil Beamish, too.—Well,' muttered the captain to himself, 'I'm glad I didn't go with that party, at all events.'

Master Walter, who was as popular in town as elsewhere, had been asked to take a seat for that day in half-a-dozen 'drags' and barouches, but he had preferred to go alone with Derrick; not that he enjoyed his companionship, but because, as I have before said, he gathered some comfort from his society under the present cloud of anxiety and apprehension.

'I say, Walter, you are a pretty fellow; you forgot all about the provisions, but see here!' cried Derrick triumphantly, pulling a hamper from under the sofa; 'a pigeon-pie, a fowl, two bottles of champagne, and one of brandy!'

'What confounded nonsense!' returned the young man peevishly. 'There are dozens of parties who would have given us lunch. The idea of a hamper on the top of a Hansom!'

'Well, come, you are wrong anyway, *there*, lad, for I have seen a dozen going by this morning.'

'Very likely, and you have also seen plenty of vans, each with a barrel of ale. However, it's of no consequence. If the Frenchman wins, I could eat periwinkles out of a hand-barrow with a hair-pin; and if he loses—why, then, I shall not have much appetite.'

'Look here, lad,' replied Derrick gravely, 'this sort of thing won't do. Never be down on your luck, until, at all events, your luck is down upon you. You are not cut out for this work, I can see. A man ought to be sanguine—yet cool; hopeful of gain—yet quite prepared for loss, who goes in for

such a stake as you have got upon to-day's race. A gambler should be all brain, and no heart: let me suggest, before we start, that you should just take a little brandy.'

'No, no!' ejaculated the captain impatiently. 'If I am a funk, as you so delicately hint, I am not a fool. Come, let's be off. The next time I see this room again, I shall be a made man—or a beggar.'

To any man, who risks by betting more than he can conveniently spare, the going to the Derby is by no means a cheerful expedition, whatever his coming home may chance to be; and further, it may be observed, that of all professional persons, those who take up the Turf as their line in life, are the most sombre and unlively. Many of them are clever fellows enough, and one or two are honest men, but there is no such thing as fun among them. The Ring would never take to the snow-balling one another, as the stock-brokers have been known to do when 'Change was dull. They have only a certain grim and cruel humour, such as the Yankees use, the point of which lies always in overreaching one another. Derrick was right when he said that Master Walter was not fit for such a calling, but the same thing might, almost with equal force, have been said of himself. He was not, indeed, of an anxious disposition, but his temper, when once roused, was almost demoniacal, and he could never stand being cheated. Now, Cheating, in some form or other, is the soul of the turf.

Whenever it is possible to trot in that vast procession down to Epsom, the appearance of which is so gay, and the pace so funeral, the large-wheeled Hansom does it. Many a pretentious four-in-hand did the captain and Derrick pass, and many a wicked-looking brougham with its high-stepping steeds; and the occupants of each had often a word to say about 'the fellow with the beard that Lisgard had picked up, and was carrying about with him everywhere.' For the manly growth that fringed Ralph Derrick's chin was something portentous, even in these days of beards, and his appearance was rendered still more striking from the fact of his wearing an infinite number of wooden dolls in the band of his hat, where Louis XI. used to stick the images of his patron saints. In vain Walter had informed him that this was a weakness only indulged in by snobs. Ralph rejoined (but not without an extra tinge of red in his weatherbeaten cheek), that being a snob himself, it was therefore only natural that he (Ralph) should take pleasure in thus adorning himself. He had rather be a snob than a nob, by a precious sight; he knew that. As for making an exhibition of himself, if that was really the case, it was only right that the public should be advertised of the matter, so he purchased a penny trumpet, and executed thereon the most discordant flourishes. 'Say another word, lad,' added he, with cheerful malice, 'and blessed if I don't buy a false nose!'

Walter made no further remonstrance; he leaned back in the Hansom as far as he could, and as much behind the green gauze curtain, until they reached the course, when his companion divested himself of the objectionable ornaments, and made a present of a live tortoise, which he had also acquired on the way, to an importunate gipsy woman, instead of crossing her palm as requested 'with a piece of silver.' They could hear by this time the hum and the roar of the great human sea which surged about the railings in front of the

Grand Stand, and in a few minutes more they were within them. They pushed their way through the babbling throng towards a certain corner that had been agreed upon, and there was Mr Tite Chifney waiting for them, with a very pale face indeed.

'Nothing wrong with the horse, is there?' cried Ralph in a loud and menacing voice, which caused not a few sharp eyes to glance cunningly towards them, and set not a few sharp ears to listen to what might come next.

'No, sir, nothing,' returned the trainer. 'For Heaven's sake, speak low. I never saw him looking better in my life. We will see him now, if you like.'

'Where's Blanquette?' continued Ralph, a little reassured by this, as they moved away towards the Paddock.

'Mr Blanquette is not here, Mr Derrick.'

'Not here! Why, he was to join you the day before yesterday, otherwise I would have come myself.'

'He has been here, sir, but he's gone away again!'

'What! Is he not coming back to-day?'

'I hope so, sir; I most sincerely hope so; but the fact is—now take it quietly, for it's none of my fault—he's gone after Jack Withers.'

In an instant, while Walter ejaculated a smothered cry of agony and wrath, Derrick had seized the trainer by the throat. 'You know me, sir,' cried he. 'As I swore to treat that tout on the Downs at Mirk, so will I treat you, if that jockey'—

But two blue-coated men had thrust themselves between the strong man and his victim; a gentleman in a tight-buttoned frock-coat was coming up, too, in plain clothes, with that swift determined stride peculiar to members of 'the force,' and the crowd grew very thick about them, and a thousand eyes were being concentrated upon Ralph's furious face, he knew. If his temper was lost now, he felt that all was lost. With an effort that almost cost him a fit of apoplexy—'I am sorry,' said he, 'that I laid my hand upon you, Mr Chifney.'

'That will do,' returned the trainer quietly, arranging his neckcloth. 'Mr Inspector, you know me, and there is no occasion for your services.'

'All right, Mr Chifney, but you have got a runnish customer to deal with there,' replied the guardian of the law, stroking his chin, and looking at Derrick, much as a vice-president of the Zoological Society might regard a novelty in wild beasts, that had been half-promised to the establishment, and then withdrawn.

'I have never been treated thus,' complained the trainer, as the three moved away, and the gaping crowd gathered round some other object of attraction, 'and have never deserved such treatment from any employer of mine, although I have kept racing-stables these thirty years. I can make some allowance for one who has so much money on this horse, as I know you have, Mr Derrick, but I give you my honour and word that I was as astounded as Mr Blanquette himself, when I heard the news that Jack had skedaddled. He was your own jockey, remember, not mine: no boy in my stables has ever played such a scurvy trick as this.'

'Have you any boy that can take this scoundrel's place?' asked Captain Lisgard impatiently.

'I have got as good riders as can be got, Master Walter, upon so short a notice; and Menelaus shall have the pick of them. But you know what

a devil of a temper the horse has ; and this Withers was the only lad who understood him.'

'How comes it that Blanquette has gone to look for him?' asked Derrick thoughtfully. 'Does he know where he is likely to be found?'

'Not as I know of, sir,' returned the trainer gravely. 'He said he would bring him back Dead or Alive—those were his words.'

'Stop a moment, Chifney,' ejaculated Ralph. 'I can scarcely find breath to utter even the suspicion of it ; and the certainty would, I verily believe, choke me ; but do you think it possible that all is not quite on the square with Blanquette himself?'

'Well, Mr Derrick, I'd rather not say. Mr Blanquette is as much the owner of the horse as yourself. He's my employer too—and nobody ever heard Tite Chifney breathe a word—'

'Thousand devils !' cried Derrick, stamping his foot so that the print of it was left in the yielding turf ; 'is this a time for your senseless scruples? I ask you, do you think it possible that this man—my pal for years, one that has oftentimes faced death in my company, and once shared the last scanty meal that stood between us and starvation—do you think it possible, I say, that this man has sold the race?'

'Well, sir,' replied Mr Chifney frankly, 'about victuals eaten under the circumstances you describe, of course I'm no judge ; but as to friendship and that, I've known a son play his own father false upon the turf before now ; and what an Englishman will do in the way of smartness, you may take your oath a Frenchman will do—and a deuced sight worse too. Moreover, since you press this question, I may say that your partner has been seen talking with Wiley—Lord Stonart's agent—more than once.'

'And why, in the devil's name, was I not told?'

'That was not my business, Mr Derrick ; you might not have thanked me for interfering with your affairs. I thought that you and Mr Blanquette were one. Besides, to confess the truth, I thought it was *The King* who was being nobbled. And since Lord Stonart has chosen to withdraw his horses from my keeping—chiefly, by the by, through his disgust at that trial-race in which his crack was beaten—I, of course, was no longer bound to look after his interests ; no, indeed, quite the reverse,' added the trainer with an offended air.

'Did this Frenchman say he would be here to-day, if he did not find the boy?' inquired Captain Lisgard sharply, with an unpleasant look in his fine eyes.

'I can answer that question for him,' returned the gold-digger grimly. 'If he has played me false, he will not only not be *here* ; he will have put the sea—and not the narrow one either—between himself and Ralph Derrick ; for he knows me very well. But now—here he drew a long breath, and made a motion with his mighty arms as though he would dismiss that matter for the present, tempting as it was to dwell upon—'let us see the boy that is to take this rascal's place. We may pull through still with luck.'

CHAPTER XXI.—AT EPSOM.

Have you ever seen at the beginning of a Great Law Case a certain hush and stir among the gentlemen of the long robe, and then a young man rise—not much over forty, that is—and inform 'my lud' that his unfortunate client was placed at a sad disadvantage, for that, through the unexpected but

unavoidable absence of his leader, the whole case must needs devolve upon his own (the junior's) shoulders? The circumstance is of course most lamentable, but still the young counsel (if he is worth a guinea fee) has a certain confident radiance about him, for he feels that his opportunity has come at last, and that he has but 'to grasp the skirts of happy chance,' to be borne from that moment woosackwards. So was it with Mr Samuel Hicks, horse-jockey unattached, when suddenly called upon to fill the vacant seat of Brother Withers, absent without leave. To ride a Derby at a moment's notice was, to one in his position, almost what to take the command of the Mediterranean squadron would be to a young gentleman at the naval school. But not a trace of indecision was visible on the young centaur's countenance.

'I will do my best, gentlemen,' said he modestly ; then added, with the irrepressible assurance of his class, 'and I think I know how to ride.'

'You know nothing, and are an infernal young fool,' returned the trainer sharply. 'You never were outside of such a horse as *Menelaus* in your life. If he is in a good temper, a child might steer him ; but if he jibs—if he stands stock-still in that great race an hour hence, as he is as like to do as not—what will you do then?'

'Bless my soul, sir,' cried the boy, his golden Future—not without 'mother in a comfortable cottage, and easy for life,' let us hope, in the foreground—all swept away by this relentless prediction—'Bless my soul, sir, I think I should cut his throat.'

'I like this fellow,' cried Derrick, slapping the lad upon the back. 'Look you, here is twenty pounds, which you may keep in any case, and you had better take it now, for if you lose the race, there will be plenty of folks to want all my money. But if you win, boy, I will make it Two Hundred.'

'And I will make it Four,' added Master Walter fervently.

'So, you see, you will be a made man for life,' remarked the trainer kindly. 'But listen to me, Sam, or else all this glitter will be the merest moonshine. Be sure never touch your horse with whip or spur ; for Withers, I have noticed, never did. But if the beast jibs—I saw Jack do this at the trial-race, and once before—snatch at his ear. There may be some secret in the way of handling it, but there is no time for finding that out. Do you twist it hard.'

'O sir, I'll twist it off, but he shall win,' returned the jockey plaintively ; and off he went to don his new owner's colours—black and red—as proudly as an ensign to his first battle-field.

It had got about that there was some hitch about *Menelaus*, and the odds were rising rapidly against him ; and when the large and somewhat ungainly animal took his preparatory canter in front of the stand under the guidance of the uncelebrated Hicks, they rose still higher. If any of his ancient confidence had remained to Captain Lisgard, he could scarcely have resisted the tempting offers that were being roared out in harsh and nasal tones from every quarter of the Ring.

'I'll lay 7 to 1 against *Many Laws*' (for most of the racing fraternity favoured Mr Derrick's pronunciation of that name) ; 'I'll lay 8 to 1.'

'I'll take 4 to 1. I name the Winner' (for the relation between *The King* and the French horse in the betting was that of buckets in a well).

'I take odds that *Menelaus* is not placed,'

exclaimed a shrill and sneering voice close beside where the two men most interested in that depreciated animal were standing.

'What odds will you take, my Lord?' inquired Captain Liscard, biting his lip in wrath, for it was Lord Stonart who was offering them, the man whose confidential agent had been talking with Blanquette, and to whose machinations it was almost certainly owing that *Menelaus* had lost his rider.

'Ah, Liscard, how are you?' returned he coolly. 'How came it that I missed you just now in the Paddock? Haven't seen you since that morning on Mirk Down. So we're going to try that race over again, eh?'

'I think you were asking for odds, my Lord, about the black horse being *placed*?' rejoined the captain, pale with passion at the sarcasm that lurked in the other's tone.

'Yes, so I was. There has something gone amiss, they say, with him. I'll take 4 to 1 in fifties—hundreds, if you like.'

'Don't do it,' whispered Derrick eagerly. 'Don't you see what the scoundrel reckons upon? If the horse runs straight, he will win the race, but if he jibs, he will be nowhere. He is therefore taking odds where he ought to give them.'

'You don't take me, eh?' continued his Lordship. 'Well, I think your friend advises you wisely. See the horses are moving towards the hill. Like myself, you have no stall, I conclude. Where are you going to place yourself? I think I shall remain below here on the green.'

'Then I shall see the race from the roof, my Lord,' answered the captain savagely, and thither he and his companion betook themselves accordingly.

To look down from that elevation upon Epsom Downs just before the start for the Great Race, is to behold a wondrous spectacle. Men—a quarter of a million or so—as black and thick as bees, and emitting much such a hum and clangour as attends the swarming of those perilous insects; and the carriages, twelve deep—dwarfed to much the same proportions as those chariots which used to be dragged in public by the Industrious Fleas. But raise your race-glass, and with a single sweep you survey every social degree of human life; from the duchess to the poor drunken hag on the look-out for empty bottles; from the peer to the ragged thief who bides his moment to snatch his booty from his Lordship's carriage-seat. This rascal's opportunity is coming. If there are five minutes in an Englishman's life in which he is indifferent to the preservation of his property, it is those five which are now at hand when that little jockey rainbow yonder is gathering on the hill. Thirty of the fleetest horses in the world are about to contend for the greatest prize that horse can win: it is not that circumstance, however, which makes so many hearts go pit-a-pat, keeps all lips sealed, and rivets every eye, except that of the pickpocket and his natural enemy the policeman, upon that shifting speck of colour. All are aware of the enormous interests that hang upon the result impending, even if they have none themselves; vague but gigantic shadows of loss and gain forecast themselves upon every mind. In a few seconds more, certain unknown scoundrels—fellow-creatures, however, with whom we have indissoluble sympathies—will be enriched beyond the dreams of avarice; and certain other poor devils will be ruined. A solemn hush pervades all

Pandemonium. The very organ-grinders cease their hateful discord; the vendors of race-cards give their lungs brief respite; the proprietors of *Aunt Sallies* intermit their useless cry of 'Three throws a penny,' and stand on tiptoe, with their *fascies* beneath their arms, as eager as my Lord who totters insecure erect upon the front seat of his drag. Nervous folks see all these things because they cannot keep their eyes fixed where they would. A sudden roar breaks forth, not in the least like human speech, but it means that They are Off!

'Are they off, Ralph?' inquires Master Walter of his companion, 'or is it a lie?' His small and well-gloved hand is trembling so, that his race-glass gives him views like a kaleidoscope. Splendour or Penury—nay, worse, or Shame await him, and are at the threshold. He knows not yet the foot of which it is that draws so nigh; and he dares not look forth to see.

'They are not off yet, lad,' returned Ralph; and even he has to swallow something which appears to be in his throat, but is not, before he can give that assurance.

Master Walter draws a long breath, for this is a reprieve, and endeavours once more to fix his eyes upon the dancing horses; but it is the retina of the mind only which presents its image. He beholds his mother's face, paler and more careworn than ever, sharpened with pain, through something which she has learned since—

'They're off! they're off!' is again the cry; and this time the great plane of faces shifts and flashes as it follows the speck of colour now in rapid motion—at first, a double line, next a lengthening oval, and then a string of brilliants, knotted here and there. As they approach Tattenham Corner, Walter perceives, for the first time, that they are horses, and that three are leading all the rest—Green, Black, and Yellow. The chances are then but two to one against him. How they lag and crawl, these vaunted coursers of the air! How long is this frightful suspense to last? 'The Yellow's beat—*Mica* is out of it—the Black wins—the favourite is beaten, blast him!—*Menelaus* wins'—There is a thunder of hoofs, a flash of Black and Green, then a cry such as, even on Epsom Downs, was never before heard. 'By Heaven, he's off! The boy is killed! Was it short of the post? What number's up? The Green has won. *The King, The King!* Hurrah, hurrah!' And so the babblement breaks forth again, and the tumultuous crowd flows in like water upon the fair green course, save one small space of it kept clear by men with staves, where lies a poor whitefaced jockey, senseless and motionless, for whose misfortune everybody is sorry, but especially those who have backed the Black.

All had gone well with the French horse until within a few strides of the winning-post; he was leading by half a length, and his victory seemed certain to all eyes, when suddenly—whether through the devilish nature of the beast, or whether poor Sam had touched him with the heel in that overwhelming crisis, can never now be known—but he stopped stock-still, and shot his rider (snatching at his ear as he flew by) a dozen yards, like cricket-ball from catapult. The uncelebrated Hicks had actually preceded the rival jockey at the post, but left his horse behind him; and there the beast was standing yet, with his fore-feet planted resolutely before him, and his untwisted ears laid level with his neck, as though he was giving 'a back' at leap-frog.

'Come down, and let us get away from this, lad,' broke forth Derrick impatiently: 'it is no use waiting here.'

'It is no use waiting here,' echoed the young man mechanically, as he followed his friend through the fast-thinning crowd down to the basement story.

At the foot of the staircase they met Mr Chifney, looking very white and disconcerted. He, too, had put more trust than he was wont to place in horses in *Menelaus*, and had suffered in consequence; and the wily trainer was not used to losses.

'How is the boy?' inquired Derrick.

'Bad, sir, bad: it is a bad business altogether,' muttered the man of horseflesh, not perhaps wholly thinking of the boy.

'It was not his fault, however,' continued Ralph. 'No man could have kept his seat during such a devil's trick. Look you, let him have all he requires; everything. I will be responsible.'

Mr Chifney had expected from this stormy client some terrible outbreak of wrath and disappointment; and lo, he was all benevolence and charity! His astonishment exhibited itself significantly enough in his face; but Ralph mistook the cause.

'Why do you stare so, sir? I suppose I am good for a few pounds yet. The horse is mine; and I apprehend will be security enough; though I wish I could afford to shoot him—cursed beast! Where is Lord Stonart?'

'A Great Personage has, I have heard, just sent for him, to offer his congratulations.'

Ralph Derrick uttered a harsh and bitter laugh.

'I suppose we couldn't see this interesting interview, eh?'

'Certainly not, sir,' replied the trainer hurriedly, alarmed by Derrick's tone and air. 'I hope you are not thinking of putting us all in the wrong by any act of violence?'

'Well, no; I thought of conferring the honour of knighthood upon his Lordship with a horsewhip—that's all.'

'Take him away,' whispered the trainer to Master Walter; 'for Heaven's sake, take him home.'

'Yes, home. Come home, Ralph,' repeated the young man, like one in a dream.

'Ha, Lisgard, how goes it?' drawled Captain Wobegon, sauntering slowly up to where the three were standing. 'I hope you recouped yourself for last night's misfortunes by *The King* just now. Devilish near thing, though. The Frenchman did win by a head, but luckily it was the boy's, and not his own.'

'I backed the wrong horse,' returned Master Walter gloomily. 'And I owe you—how much is it?'

'A little over fourteen hundred. If it's any convenience to you, I can wait a fortnight or so; I would say longer—but Lurline—she was inquiring after you, only yesterday, by the by; I felt quite jealous—has a soul above economy. And after the Derby, you know, folks send in their bills; especially jewellers. They know if they are not paid *then*, it's a bad look-out. What a lot that fellow Stonart must have netted! I'm sorry to see you so down in the mouth; you used to be such a lucky fellow.'

'Used to be such a lucky fellow,' mused Master Walter, as he and his companion made their way to the outskirts of the heath, where a place had been appointed at which their Hansom was to wait

for them. 'Yes, so I was. I used to win in a small way, and yet people were always glad to see me. They won't be so pleasant, I reckon, when they find that I am a defaulter. I can't get at any money for a year, and who'll wait a year without making a row? Even if they do, mine will be a fine coming of age. How *could* I have been such a frightful fool?'

'Tell your fortune, my pretty gentleman,' observed a gipsy girl, laying her walnut-coloured fingers upon the young man's coat-sleeve. 'You are born under a lucky star.'

'I may have been born there; but I have wandered far away from its influence,' replied Master Walter, shaking her hand off somewhat roughly. 'If you want a shilling, you shall have it; for I have nothing but other people's money about me, and that one always parts with very readily. But don't call me lucky, for that's a lie, you jade.'

'Bless your handsome face,' returned the gipsy humbly, 'it's a shame that it ever should be crossed by the shadow of sorrow. You can't be unlucky, sir, with eyes like yours—especially,' added she, as the two strode hastily away, 'especially among the ladies.'

'Do you hear that, lad?' laughed Derrick encouragingly; but the young man was too wrapt up in his own sombre thoughts to heed such things.

'I must sell out,' muttered he to himself; 'that's the first thing. And I must run down to Mirk; there is no knowing what that spitefire there may do else.'

'Here's our Hansom, and the fellow not drunk for a wonder!' exclaimed Derrick. 'Where's the horse, man?'

'In this next booth, sir,' returned the driver. 'I will put him to in no time.—I am afraid your honours have not won.'

'See, Walter, lad,' cried Derrick in remonstrance; 'that's your fault. Don't hang out such signals of distress that everybody who meets us offers their confounded pity. Be a man, lad; be a man. Besides, what did that gipsy girl say just now? Many a wise word is spoken in jest. She said, with your good looks, that you must needs be lucky with the women. I should like to see the heiress who would say "No" to Captain Walter Lisgard. A good marriage would mend all this, and—'

'Go to the devil!' exclaimed the young man passionately.

'You are out of temper, lad,' returned the other gravely; 'but don't say those sort of things to me, for I have not deserved them.'

'Not deserved them! you have been my ruin, curse you!' continued the other with vehemence. 'But for you, you drunken—'

'Take you care, Walter Lisgard!' roared the bearded man in a voice of thunder. 'Do not make me strike you, for I would as soon strike my son. How can all this be my fault? Do you suppose that I have not lost also—almost all I have in the world save a few hundreds?'

'Ay, mine, I suppose,' exclaimed Walter bitterly. 'I know I owe you a thousand pounds.'

'Yes,' returned the other, producing his pocket-book, 'here are three I.O.U.s bearing your signature, for two, three, and five hundred pounds.'

'You shall be paid, sir, never fear,' rejoined the young man insolently. 'No man but you, however, would have produced them at such a time. But it serves me right for herding with such people.'

'Thank you, young man. At the same time, few of your fine gentlemen would treat them this way.' Thus saying, he tore them into little strips, and scattered them to the wind.—'All I ask, by way of repayment, now is, that you will listen to a few words I have to say. I have loved you, Walter Lisgard, in spite of yourself, and would have laid down my life for yours. I have concealed from my own heart as well as I could the selfish baseness that underlies your every act—but that is over now. Look you, on the coasts where I have come from, there is many a bay which, if you saw it at high tide, you would say: "What a beautiful harbour! what smooth and smiling water! This is a place for all men to cast anchor." But when the tide is going out, you see how you have been deceived. Here is a reef that would wreck a navy; here is a jagged and cruel rock, and there another and another. With every one, you say to yourself, surely this is the last. But for this and for that, there was never a better anchorage; and how beautiful the place is! What luxuriant foliage—what exquisite verdure fringes the shore—just the shores, you know. But when the tide is quite out, it is impossible to like the place any longer. There are nothing *but* reefs and rocks to be seen then, and a few loathsome reptiles among the slime. Now, Walter Lisgard, I have come upon you at dead low-water, and I don't wish to meet you any more. You will deceive others, of course, who may see you at the flow, but you will never deceive me. I shall go down to Mirk, after a little, to bring away my wife. Take my advice, and don't be there. Above all things, see that your mother does not cross me in that matter, or it will be worse for all concerned. I have nobody now in the world who cares for me save Mary Forest, and they shall not rob me of her. Here is the Hansom in which we can no longer sit together. You are not used to walking, being what is called a gentleman, so you had better take it. All I ask you is, to leave our lodgings before I reach them, since you will arrive there first; or if not—I will take myself off elsewhere; I should be sorry to be under the same roof, with you again, young man.'

Then pulling his hat forward upon his brow, in place of farewell, Ralph Derrick turned his back upon Walter Lisgard, and took his way to town on foot. As the captain, sitting alone in no very enviable frame of mind, passed him afterwards upon the road, he could not help remarking to himself how old and bowed the insolent fellow looked.

HAPPY HOMES.*

THE condition of multitudes of the manual labouring-classes in this country is a reproach to our modern and somewhat boasted civilisation. It has attracted attention, however, far more than at any former time, and good hopes may therefore be entertained. Earnest efforts are also being made in various ways for its improvement, and with some measure of success. Ministers of every denomination, city missionaries, and Sunday-school teachers, labour in the cause of religion. Many exert themselves to diffuse the blessings of education. Others devote their energies chiefly to the promotion of

temperance. But all these find a great obstacle to their success in the densely-crowded state of the poorer districts of towns, and the want of that space and accommodation in the houses of the working-classes, both in town and country, which are necessary for the purposes of family life. If the inhabitants of narrow lanes, which the sunshine scarcely enters, and where the pure air of heaven cannot circulate, draw in poison with their breath, and fevers and consumption and a long train of diseases are the consequence, not less certain is it that the moral atmosphere which surrounds them is pernicious. The members of decent families, unhappily reduced to the necessity of living in such situations, are brought into close contact with the most depraved of human beings, and are familiarised from childhood with every idea of vice. The houses afford no place of retirement for reading, for self-improvement of any kind, or for devotion; and do not even admit of the observance of that decency without which a proper tone of moral feeling cannot subsist. Dr Begg well says: 'Man must have not only a covering, but a HOME. God made men in families; and it is upon the right maintenance and ordering of these little kingdoms that the peace and social order of the great kingdoms of the world depend.'

Because their habitations are not fit for homes, the circumstances in which tens of thousands of families in Britain live at the present day, powerfully tend to degradation and vice. Nor is the evil confined to towns. It exists to a great extent also in villages, through the mistaken policy of landowners, who dread an increase of the village population, and of consequent pauperism. Sites for houses are therefore refused, and the result is, that new buildings are erected within the space to which the village is confined, where formerly there were gardens; and worse still, the existing houses are made to accommodate a greater number of families, and are crowded with lodgers. Pauperism is increased by the very means taken to prevent it, for vice and disease become more prevalent, and both produce it. And even in strictly agricultural districts, the houses of labourers are often mere hovels, not half so well adapted to the wants of human beings as the stables, byres, and pig-sties are to those of the brutes for which they are intended.

Dr Begg calls attention, in the little volume now under our notice, to statistical returns obtained at the census of 1861, concerning house-accommodation in Scotland, from which it appears that there were at that date 666,786 inhabited houses in Scotland; and of these, 246,601 consisted of only two rooms, 226,723 of only one room, and 7964 houses were without windows! In Edinburgh, one hundred and twenty-one families lived in houses of one room, without a window; in Glasgow, two hundred and forty-one. About fifty thousand of the population of Edinburgh, and about one hundred thousand of the population of Glasgow, lived in houses of one room; many of these houses containing six, seven, or eight persons, and some of them a greater number, even up to fifteen. There is no reason to think that the state of things is better in England, although no such statistical returns were obtained for England, and it is due to Dr Begg to state that it was very much through his energetic exertions, in urging the subject upon the attention of government, and moving others to do so, that they were obtained for

* *Happy Homes for Working-men, and how to get them.* By James Begg, D.D. London: Cassell, Potter, and Galpin. 1866.

Scotland. They exhibit in a striking manner the appalling magnitude of an evil, which demands the serious attention of statesmen and philanthropists.

It is not too much to demand that cottages of at least two or three apartments should be provided for agricultural labourers, and these not erected, as is too often the case, in damp situations, without the slightest attempt at drainage. To this extent, surely, the legislature might interfere, requiring all landowners to do what some have already done of their own accord. It is reasonable to say that where a manufacturing or mining village has sprung up, facilities should be given for the erection of the needful number of houses. A landowner may take his own way in the first instance; but if he finds it to his profit to have mines or manufactories on his estate, he ought to be regarded as having committed himself to the granting of sites for houses on fair and reasonable terms. The public interest requires it. In like manner, the extension of towns over a greater area ought not to be arrested at the mere pleasure of individuals. It is a great public improvement, and Dr Begg properly contends that provision ought to be made for it as for other great public improvements, and that ground should be taken for it, if necessary, without consent of the owners, at a fair price, as it is for railways. Otherwise, the difficulties in the way may often be found insuperable, and the population of fever-haunted lanes may remain as dense as it is, social reform may be prevented, and multitudes left to vice and misery.

At the present moment, a great project is entertained in Edinburgh, the opening up of some of the worst districts of the Old Town by new streets, and by the widening of lanes or *clases*. The Lord Provost, who has recently entered on his office, has taken the lead in the movement for this purpose, and calculates that if the proposed improvements are effected, three hundred lives will be saved annually—a calculation which is probably within the mark—whilst great benefit may be expected as to morality and religion. But what is to become of the actual inhabitants of the districts which are to be improved? They must find houses elsewhere, and these houses must be built. The progress of the alterations must not be so rapid as to throw them out of their present abodes, however miserable these may be, before there is room for them in new ones. Too much of this has taken place already, particularly in towns through which railways have been carried, and with the result of a more grievous overcrowding than before. The question now arises, how the additional house-accommodation is to be provided? It is this question which Dr Begg undertakes to answer in the present work, and not with special reference to the projected improvements in Edinburgh, but generally with a view to the improvement of all towns, and of the condition of the working-classes. He regards the erection of houses for the working-classes to anything like the extent necessary, as an enterprise too vast for mere benevolent effort, even if this were the way in which it could be most beneficially done. He thinks it unlikely ever to be accomplished by speculators seeking their own advantage in the investment of money, because this kind of property is far from being one of the most desirable of investments; whilst the rents, which, for their own security, speculators in house-building must

demand, are a heavy drain on the limited resources of their tenants. He urges upon working-men the consideration of the advantage which they would derive from building houses for themselves; he urges upon the whole community the duty of seeking to secure for them every possible facility of doing so. He refers to the success which has attended the *Freehold Land and Building Societies* of Birmingham and other towns in England, societies which had their origin in a political motive, but have been the means of accomplishing what is already a great social reformation. He adduces also the example of the *Co-operative Building Company* of Edinburgh, the first of its kind in Scotland, and formed so recently as the year 1861, but which has already erected one hundred and fifty-nine excellent workmen's houses, and has forty more in progress, the houses being almost always eagerly purchased as soon as they are finished, or even before they are finished, and generally by men who obtain money for that purpose from a Property Investment Society. The price of a house, with a small garden, in a pleasant suburban situation, is £130, of which £125 is obtained from a Property Investment Company; so that a man can enter at once into possession of it who has, besides the furniture, £5 in the savings-bank for a first instalment of the price, and about £3 for the expense of title-deeds. And by an annual payment of about £13 to the Property Investment Company, which is only about £2 a year more than the annual rent of such a house, he can make it absolutely his own in fourteen years. What an encouragement to economy and temperance, and every good habit! And what a difference to a family in that commodious house, with its little garden, and its quiet, decent neighbourhood, from the miserable crowded lane, reeking with filth and vice!

The scheme is indeed an admirable one, and the best interests of the country are concerned in its promotion. It has sprung up gradually, and as it were naturally; it is not the creation of any individual mind. Dr Begg, along with others, has the merit of having early perceived its excellence; and to his energy in explaining and recommending it, the beginning of its adoption in Scotland is very much to be ascribed. Much may still be done by explaining and recommending it everywhere; but much needs also to be done in the removal of obstacles out of the way. These obstacles arise chiefly from two causes: the difficulty of obtaining land, to which reference has already been made; and the expense of obtaining a legal title to what is called in Scotland 'heritable property,' and in England 'real estate.' This expense is unreasonably great, and in Scotland it is much greater than in England, although recent acts of parliament have done something to diminish it. In England, also, there are different tenures of land; *copyhold* in one place, and *freehold* in another; and in consequence of this difference, the building of houses by working-men has not yet made progress at Manchester as it has done at Birmingham and some other towns. The *copyhold* system most nearly resembles that universally prevalent in Scotland. The *freehold* system is the most simple and natural; and little more is to be desired than an extension of it to all parts of the United Kingdom. The relics of feudalism are a barrier to progress; and the ruins and rubbish cannot too soon be cleared out of the way.

It is not to be hoped, as to many of the

inhabitants of the worst districts of cities, that they will seek to avail themselves of any facilities for building houses of their own. Some would, who are now compelled to live there. And as to those who would not, a great improvement in their circumstances would be indirectly effected. It is thus that we may hope for a general change. And when the overcrowding begins to be diminished, means, now comparatively powerless, will be found to be powerful. The temptations to intemperance would not be felt in the same degree, and the diminution of intemperance would prove favourable to all that is good. There can be no doubt that much temptation to intemperance arises from the want of proper house-accommodation, and the consequent want of the delights of home-life; much also from the exhausting effects of a vitiated atmosphere, producing a craving for stimulants. In both respects, a diminished density of population would be most beneficial in its results. And many of the difficulties which now stand in the way of the progress of education and of religion would vanish.

KAILIE STORIES.

THE word *kailie* is Gaelic, and appears to signify primarily 'a pilgrimage' or 'visiting.' It is used secondarily to signify 'gossiping,' but never in a contemptuous sense. But it is more particularly applied to a custom universal in the Highlands, and still, to a certain extent, kept up in the remoter parts of the low country, of neighbours within a certain range of district congregating in the house of one of their community, to pass the night in the social interchange of good cheer, and particularly in singing songs and telling stories, while all kinds of indoor work are at the same time carried on. All the houses of the neighbourhood are reckoned to be alternately free and common to the observers of this custom, but usually some particular two or three are adhered to in preference to others. Modern ideas are no doubt displacing the custom, and it will perhaps soon be unknown. It would take a long chapter to describe the usual incidents that occur, but it is a pity that some accident should not be made to collect the pictures of common life, and the current lore, that are constantly passing and repassing at such gatherings. The following stories, which all belong to the north of Scotland, are merely intended to give some idea of the sort of spirit that is usually indulged in among the 'gossips.' *Kailter* is 'a man-teller,' and *kailteh* 'a woman-teller.'

KAILTER MR HUTCHESON.

I remember hearing, when I was a boy, a story told of a neighbouring minister, who, not being much distinguished for his own abilities in sermonising, thought he might begin and substitute the composition of some of our worthy divines for his own, and preach them—no doubt through a conscientious zeal for their spiritual welfare—to his admiring little flock. One day he happened to be declaiming with more than his wonted animation, and appeared to think his oratory was taking admirable effect, when his fiery chariot was stopped in mid-career by a voice singing out: '*That's Boston!*' At once, he stood as if transfixed by a lightning-stroke. But recovering himself, and thinking to annihilate the still ringing echoes of 'that voice of Satan' by the thunder of his own, he charged sublimely into his subject again,

and rose on the wings of the tempest as before. But he was no sooner at top-speed again, than the air rung with: '*That's Baxter!*' For a moment, the gowned hero stood paralysed, but only for a moment. Maddened by this second attack, he plunged forward again with all the fierceness of despair; his mouth began to foam; his eyes glared through his dishevelled hair; his arms flew about like the tails of a herd of oxen in midsummer; and his body writhed like a serpent over a fire. While this was going on in such a way as might have produced the desired effect, the hated interruption once more broke forth. This was now become unendurable. 'Put out that man!—vile limb of the devil!' roared the infuriated minister. 'That's your ain noo!' retorted his incorrigible tormentor, for the fourth and last time. Never afterwards was the minister known to borrow a sentence, but preached such discourses as were unanimously pronounced—even by the censorious yeoman—to be his own.

KAILTEH MRS HUTCHESON.

A tailor made a wager that he would make a pair of hose in the pulpit of a certain Church. He was not to enter the church until dark, and he was to have the hose done at twelve o'clock, or, at any rate, was to continue working at them until midnight. When the night was far advanced, and the tailor was becoming a little *eerie* as to the peculiarity of his position, his attention was roused by a slight hissing noise in the body of the church, and lifting up his eyes, he beheld a long, white, bony figure rise in the middle of the building, apparently from under the ground, which, raising its right arm, presently began addressing him. 'Look, thou vile reptile, that comest here to insult the dead at rest, and defile the sanctuary of God! look here! know that thou shalt not mock with impunity the silent sleep of the departed! Dost thou see this right arm? there is on it neither flesh nor blood, nor is there now, nor has there been for many a day.'—'I see that, and I saw this,' rejoined the tailor. Holding up his left arm, the figure repeated the same, then his right leg, and then his left, and the tailor answered each time with the same rejoinder. It struck twelve, and the tailor was done. The figure approached him, with the ominous words: 'As thou hast seen, so shalt thou feel.' The tailor leaps up, and takes to flight, the figure chasing, when, just at the door, and as the tailor gave a bound out of the church, the figure strikes at him with his right hand, but missing him, and hitting the door-pillar, he leaves the mark of his hand; and there the mark of the 'devil's' five fingers are unto this day. The tailor heard the blow behind him, and then the figure vanished in a blaze which singed the tailor's skin; and never more till the day of his death had the tailor a hair on any part of his body, or had he a shadow.

KAILTER MR HUTCHESON.

An old woman of the parish of — was so indecorous as one day to allow her pig—which was a pet—to follow her to church, and not only to the church, but *into* it. In due time, the services began by the minister giving out a psalm, during which time grumpy was as quiet as it was possible for her nature to be, being nestled quite close to the feet of her owner, and only disturbing a few sensitive ladies by an occasional low grunt

of self-congratulation. But when the psalm began to be sung, grumphy pricked up her ears, gave a loud snort or two, by way of clearing her throat, or ascertaining the proper key-note, and then struck boldly in with the general voice. The tune, of course, she did not strictly follow, and not believing in the measures, she lengthened them out a note or two, by way of refrain, at each of which the man in the gown half rose and peeped over the pulpit. The singing over, the minister rose to pray. But grumphy, still thinking it her duty not to be silent, struck in every time the good man gave a fervent exclamation, supporting it in the same key with great emphasis. This state of matters continued for some time, much to the merriment of the youngsters, and not much to the credit of the elder people, who all of them seemed afraid of losing the tongue of Mrs Graymantle by silencing that of her fourfooted friend. This at last roused the worthy minister, who did not relish his every sentence being chorused in such a fashion, and leaning over the pulpit, he thus apostrophised the beadle: 'Tak awa' that pig, and the owner o' the pig; tak them as far as such a place, and if you get a stane upon them, guid and weel, and haste you back to worship.'

KAILTER SANNERS BAIN.

I returned hame ae day, and found Tam Macphail waitin' for me in the hoose, readin' a beuk. 'Weel, Tam,' says I, 'I'm gled to see you sae weel employed; ye seem to be very muckle interaisted in that beuk; let me see—I think that's Fox's *Beuk o' Martyrs*.'

'Ay, troth is 't,' says Tam; 'and a capital beuk it is. I hae been readin' it here this mair than an oor, and I think mair o' it the langer I leuk at it. God-a-mercy, what pictures, man! Lordsakes! leuk, here's ae chiel boran oot anither ane's e'e wi' an 'imble. My troth! I think it's a beuk. Ye maun gie me the len o' it, Sanners; I'll tak guid care o' it, ferna ye.'

'Weel, we shall see,' says I. 'But foo hae ye been this lang time? I haena seen you for ooks. Foo is the guidwife? I houp Jeanie's knee is better.'

'Nae a muckle better o' it,' says Tam; 'we are a' weel else but this. Tibbie yonner was speakin' about a doctor, and priggin' sair wi' me this mornin' to alloo her to sen' for ane. But of coorse ye ken my opinions on that subjick, that I hae nae faith in sic astrologers and soothsayin' hypocrites, wi' their fiddlem-diddlem-lotions-potions-notions-nonsense. But ye ken, Sanners, it's the kind o' no respectable-like, for ae thing, and, anither thing, if it should come to waur, or end in warst (whilk Gude forfend!), and although it woulдна be true neither, fowks woud lay the blame and cause o' a' agin me. So my principal errand here was to see if ye woud do me a particular favour in this matter, whilk is to gae and ca' on Tibbie, just as if ye gaed o' your ain accord, to speir for Jeanie, and of coorse Tibbie'll explain it a', and ax your advice, and speir if she shouldna send for a doctor, and misca' me, and sic-like. Then ye can tak up the string wi' her, and tell her seriously to get a doctor (deil tak him!) immedantly, and that ye'll tak me in hand about it, and stand atween her and a' consequences. And, Sanners, ye'll sattie wi' the doctor, and I'll sattie wi' ye (but that's atween corsells); sae that'll keep things trig and snod. Ye see I dinna want them to ken that I think

anything o' the accident; but I'm afeard it's no to be ow'r muckle lippeded to.'

KAILTER PETER GRANT.

Tam Shaw went to the market to sell his mare, for the same reason that some people seek to divorce their other half; but instead of acting the part of a rascally cheating jockey, by representing his animal to be everything it was not, Tam's object was to do honestly. So, when would-be buyers gathered round to look at the 'beast,' guidman Tam cried out: 'Haud oot ow'r, haud oot ow'r!—if ye care for life and hale banes, haud oot ow'r! I hae to put on the harness on her every day wi' the pitchfork' (spoken very quickly and vehemently); and thereupon, in a way as if he did not want people to see, he began tickling the 'beast,' to prove his word by ocular demonstration. The *ruse* took. Some one, thinking the matter was all a joke, and the man just a 'queer one,' bought the animal at once. Next day, 'the gowkit idiot,' as Tam said, 'tried to put back the beast, "for," says he, "a' ye said was true." And do you mean to say ye ever dooted my word, sir? says I to him.'

KAILTEH MEG MURRAY.

When ow'r the fire ye place the kettle,
And want your bree to be smoke free,
O' clean white saut, a chosen pickle,
Lay on the lid, and say *Forbid*.

KAILTEH MRS ROSE.

The Bible was considered by the old folks as a depository of all knowledge of everything that ever was, or is, or should be known. The common belief appeared to be that everything good or natural was to be found in the Bible, and whatever was not found in it, ought not to be. In warning young folk of anything that was thought hurtful or wrong, the reason assigned would be that it was forbidden: 'Such a thing is forbidden;' and if asked: 'Where forbidden?' the reply invariably came: 'Where but in the Bible?' As a universal refuge for ignorance, anything that could not be accounted for was said to belong to the hidden mysteries of the Bible; and any old saw, common saying, or story that could not be otherwise authenticated, was at once referred to the Bible. If any doubt should be expressed as to such or such a thing being really in the Bible, the reply would be: 'Nae fear it's in 't, gin 'twould be foun' oot.' Ignorance on any subject supposed to be very commonly known, was held as shewing great want of knowledge of the Bible. I remember old Hugh Roy, who was noted as a great Christian in his day, once asking a beggar, who was relating to him a story about the *water-kelpies*, what he understood these to be. 'Losh, man!' replied the beggar, 'but ye're ignorant o' your Bible, when ye dinna ken about the *water-kelpies*!'

KAILTEH MRS MACWATT.

An old lady called one morning on Eneas Ross at rather an early, and, as it proved, unseasonable hour, for the purpose of paying her account with the guidman, and, without much ceremony, tabled the money; whereupon Eneas, rising, seized 'the root of all evil,' and with the greatest disgust, flung it to the other side of the room, with this reply to his visitor: 'Do you think I am to do homage to that vile worldly trash before I bow down before my Maker? Get thee behind me, Mammon!'

KAILTEH MRS HUTCHESON.

Dr Maccoll and Mr Mackimmie having gone one time into the far west to preach, were so inhospitably received by the people of the place, because, as they afterwards learned, they were taken for excisemen, that they could not so much as get night-lodging. No one would receive them. At length, however, though very reluctantly, they were directed to the dwelling of an old woman far up amongst the hills, and were, moreover, furnished with a guide. Arrived at the old woman's house, their guide announced them, with a word of explanation in his own way, and took his leave. Here they were indeed received, but with a very ill grace. Their hostess remarked to them, that if they wanted food, there was some sowens that her other people had left, and if they liked to take that and milk, they could take it. It was rather cold refreshment, but they took it, and were glad to get it. Having despatched their repast, they asked the old dame if they could have grass for their horses. To this she replied, that she had grass, away in the park on the southern shoulder of the hill; but if they wanted any, they would have to shear it themselves.

'We'll do that,' rejoined Dr Maccoll, in great glee, and thereupon started for the southernmost shoulder of the hill.

'O doctor!' said Mr Mackimmie, running up to him, 'I can't shear—I can't shear!'

'But I'll shear it,' said the doctor; 'and you'll carry it home on your back.'

In the morning, at the first peep of dawn, they were roused from their slumbers by their old hostess thumping at the door. 'Rise—rise!' cried she.

'Why so soon?' they replied.

'That's my business,' said the old dame; 'but if ye want to know, rise and see; may be, too, it may be something in your own way of business—ye'd better look sharp, hadn't ye!'

To this they replied by tossing themselves in the bed, as if they essayed to rise; but being nowise tired of the blankets yet, for they had had but a few hours of sleep, and not feeling that they had rested enough for the fatigues of the previous day, they were loath to rub their drowsy eyes. But the old lady was not to be diverted. She returned again, something louder than before, and, to urge her request, became so condescending as to explain part of her reasons, and to say that it was necessary for them to get up without more ado, for she was going to hear a great minister from the east country, and she had all her gear to put right before she could go; but she must go, come of everything that might; and if they wanted a breakfast, they must take it then, or none, for she wanted them out of the way, and no more ado. This was plain-dealing; and making a virtue of necessity, they rose, and proceeded to avail themselves of the breakfast, which consisted of two 'bickers' of oatmeal 'porritch,' and milk, and barley-cakes. Then, having finished their meal, they got themselves 'out of the way.'

At the hour for beginning the services, Dr Maccoll stood up in the minister's box (there was no church), to the astonishment and dismay of not a few, but to the utter bewilderment and terror of the old lady, the doctor's hostess. The sermon she bided, but immediately thereafter she ran home, scrubbed and scoured the room, brought forth her

best and most precious gear, breaking at the same time some dear articles thereof, and when her guests returned, the old lady, now writhing like a roasting eel, ushered them into a room that made the ministers stare, and having made them sit down to a table covered and groaning with the mountain produce, and all the most esteemed Highland luxuries, overwhelmed them with courtesy and kindness.

S E A - V I E W.

I.—DAY.

The ships seem hanging in the air,
Through the haze and through the mist;
And the sea and the horizon
Are cloudy amethyst,
Till the keen rays pierce and sever
The veil before the sun,
When the ripples dance, and sparkles
Break forth from every one.

And the creosents and the churches,
Long looming through the gray,
Appear piled up in brightness
Of the expanding day;
And the pier, with arms extended,
Seems welcoming the ships,
And the red buoy to the southward,
On the foam-crest shines and dips,

As the little tawny vessels,
Umber, and yellow, and black,
Come skimming round the foreland
Upon the frigate's track,
Scattered like sheep a-feeding,
Over the glistening tide,
And the galley's oars like pinions
Of an albatross spread wide.

II.—NIGHT.

All day the sunbeams' shadow chased
Along the white cliff fleet,
Till the red light's fading westward
Where the clover's dewy sweet;
Till the surf's white fire rolls boating
Against the jetty wall,
And you hear the ship-bells sharply
To the absent sailors call.

And when the stars are sparkling,
The harbour's emerald flame
Shines to the ships returning
To the port from whence they came;
And the church-clock mourns so gravely
The passing of the hour,
And the moon in the blue sky ruling,
Shines with a fuller power.

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STAGE IMPROMPTUS.

'LET those that play your clowns, speak no more than is set down for them: for there be of them, that will themselves laugh, to set on some quantity of barren spectators to laugh too; though, in the meantime, some necessary question of the play be then to be considered: that's villainous; and shews a most pitiful ambition in the fool that uses it.' True, O Shakspeare! *Gagging* is a pitiful vice; but it has kept the stage, and will keep it, protest as we may. Some of the funniest bits in the *Critic*, as acted, are not to be found in any printed copy of that admirable burlesque; and we are vastly mistaken if that popular nobleman, my Lord Dundreary, is not almost entirely a creature of *gag*.

When O'Neill's company played at Dundalk, an influential patroness commanded *Pizarro*, and the manager was compelled to engage a Rolla from Dublin for the occasion. He did not think it necessary to make the 'star' aware that the state both of treasury and wardrobe forbade the employment of the usual force of supernumeraries; so, when the representative of Ataliba's army appeared on the scene, Rolla was paralysed with astonishment, and stopped short in his invocation. Quickly recovering himself, however, he exclaimed: '*What! all slain but thee?* Come, then, my brave associate, &c.'—a piece of *gag* pardonable under the circumstances.

Hardly so excusable was that perpetrated by Emery in the same play at Drury Lane. The rising of the curtain had been delayed beyond the usual time; the audience grew impatient, and Kemble, in no very good temper, informed the house, that they were only waiting Mr Emery's arrival to go on with the performances—he being the sentinel of the evening. At length the tardy actor came, and easily made his peace by explaining that he had been detained at home by an interesting domestic event. The well-known prison-scene came, and the following colloquy took place between Rolla and the soldier: 'Hast thou a wife?' 'I have.'—'Hast thou children?' 'I had two this

morning. *I have got three now!*' Exit Rolla in a passion, amid loud and prolonged laughter. For that night at least Emery was the hero of the play. Equally successful in bringing down the house by illegitimate means was an actor who, playing Barbarossa at a seaport, appealed to the sympathies of his nautical listeners by exclaiming:

Did not I,

By that brave knight, Sir Sidney Smith's assistance,
And in conjunction with the gallant Nelson,
Drive Bonaparte and all his fierce marauders
From Egypt's shores?

'Let me play Catesby to your Richard,' said a country tailor with a soul above buttons, to George Frederick Cooke, 'and I will make you a coat for nothing.' The bargain was struck. Catesby got on well enough till he came to the tent-scene; but rushing on the stage at Richard's challenge of 'Who's there?' he was so startled by the great actor's glance, that he stood transfixed, only able to stammer out: 'Tis I, my lord, the early village cock;' and there he stuck fast, while the people shouted with delight, and Cooke growled out: 'Why the deuce don't you crow, then?'

An interpolation of Quin's brought him into serious trouble. Playing Cato at Drury Lane, Williams, who acted the messenger, in delivering the sentence: 'Cæsar sends health to Cato,' gave such a peculiarly ludicrous pronunciation to the last word, that Quin indignantly replied: 'Would he had sent a better messenger!' This so enraged the Welshman, that he challenged Quin, who tried to laugh him out of his passion. Williams, however, was determined to revenge his outraged dignity, and attacked Quin as he was leaving the theatre. The latter was obliged to draw in self-defence, and the hot-headed Welshman paid for his folly with his life.

Prologues are never heard now a days, but players used to resent their omission, and it took some time to reconcile them to the new fashion. When *Cato* was revived at Covent Garden some years ago, it was resolved to dispense with the prologue. Mr Wignell, as Portius, was suffered to pronounce his opening lines—

The dawn is overcast; the morning lowers,
And heavily in clouds brings on the day—
and then cries of 'Prologue, prologue!' rang through
the house. Unaffected by the uproar, the actor,
without pausing or changing his voice, went on—

Ladies and gentlemen, there has been no
Prologue spoken to this play these twenty years.—
The great, the important day, big with the fate
Of Cato and of Rome!

which so tickled the fancy of the audience, that
they allowed the play to go on without further
interruption. Still better and worse was the
Nottingham manager's speech as Richard III.—

Hence, babbling dreams; you threaten here in vain.
That man in the broken wig has got in without paying.
Richard's himself again!

Nor did the marring of Shakspeare's text stand in
Stephen Kemble's way, when he wanted to rebuke
a noisy occupant of the boxes at the Dublin
Theatre, who annoyed Stephen by applauding
everything, and did it by making Shylock assure
Gratiano: 'Till thou canst rail the seal from off
this bond, thou, and that noisy fellow in the boxes
yonder, but offend your lungs to speak so loud.'

Some of the most comical interpolations have
come from the audience itself. When Spranger
Barry's Romeo drew all the town to Covent Garden,
Garrick, in defence, took to playing the same char-
acter at Drury Lane. On the first occasion of his
doing so, upon the love-lorn Juliet exclaiming:
'O Romeo, Romeo, wherefore art thou Romeo?' a
good-natured auditor saved Garrick the necessity
of replying, by calling out: 'Because Barry is gone
to the other house.' Dear Oliver Goldsmith once
made himself conspicuous by expressing his opinion
of a play too audibly. He had just quarrelled with
the great actor-manager, and went to Drury Lane
to 'assist' at the production of a new tragedy
called *The Countess of Salisbury*. The poet sat
pretty patiently through four weary acts, but when
the slaughtering commenced, he could bear it no
longer; he rose from his seat, shouted: 'Brown-
rigg! Brownrigg! by God!' and hurried out of
the theatre. Bernard, in his Autobiography, relates
a good story of Haydon the painter. 'One evening
I was playing Sharp in the *Lying Valet* at Plym-
mouth, when my friend Benjamin Haydon and his
little son (B. R. H.) were in the stage-box, and on
my repeating the words: "I have had nothing to
eat since last Monday was a fortnight," young
Haydon exclaimed in a tone audible through the
house: "What a whopper! You dined at my
father's house this afternoon." The same actor is
also responsible for the following: 'Our principal
actress, a Mrs Kirby, playing Queen Anne, inquired
very piteously:

Oh, when shall I have rest?

A ruthless grocer started up in the pit and shouted
out: 'Not till you have paid me my one pound
one and tenpence, ma'am.' Quite as matter of
fact in his way was the Yankee who, strolling
into a theatre on the evening of the arrival
of the news of the fall of the Crimean stronghold,
could not hear Hamlet's complaint—

I die, Horatio;

The potent poison quite o'ersows my spirit;
I cannot live to hear the news from England—

without easing his mind by shouting across the
pit: 'Die away, old hoss! Sebastopol's taken!'—a

piece of gratuitous information that probably sur-
prised the representative of the Danish prince, as
much as an English Othello was astonished by a
girl tumbling from gallery to pit as he pronounced
the words:

'Tis like she comes to speak of Cassio's death.

Stage-managers are often nearly driven out of
their wits by perverse *supers*, who will misunder-
stand their instructions, like the stage centurions
who received Quin as Coriolanus with a succession
of grave bows, because he had told them to lower
their *fasces* when he appeared; and Mr General-
Utility is apt to bring down curses, not loud but
deep, upon his unlucky head by marring the
leading actor's most effective scene. At a rehearsal
of the banquet-scene in *Macbeth*, the 'first murder-
er,' spite of Macready's adjurations, persisted in
walking down to the centre of the stage, and there-
by entirely hiding Macbeth from the audience.
The tragedian impatiently called for a carpenter,
a brass-headed nail, and a hammer. The carpenter
came. 'Do you see that plank there? Drive the
nail into that spot.' It was done. 'Now, you, sir'
(this to the 'murderer')—'look at that nail. Come
down to that spot, not an inch further—and wait
there till I come.' Mr Utility did as he was
desired, and Macready's mind was easy. Night
came, and with it the banquet-scene. The 'first
murderer' enters, walks down the stage, stops
suddenly, then turns round and round, apparently
looking for something he had dropped. The
audience begin to titter. Macready stalks to the
man's side: 'In Heaven's name, what are you
about?' 'Sure,' exclaims the "murderer," 'ain't I
looking for that blessed nail of yours!' The effect
of this speech upon the audience may be imagined.
The 'first murderer' had to give his royal employer
a wide berth for the rest of the evening.

The most experienced actor is apt to find his
tongue unruly at times, and playing strange tricks
with the text. The following curious colloquy
took place between Quin as Balance and Peg
Woffington as Sylvia in the *Recruiting Officer*:
'Sylvia, how old were you when your mother was
married?' 'What, sir?'—'Pshaw, I mean, how
old were you when your mother was born?' 'I
regret, sir, I cannot answer your questions; but I
can tell you how old I was when my mother died!'
Peg was not so stupid as the actor who persisted in
sticking to his text, when Elliston as Richmond
blunderingly asked: 'Is young George Stanley
slain?' and replied: 'He is, my lord, and safe in
Leicester town!' An Aberdeen actress having to
ask if somebody retained his influence at the India
House, from some extraordinary confusion of ideas,
actually inquired: 'Does he still maintain his
infants at the India House?' Sometimes tongue-
tripping proves catching, as when Mrs Davenport
exclaimed: 'I protest, there's a candle coming along
the gallery with a man in its hand;' and Mrs
Gibbs directly afterwards declared: 'Betty has
locked the key, and carried away the door in her
pocket.'

The art of apologising is well worth the study
of any actor who hopes—and what actor does not
—to be a manager. To be able to put folks in a
good-humour who have reason to be in a bad one,
is a valuable accomplishment, and one or two
comedians we wot of are adepts in the art, melting
the anger of the gods as sunshine melts the snow.
But some ludicrous apologies have been made from

the stage. Jack Johnstone, being called upon to sing the *Sprig of Shillelagh*, stepped forward to do so; but when he should have commenced, stood silent and confused. At length, when the audience shewed signs of impatience, Jack astonished them by addressing them thus: 'Ladies and gentlemen, I assure you I have sung the song so often, that, by my soul, I cannot recollect how it begins!' Quin, who despised and detested theatrical dancers, had thrust upon him the disagreeable task of excusing the non-appearance of a popular danseuse, and executed it by saying: 'I am desired by the manager to inform you that the dance intended for to-night is obliged to be omitted, on account of Madame Rollan having dislocated her ankle. I wish it had been her neck!' This was bold, but not so bold as the speech made by a certain actress, who, in consequence of some scandalous story flying about town, was received with a storm of hisses. As soon as they subsided sufficiently for her voice to be heard, the undaunted dame advanced to the front, courtesied, and said: 'Ladies and gentlemen, I appear before you in my public profession of an actress, in which character I shall ever exert my utmost endeavours to please. As to the rest, I beg to be excused.' Nothing could have been done more neatly; the malcontents were struck dumb, and the actress soon earned their applause. There was pluckiness, too, in the appeal wrang from the unlucky representative of crook-backed Richard, who, finding it impossible to make head against the disapprobation evoked by his histrionic efforts, dropped blank verse, and in very plain prose told his audience: 'Mr Kean is playing this part in London at a salary of thirty pounds a night; I receive but fifteen shillings a week; and if it isn't good enough for the money, may the Lord above give you more humanity!'

One of his auditors at least must have appreciated the poor actor's courage, whatever he may have thought of his acting, for Elliston, who was present, was a proficient in addressing a theatrical audience; and well he might be, seeing his recklessness was constantly getting him into scrapes, out of which only his matchless insinuating impudence could extricate him. One season, when he had the Birmingham Theatre, business got awfully bad; do what he would, nothing but empty benches met the manager's eye night after night, and it became plain that unless something was done, the ghost would soon cease to walk. Elliston was equal to the occasion. Every wall in Birmingham grew eloquent recounting the feats of THE BOHEMIAN, who was to astonish the natives by his performances with a stone of a ton-weight. The night came, and the theatre was crammed. *Pizarro* was turned into a pantomime, for not a word could be heard for cries of 'The Bohemian! the Bohemian!' At last, the curtain fell; the band struck up *The Battle of Prague*, and all was expectation. Suddenly the audience were startled by the appearance—not of the Bohemian—but of the manager, who, pale as any ghost, exclaimed: 'The Bohemian has deceived me: *that* I could have pardoned; but he has deceived my friends—he has deceived *you*. I repeat, the Bohemian has deceived *us*: *he is not here*—and the man, of whatever name or nation he may be, who violates his word, commits an offence which'—The sentence was never finished; the conviction flashed upon the audience that they were sold, and a fearful clamour arose. Taking advantage of a momentary cessation,

Elliston proceeded: 'Anxious for your gratification, I entered into correspondence with the faithless foreigner, who was this day to have appeared. The correspondence, ladies and gentlemen, is in my pocket; I'll read it to you.' As Elliston coolly produced a packet of letters, the uproar broke out again with tenfold violence; he waited patiently till they were tired, and then went on: 'Here they are. *Does any gentleman present read German?* If so, would he honour me by stepping forward.' This was too much; peals of laughter rang through the house. 'Am I left alone? Then I'll translate it for you.' (Cries of 'No, no; go on, Elliston!') 'I obey; the correspondence shall *not* be read; but, ladies and gentlemen, *the stone is here*—you shall see it! You shall yet be satisfied! You are my patrons, and have a right to demand it!' Crash went the band again, up went the curtain, and there was an immense piece of sand-rock, labelled, 'This is the stone!' That was something, at any rate; the audience cheered; Elliston bowed, and disappeared.

In after-years, he had often to employ his eloquence upon his rough friends on the other side of the water. Surrey audiences, at least in those days, were somewhat of the noisiest; how he talked to them, may be judged from the following speech, delivered when the crowded state of the gallery rendered the gods more uproarious than usual. 'Ladies and gentlemen, I take the liberty of addressing you. It is of rare occurrence that I deem it necessary to place myself in juxtaposition with you. When I said juxtaposition, I meant *vis-à-vis*. When I uttered the words *vis-à-vis*, I meant contactability. Now, let me tell you that *vis-à-vis* (it is a French term) and contactability (which is a truly English term) very nearly assimilate to each other. Gentlemen! gentlemen! I am really ashamed of your conduct. It is unlike a Surrey audience. Are you aware that I have in this establishment most efficient peace-officers at my immediate disposal? Peace-officers, gentlemen, mean persons necessary in time of war. One word more. If that gentleman in the carpenter's cap will sit down, the little girl in red ribbons (you, my love, I mean) will be able to see the entertainment.' Elliston's style may seem a cavalier one for a manager to adopt towards his patrons, but we have known modern audiences to be treated in even more supercilious fashion, and bear it with profound equanimity.

THE HIGH PASTURAGES OF SWITZERLAND.

HAVING given a slight sketch of the lower pastures and arable land of Switzerland, the cultivation of which furnishes the shepherds with hay for their immense flocks during the winter season, we will now call the attention of our readers to the other division of the grass-lands, which are found within the level of four thousand to six thousand feet.

These Alpine fields are divided into three classes: the Lower Alps, or Alps de Mai; the Alps de Vaches (cows); and the Alps de Moutons (sheep), and are distinguishable according to their separate elevations. The two former are found on the summits of the lower range of mountains, in slopes well exposed

to the sun, and in the intervening ravines connecting the heights. In the winter, they are covered with a carpet of thick snow, which in early spring gradually disappears, giving place to a young and tender herbage, of an exquisite green. No sooner does this vegetation gladden the eye, than it is the signal to open the doors of the chalets, where the cattle have been imprisoned during the winter, and lead them to these heights, where they are permitted to feed for one month, until the still higher pastures are uncovered. These latter are called by the peasants *Kuh Alpen*, and are found in narrow valleys, surrounded on all sides by nearly perpendicular walls of rocks, or on plateaux between the teeth of the mountains, and even sometimes in the immediate neighbourhood of the glaciers themselves. It is on these high pastures that botanists find the rare Alpine plants which enrich their collections; indeed, the grass which covers these heights is so beautifully enamelled with flowers of every hue and fragrance, that the cows which feed there yield a milk, that, when made into butter, is celebrated for its aromatic and delicious taste. Above these Alps, again, rise the Schaf Alpen, or sheep-tracks, the limit of whose vegetation ends only where the eternal snows commence. On the jagged peaks of giddy heights, on the verge of mighty precipices, on wedge-like ledges of rocks, softened by atmospheric influences, where tufts of herbage, and a few mosses, lichens, and other hardy plants creep, sheep, goats, and chamois dispute with one another for the scanty vegetation that is found there. Notwithstanding the immense number of cattle fed on the grass-lands of Switzerland, it is commonly remarked by travellers, that in passing through the country, they seek in vain for the troops of cows which they have always understood form one of the picturesque features of its pastoral scenery. Whenever the question is asked as to where these herds are to be found, the invariable answer is, that they are on the Alps, and these Alps the tourist rarely visits. But in penetrating through the mountain solitudes amid scenes of savage grandeur, and especially when passing near the few villages scattered over the lower heights, the traveller can hear above him, on altitudes so far removed that the huge firs which form the forests look like diminutive shrubs, the silvery tinkling of far-off bells.

In l'Engadine, and in the valley of Zermatt, the lowest range of Alps is six thousand feet, the midmost seven thousand, and the highest reaches to above nine thousand feet. The whole tier may be seen from the heights of Monte Rosa rising one above another, and varied by the pyramidal and broken rocks which intersect them. The Schaf Alpines are frequently very difficult of access, and often, indeed, so isolated as to be surrounded on all sides by glaciers, so that when reached, they have the appearance of flowery isles on the bosom of the icy waves of a polar sea. Thus, in the middle of the large circle of snows formed by the numerous peaks of the Bernina, the two great glaciers of Rosegg and Cierva descend, and entirely surround

the Agaglione Alpine, upon which the sheep can only arrive by first crossing the perilous surface of their ice. Near the Saas, in the Canton de Valais, at the foot of the peaks of this chalet, the Glacier de Fée enriches a similar Alpine; whilst another field of the same kind is well known to all tourists who visit Chamonix, under the name of Le Jardin, lying at the bottom of the Mer de Glace. Many others of equally difficult access are found in various parts of Switzerland, yet the little crop of herbage which each produces is eagerly appropriated by the shepherds for their flocks, and in some instances, the sheep are obliged to be carried to them on the herdsmen's back, and are left to graze by themselves, their masters only returning from time to time to look after them.

Thus, from the bottom of the valleys of Switzerland, to the extreme heights where vegetation ceases, nature offers to man fields for culture and industry, and these gifts being appropriated, nothing is lost that honest toil can gain. It now remains for us to see the mode of life, and the means used in connection with these pastures and their cultivation. One of the great annual events in the pastoral life of the villagers of the higher cantons, takes place in the early spring, when the flocks and herds depart for the mountains. The day is celebrated by a fête, although there is mixed with the hilarity a considerable element of sorrow and pain, for it is a period of family separations which necessarily ensue; husbands, sons, and brothers quit their homes to pass three or four months alone with their cattle among the far-off heights. They bear these partings with resignation, feeling they are unavoidable, for unless the herds were cared for above, where would the next winter's snow find them? Instead, then, of useless weeping, the relatives of those who go with the cattle provide as far as they can for their comfort, and accompany them a part of their upward journey, with outward signs of festivity. The caravan which is formed on these occasions is one of the most picturesque sights that can well be imagined, especially when seen winding through the narrow valleys, or up the rugged sides of lofty mountains, and between dark forests of wood-crowned hills. At the head of the procession march two beautiful cows, proudly recognised as the guides of the flock, and self-conscious, too, of their own dignity. Each carries a large bell attached to its neck, whose silvery tinkle as the animal walks has a most harmonious sound, and the heads of these avant-couriers of the troop are always decorated with wreaths of flowers. One by one, the other cows follow, never disputing the honour given to their guide; behind them stalks the bull, and he alone would be worthy to be a study for Rosa Bonheur's pencil, for on his massive head, between the huge horns, he carries triumphantly the large copper boiler used to scald the milk before it is converted into cheese. Around these tame and useful creatures, frolicking and bounding in the freedom of regained liberty, come an undisciplined herd of goats; the young shepherd lads following, hardly less buoyant in their step than the animals themselves, while they make the woods ring with their Alpine horn and Swiss mountain songs. At the rear of this long cavalcade walks the head-shepherd, a man of experience; and by his side, an assistant leads the one horse or mule, laden with all the necessary utensils for making butter and cheese, and also with such

simple provisions as the shepherds require during their banishment above. Their first halting-place is on the Lower Alps, where the young fresh grass left free by the snow forms a feast of ravishing delicacy to the herds. Here they remain a full month, chalets rudely constructed forming shelter to man and beast; and at night, through the clear air, the shepherd's horn may be heard calling together his cows, who, obedient to the sound, collect round their two leaders, and return in procession to their night's quarters.

Those who have not in person visited the chalets, can form but little idea of the primitive simplicity with which these rude dwellings are built. In some places, they are merely made of large stones piled on one another, with a sloping roof, and surrounded by a narrow gutter to carry off the rain; others, when situated within reach of the forests, are built of rough logs of wood, placed across each other, the interstices being filled with moss and dried leaves; these are better than the stone huts, as they are much warmer, and retain less damp. The whole building is about twenty feet by fourteen, and divided by a slight wooden partition, the larger portion being used as a cow-shed. Above this apartment, and under the sloping roof, is the place where the hay is stored, and which forms the shepherd's sleeping chamber. The remainder, a space of about fourteen feet by six, is reserved for kitchen and parlour, and is not unfrequently shared by one or two favourite goats, or even a pig. This part is open to the roof, and through a trap-door, kept open by means of a long fir pole, the smoke finds exit, chimneys not being in vogue. It has also another slight partition or screen across one corner, which is appropriated as pantry or larder. There being no windows, daylight is admitted through the door, which is kept open for that purpose. The floor is of stone, or rather a mixture of earth, rock, and stone; and there is no fireplace, a fire being made when required on the ground in a corner. Its furniture consists of a wooden bench or settle, and perhaps a large stone boulder, which serves as table or seat, as may be required. The kitchen utensils comprise two or three porringers, a kettle, and a few wooden spoons, besides two milking-pails. Above the hearth, which is formed of stones, is suspended a little wooden crane that turns on a pivot, upon which is hung the great copper caldron that the king of the herd brought up in triumph on his head from the village below, and in which the milk is scalded preparatory to making it into butter and cheese. There is no lack of ventilation in the dwelling, for around, above and between the bare rafters which form the walls, the wind and cold air from the glaciers above whistle freely, though this is in a measure tempered by the warm and fragrant breath of the cows, who are closely packed every night within the hut.

The only things that do not become incrustured with smoke are the wooden pails and churn, and these are kept scrupulously clean and white. In such of the Alps where the attention of the peasants is directed more to making butter than cheese, the chalets are generally built against one or other of the rocks, in which a kind of dairy is excavated, through the crevices of which flows some little stream of water, admitting at the same time the cool air. These natural ventilations serve also as barometers, for as long as the air is cold, the shepherds know the fine weather will last; but if it

becomes warm, they know it will rain. An ordinary herd of cattle comprises about thirty cows in milk, a few young heifers, a herd of goats, and another of pigs, and these are fed on *le petit lait*, or skimmed-milk. A few cocks and hens also have the run of the chalets by day, and roost at night on the backs of the cows. The attendants required to look after such a herd number at least four persons—the master-herdsman, a man of experience and confidence, to whom is intrusted the management of the cows, and who is responsible for the amount of butter and cheese produced from them: then comes his assistant, or *Jünger*, to whom is committed the charge of the goats and pigs, and who also makes the cheese derived from the milk of the goats: next in order comes the *Freund*, as he is termed, a kind of Jack-of-all-trades, whose duties are to descend up and down from the mountain to the plain with the cheeses and heavy baskets of butter made above; he also has to carry up the provisions of bread, salt, and wood necessary for consumption, and otherwise to perform any kind of work set him to do by the herdsman: lastly, there is the *Kuhbube*, or cow-boy, who follows the cattle, lest they should stray into dangerous ground, and calls them at night by the aid of his musical horn, besides opening the doors of their stable in the morning. Thus, each of these four individuals has his full share of work allotted to him. It often, however, happens that a pasturage is too small to contain so large a herd as the above named; the staff of shepherds is therefore naturally reduced to the few it will contain; and often one shepherd suffices for all these functions, fulfilling them for four months in solitary seclusion. Life under such auspices is a hard necessity; yet there are numbers who willingly submit to its privations, and, accepting nature as their companion, leave wife and children, thus to earn for them an honest livelihood.

The cows included in a herd have generally many different proprietors; one perhaps owning six, another four, whilst some are only master of one. They then club together their resources, and jointly engage the required staff of shepherds, and commit their flock to their keeping. The milk yielded by all the cows is put into one common receptacle (the huge caldron, for instance), and the daily quantity marked in a book kept on purpose; whilst the profit of butter or cheese made is also recorded, and the owners afterwards divide the produce according to the number of cows each has sent up. In some far parts of Switzerland, there have been of late dairies built on the mountains capable of containing the milk of one thousand cows; and in these may be seen, towards the middle and end of summer, a vast array of cheeses piled up in rooms made on purpose, which afterwards finds its way down to the towns, and is sold under the name of Gruyère.

In order to keep a check on the honesty of the shepherds, the proprietors assemble two or three times during the summer, and mounting up together to visit their flocks, examine the profit and loss account, judge for themselves of the health of the cows, and regulate all such affairs as want looking after. This kind of *procès-verbal* saves all disputes as to rights and quantities. The same kind of co-operation as is thus being carried on in respect to the produce of the cows, is fast extending over the other agricultural resources of Switzerland; and fruiteries, granaries, cheeseries, &c., are

formed, and own joint-proprietors, who share the calculated profits according to the measure they furnish.

In some of the far mountains, another system is carried on, and the shepherd rents the Alpage, pays a certain sum of money for every head of cattle which is committed to his care; he makes what profit he can out of the beasts, for which he is responsible, and has to return them in good condition when summer is over. This plan is, however, but rarely adopted.

If one allows the imagination to take a near view of the life of these herdsmen during the most beautiful season of the year, we may easily go back to those ancient times when all the human race led a similar existence. Milk, cheese, a little rice or maize, and hard brown bread full four months old form their diet. They have no society save the occasional visits of their employers; books also are far removed from their reach, except that one endless volume of untiring change and interest found in the study of nature and the works of creation. During fine weather, their labour is not severe, and the pure atmosphere and beautiful scenery which surround them compensate in some sort for the personal privations they are called on to endure. Their principal occupations are to milk the cows morning and night, to turn into butter or cheese the milk they yield, and watch their troops as they wander at will wherever green herbage and wild-flowers attract them. As long as the sun shines, indeed, their life is rather to be envied than otherwise, for they leave behind in the plain many cares and troubles, which have no existence in their solitary and peaceful abodes above.

No sooner, however, does *le mauvais temps* arrive, than the whole aspect of things undergoes a change; for instance, when a storm breaks over the mountains, and hail and wind lash with fury the Alps; when the thunder rolls from peak to peak, making the very rocks tremble with its voice, as though some formidable convulsion of nature were about to take place; and the lightning darts its forked arrows through the shrubs and trees—then the excited animals, with drooping tails and starting eyeballs, maddened with fear, and without looking where they go, flee in every direction, running the risk of being precipitated into some deep ravine or rapid precipice, or injuring themselves by coming in contact with pointed rocks. Then, indeed, the herdsman's task is no easy one, for, 'mid rain that soaks him to the skin, and wind that barely permits him to keep a footing, he has to follow his frantic charge, and conduct them back to the *châlets*. In this, they are not always successful, and it not unfrequently happens that, during a severe storm, many cows are lost, whilst in the attempt to recover them, the shepherds themselves but too often fall victims. Such accidents would be of less frequent occurrence if all the pasturages were provided with *châlets* for herding the cattle, as then, on the first sign of bad weather, the animals could be driven home; but unfortunately, on the highest pastures, where the wind and rain exert most power, there is often not sufficient wood to fell for building them, and a few trees alone, which the law protects from destruction, supply their place as a night-shelter in ordinary times. Such clusters of trees are named after their use, *Wettertannen*.

The shepherds are often accompanied and visited

by their families up to the first Alps, or Alps de Mai, who inhabit the *châlets* with them, sharing the rude accommodation already described, and also the duties attending the care of the herds. In order to facilitate their labour in ascending the heights, the women adopt a somewhat unfeminine garb, and they may be seen at work in jacket and trousers, looking so exactly like men, that at a distance it is difficult to discern their sex, and, indeed, on a nearer approach, it not unfrequently happens that it takes some little time to do so, or that it is some old hag, in man's attire, by your side. The garments they use are generally the cast-off suits of their male relatives.

When the cattle have eaten all the early grass which grows on the first heights, they ascend to the Medium Alps, and there make another and longer sojourn. The herbage being there secured, they mount higher and higher, find new food on each ascent, and a fresher atmosphere, until, at the end of the summer, they reach the limits of the pasturages appropriated to them; here it is they find the richest vegetation of all; and these plentiful repasts of fine grass, varied by aromatic herbs and plants, improve the flavour and quantity of their milk, and make the most delicious cream.

Innumerable are the different kinds of flowers, which are alike appreciated by the cows for their sweetness, and the botanist for their rare beauty. Around the *châlets*, where the ground is most manured, there grows a luxuriant, but not less fine grass, in which many dangerous plants are found, such as the Aconite, the Henbane, the *Anemone*, *Digitalis*, &c. The old cows pass them over, though the younger cattle often eat them, to the detriment of their health, and sometimes even of their lives, so that it becomes one of the duties of the shepherds to exterminate these poisons.

In these high altitudes, one would think that the cattle might have difficulty in finding sufficient water. But it is not so, for hardly can a step be taken without the murmur of the water's friendly voice being heard, and little lively brooks run prattling through the grass-plots, reminding man of the Scripture words: 'He sendeth springs into the valleys, which run among the hills,' where man and beast alike can quench their thirst, whilst hundreds of silvery threads flow from the glaciers above, feeding their beds, and renewing each winter their frozen life.

It is not till the end of August that the cows begin to descend, warned by the approach of snow-storms on the pastures above. Slowly they make their homeward journey, stopping a few days at each gradation of height, to take advantage of the growth of herbage which has sprung up since they fed there on their ascent. In the middle of September they are still found on the Medium Alps, and in October they linger on the Alps de Mai, during a few fine days. After every available blade of grass is secured, they are conducted home, and littered in winter-quarters prepared for them by the villagers in anticipation of their return. Thus terminates the periodical migration of these useful animals. Unfortunately, the bad weather sometimes interrupts the regular succession of vegetation; in the middle of summer, for instance, a storm will devastate the air, and the temperature become cold; and in July and August, the high pastures are occasionally covered with snow. In preparation for such a misfortune, the *châlets* are always provided with a supply of hay; but if the

snow remains long, the cattle are obliged to descend, and then the hay-fields are infringed on for food, entailing a certain loss of the crop, and causing much trouble to the farmers.

MIRK ABBEY.

CHAPTER XXII.—MISS AYNTON'S THUMB IS TURNED BACK.

'I SUPPOSE, Mary, that I shall be sure of getting a letter from Mr Arthur to-day?' observed my Lady to her maid, as that confidential domestic was proceeding with the duties—which were by no means mysteries—of her toilet, upon the morning after the picnic at Belcomb. 'He is certain to reply concerning a matter which was important enough to cause the use of the telegraph.'

'I suppose so, my Lady: very likely.'

Nothing could be more in contrast than the tones in which these two persons had spoken; the question had been earnest, almost fervent, and one which evidently was put in order to evoke an affirmative answer; the reply was given carelessly enough, or rather as though the thoughts of her who uttered it were absent from the matter altogether.

"*Very likely,*" Mary! Why, how can it be otherwise? Just run down and open the letter-bag; you know where to find the key.'

'Yes, my Lady.'

As Mary Forest left the room, she cast at her beloved mistress, whose eyes were fixed thoughtfully upon the pattern of the carpet, and observed her not, a look of unspeakable love and pity; and when the door was shut between them, she burst into a passion of silent tears.

'It will kill her,' murmured she; 'she can never survive this second trouble. Sorrow and shame, sorrow and shame, are all that fall to my dear mistress now. *How* shall I tell her? May Heaven give her strength to bear it; but I wish, for her sake, that she was dead, and already the angel she deserves to be—Ah, you minx!' ejaculated Mary, interrupting herself as she passed Miss Aynton's room, and shaking her plump fist at its unconscious tenant; 'you'll go to quite another place, and serve you right too.' And seemingly comforted by this reflection, she wiped her eyes with the hem of her apron, and hurried down the back-stairs upon her errand.

'What will Arthur think?' mused my Lady, as she awaited her maid's return with a beating heart. 'He will certainly connect the request to destroy that letter with what I said to him at the Watersmeet a while ago, about'—she did not utter the concluding words at all, but only formed them with her lips—poor Ralph. If Arthur suspects, it will be with him the first step to knowledge; and yet he would never use it to my hurt. If there were anything amiss in the concealment of this matter, then I should fear him, for he is the soul of honour. But my bastard son—God help him, if he ever comes to know it—robs nobody even of this barren title, and my children's money is due to no one else. They might have been paupers as well as bastards; let their mother comfort herself with that thought all she can.' My Lady's lips were crooked into a bitter smile; hers was not a cynical face—far from it—and such an expression misbecame it sadly; it looked more like a contortion of the mouth induced by bodily pain.—'Well, Mary, is there no letter from Mr Arthur?'

'No, ma'am; none.'

'Then there is one more cause for anxiety added to the rest of my troubles, that is all. Ah me, how foolishly I used to fret myself in days when there was no cause! Perhaps he never got the telegraph, and not understanding why the letter came to him, has transmitted it back to—to the person to whom it was addressed.—Mary, you had better presently run over to the *Lisgard Arms*, and see to that. Steve will give it up, if you explain to him that it is your handwriting. Tell him, if necessary, that I promise him he shall not lose the inn. I must have that letter. Mr Arthur could not possibly know the London address of—of that person, could he?'

'Very likely, my Lady, yes—at least, I don't know.'

'Mary!'

'I beg your pardon, madam,' replied the waiting-maid, starting like one aroused from a dream. 'I was not thinking what I said; I was thinking of something else.'

'I think you might give me your attention, Mary,' returned my Lady sighing: 'you cannot be thinking of anything so momentous as this matter, which involves sorrow, shame, and perchance utter ruin.'

'Alas! but I can, my Lady,' answered the other gravely; 'and I am doing it. There has something happened worse than anything you can guess at. Master Walter'—

'Great Heaven! has any accident happened to my boy? I saw him but an hour ago; he came into my room, dear fellow, to bid me good-bye before he started for the station. The young horse was in the dog-cart—O Mary, Mary, do not—do not tell me that my Walter is killed!'

'He is quite well, my Lady, so far as I know—quite well in health.'

'Thank Heaven for that! Bless you for that, Mary! Why did you frighten me so, if there is nothing the matter?'

'There is something the matter, my Lady. Pray, command yourself; you will have need of all your fortitude. I would never tell it you—burdened as you are already—only you must know it; *you*, above all, and no one else, if we can help it.'

'More secrets! more deception, Mary! Spare me, if you can, dear friend; I am sorely tried already.'

'I cannot spare you, my Lady, or I would do so, Heaven knows; nay, I would almost take the shame upon my own shoulders, if that might shield you from the sorrow it must needs bring with it. Miss Letty'—

'It is not fit that Shame and my daughter should be mentioned in the same breath,' replied my Lady, rising, and speaking with dignity. 'Do not continue; I forbid you to speak. What you were going to say is false, and I will not listen.'

'It is true, my Lady—true as that the sun is shining now. Of course, Miss Letty has nothing to do with it; but it was through her I learned it.'

'Does she *know* it, then?' asked my Lady sternly.

'Certainly not, madam; and Heaven grant she never may. She's as pure-minded as any seraph, and, like Charity, thinketh no evil. But she told me this afternoon—seeing that you were troubled, and not liking to pain you, perhaps without reason, and speaking to me as her old nurse and friend, who loves all the *Lisgards*, good and bad (for they are not all good, alas, alas!), and who will love them to the end—she told me that something

which she had overheard between Miss Rose and Master Walter?—

‘You mean Sir Richard,’ interposed my Lady.

‘No, madam—his brother. It was Master Walter that I was speaking of the other day in the carriage, and whom I understood your Ladyship to say that Miss Aynton had refused. I knew very well that they were love-making, flirting and such like upon the sly; but I did not know—I could not suspect—— O mistress dear, a terrible disgrace has befallen you, through that infamous young hussy, Miss Rose Aynton—though what Master Walter could have seen in the Jade, I am sure passes my comprehension altogether.’

‘Disgrace! Walter! Rose Aynton! What do you mean, woman?’ asked my Lady angrily. ‘You must be mad, to say such things. I heard Sir Richard ask the girl to be his wife with my own ears, and she refused him.’

‘Did she, my Lady? Well, I’m surprised at that, for I should have thought she would have stuck at *nothing*.—But let me tell the whole story. What Miss Letty heard at the picnic was this: she heard Master Walter cursing Miss Rose. That was an odd thing for a young gentleman to do to a young lady—although, for that matter, I have no doubt she *deserved* it—was it not? Well, that was what Miss Letty thought. She had never heard such words before, and could scarcely force her innocent lips to repeat them; but I made her do it. And certainly Master Walter expressed himself pretty strong. It seems he was angered about the young woman’s behaviour to his brother yesterday.’—

‘Ay,’ interrupted my Lady quietly, and still thinking that the prejudice of her waiting-maid had much exaggerated matters, ‘that was partly my fault; I begged Miss Aynton to be more complaisant in her manner to Sir Richard.’

‘Well, Master Walter might have been annoyed, madam, but what right had he to be *jealous*? and especially what relation could exist between him and Miss Rose, which justified him in using such dreadful words? Fancy *incouring* at her, my Lady!’

‘Yes, that is shocking indeed, Mary. Miss Letty, however, must certainly have misunderstood him.’

‘That’s what I told her, my Lady, in hopes to quiet her a bit; but I did not believe it myself, no more than you do. We don’t suppose that Miss Letty invented the oaths, do we?’

‘That is true,’ sighed Lady Lisgard. ‘It makes me very wretched to think that my boy Walter should have so far forgotten himself as to use such language to a young girl—a guest, too, in his mother’s house. I shall certainly demand an explanation of it from his own lips.’

‘Alas, there is no need, madam,’ returned the waiting-maid. ‘I can tell you all—if you can bear to listen to it.’

‘I am listening,’ said my Lady wearily; but she sat with her back towards Mistress Forest, and once, in the course of her recital, she uttered a piteous moan, and covered her face with her hands.

‘When Miss Letty told me what I have just said, my Lady, and had parted from me a little comforted, trying to persuade herself that she really might have been mistaken in what she had overheard, I instantly sought out Anne Rees, and bade her come with me to my room. You wouldn’t have believed it in a girl as you yourself chose out of the village school, and who has been at the

Abbey under my own eye for four years; but she refused point-blank: ‘very respectful, I must say, but also very firm. “I durstn’t do it,” said she, all of a twitter—“not till Miss Rose is abed and asleep; or if I do, you may be certain sure as she will come to know it, and get out of me every word that may pass between us two.”’

‘The girl looked as scared as though she had seen a ghost, and yet my request did not seem to come on her at all unexpected; and, in point of fact, she knew what she was wanted for well enough. However, I thought it best to let her have her way; and so it was arranged that she was to come to my room as soon as she had done with the young ladies—although ‘tis little enough, indeed, she has done for Miss Letty of late weeks, but all for that spiteful little hussy, Miss Rose.

‘Now,’ said I, when I got her alone, ‘Anne Rees, there is nobody to listen to what we say, and you may speak to me as to your own mother.’

‘Ah, Mistress Forest,’ answered she, beginning to whimper, ‘I only wish I dared.’

‘This young lady has got you under her thumb, I see, Anne. Now, if you’ll tell me the whole truth of what is going on between her and Master Walter, I promise you that I’ll turn her thumb back. It will hurt her a little—and that you won’t be sorry for, perhaps—and it will set you free.’

‘Oh, Mistress Forest, if you could only do *that*, I would be a good girl all my life, and never try on other people’s clothes again, nor be a spy upon my Lady, and”— Here she stopped quite short, and looked as though she would have bitten her tongue off.

‘Now, Anne,’ said I, ‘you *must* tell me, whether you will or not: for you have gone too far to turn back. How did Miss Rose Aynton make a slave of a well-conducted girl like you—with nothing but vanity, that I know of, to be said against you—and compel you to do all this dirty work for her?’

‘Well, Mistress Forest, as you truly say, I was always a vain child; and Heaven has punished me pretty sharp for it. One day, when the young ladies were out, and I was in Miss Aynton’s room a-setting it to rights, what should I come upon—where, perhaps, I had no right to look for it, for it was evidently meant to be hidden—but a queer-shaped leather box with trinkets in it.”

‘A jewel-case, I suppose you mean, Anne.’

‘Yes, ma’am; but they were none of those as Miss Aynton was in the habit of wearing—nor had she that box when she first came: she must have brought it down with her after she went back to London for a week in the early part of the year. However, all as struck me then was the beauty of the jewels; and I thought there was no harm in my just trying them on in the front of the swing mirror. My ears not being pierced, I couldn’t fix the earrings, although I wouldn’t a-minded a little pain, and they sparkled like morning-dew; but I clasped on the pearl necklace and the bracelets, and stood admiring myself in the looking-glass a good long time. Then all of a sudden I saw an angry face looking over my shoulder, and heard a cruel voice whisper: ‘Thief, thief!’ just like the hiss of a wood-snake. I scarcely recognised Miss Rose, who had always looked so pleasant, and been such a smooth-spoken young lady.

‘“I could send you to prison, Anne Rees, for this,” continued she, very grave and slow; ‘and I

will, too, if you don't do everything I tell you. I hate a thief.

" 'Lor, miss,' cried I, 'have mercy, for Heaven's sake! I never meant to thieve nothing.'

" 'And I hate a liar,' added she, looking so cold and cruel that she made me shudder. 'You break open my drawer—not a word, you bad girl, or I'll send to Dalwynch for a policeman—and I actually find my property on your very person! You ought to go to jail for this; and perhaps I am wrong not to send you there. However, remember; from this moment, you are my servant—only mine; and whatever I tell you to do, whether it is against your late mistress or not, see that you do it; and dare not to breathe one word of anything that I do, or speak, or possess—such as these jewels, for instance—or you will rue it bitterly, Anne Rees.'

"Of course I promised, Mistress Forest, for I was in such a state of terror that I would have promised anything; but you cannot imagine to what a slavery I bound myself!"

"I know all about that, Jane," said I: "everybody knows you're become a spy and a sneak. But there is no occasion for you to follow such vocations any longer. My Lady would never believe a word of your intending to steal those things: I can promise you her protection; so make your mind quite easy upon that point.—But now, what about Master Walter?"

"Well, Mistress Forest, the jewels were his present, to begin with. There have been very wicked goings on. It was quite dreadful to see her kiss dear good Miss Letty at night, and return her 'God bless you!' so pious like, when she was not blessing her—I mean Miss Rose—at all. Oh, Mistress Forest, I have known all this for weeks and weeks, and dared not speak one word; and now the truth is almost too terrible to tell."

"And then, my Lady," pursued Mistress Forest, "she told me things which it is not necessary to repeat to you. I knew she was telling truth; but in order to assure myself that it was so, I crept out with naked feet, and listened at Miss Aynton's door, and I heard two voices"—

"Did you recognise them, woman; are you sure of that?" asked my Lady sternly.

"Ah, yes, madam—there is no doubt."

"Heaven help us, and forgive us!" murmured my Lady, with bowed head. "Ah, Walter, Walter, I had expected Shame, but not from deed of yours! Where is this—Miss Aynton, Mary?"

"At her breakfast, my Lady; and doubtless making an exceedingly good one. She is not one to let her conscience interfere with her appetite, bless you! Like the murderer under sentence in Dalwynch jail, as I read of in the paper yesterday, she 'takes her meals with regularity,' I warrant; and does not in any way physically deteriorate under the distressing circumstances of her situation."

"Send her to me, Mary—in the boudoir yonder," said my Lady gravely. "Tell her I desire to speak with her very particularly. Breakfast? No, alas! I feel as though a morsel of food would choke me. Send her hither at once."

CHAPTER XXIII.—THRUST AND COUNTER-THRUST.

I cannot, for my own part, at all agree with the depreciatory expressions used by Mistress Forest with respect to Miss Rose Aynton's personal appearance. 'What Master Walter could have

seen in her,' &c., it was easy enough for anybody else to see who was not of her own sex. A magnificent figure, masses of silken hair that, when unbound, would ripple almost to her dainty feet, and a countenance 'bright as light, and clear as wind;' and indeed this latter was too keen and sharply cut for my taste. The sort of expression which one likes to see in one's lawyer, does not so well become the object of our heart's affections. Of course, there was nothing of steel about Miss Rose, except what might have been in her crinoline; but I never saw man or woman who gave me so much the idea of being armed *cap-à-pied*; she seemed to be equipped in a complete Milan suit of proof, impregnable, invulnerable. Like *Le Noir Fainéant* in *Ivanhoe*, she never attacked anybody, although my Lady fancied she had recently detected signs of aggression about her; and those who knew her best avoided putting the temptation in her way. But when she entered her hostess's boudoir by invitation, upon that particular morning, she looked not only, as usual, on her guard; there was also a certain slumbrous fire in her dark eyes, which betokened onslaught—the initiative of battle. My Lady herself remarked it, not without pity. 'How little is this poor lost creature aware,' thought she, 'that I know all.'

But she was quite wrong in this. Miss Rose had almost gathered the truth from the trembling fingers and frightened manner of her tiring-maid that morning; and the thing had been quite confirmed to her by the malicious triumph with which Mary Forest had delivered her mistress's request to see her in the boudoir upon very particular business.

'Will you please to sit down, Miss Aynton?'

Yes, it was so. The secret was out. Not even a morning salutation from her friend and hostess; and the hand only outstretched to point her out to a chair at the other extremity of the room. 'Before proceeding with what I have to say,' began my Lady, 'I wish to know whether your aunt is in town.'

'I believe so, Lady Lisgard; I think she has come back from Leamington—although I have not heard from her for the last two days.'

'That is well. When I hinted, yesterday morning that it would be better for you to return to London, I was unaware of the necessity for your departure from this roof at once—immediately—and for ever.'

'Indeed!' Not a muscle moved: confident in the goodness, if not of her cause, at least of her Milan suit; conscious, too, of the possession of a Damascus poniard, undreamed of by the foe, and admirable for close encounters, her right hand nervously opened and shut as though to clutch the handle—that was all.

'You have disgraced this house and me: yourself and your sex.'

'You lie, insolent woman,' returned the other; 'and judge others by yourself.'

Each started to her feet, and looked her enemy in the face as she slung these words of flame.

'It is worse than useless, girl, thus to brazen it out,' continued my Lady, attaching no importance to the emphasis the other laid upon her last words. 'Outraging not only moral laws, but even the rites of hospitality, you have intrigued with my own son under my own roof.'

'You dare to say so, Lady Lisgard, do you? It is only for his sake, I swear, that I do not brand

you Wanton, for that calumny. I *could* do it; you know I could, although you wear that look of wonder. Was not that man Derrick once your lover? Ah! you wince at that. Sir Robert—good, easy man—he knew nothing, of course!—Here she stopped, for my Lady's face was terrible to look upon.

'Be silent, bad, bold girl! You shoot your poisoned arrows at a venture, and aim nothing home. You know not what a wife should be—how should you? You!'

It is not true that the swan is 'born to be the only graceful shape of Scorn.' A fair woman unjustly slandered is its rival therein. Rose Aynton cowered before that keen contempt—beneath the dropping of those bitter words—as though they were sword and fire.

'I will never forgive you this, Lady Lisgard, muttered she—'never, never!'

'You! you forgive! To such as you, it would be idle to protest my soul is spotless. The man whose name you have soiled by uttering it—my husband—he, in high heaven, knows right well that never so much as thought of mine has wronged him. Vile, evil-minded girl, as false as frail!'

'That is sufficient, madam; almost enough, even if I were indeed the thing you take me for. Here the girl paused to moisten her dry lips, and catch her breath, of which passion had almost deprived her. 'Now, look you, I was wrong. I thought my Lady was not so lily-pure as the world took her to be, and I was wrong. I have seen things with my own eyes, and through the eyes of others, that might well entitle me to say: "I still believe it." I tell you, Lady Lisgard, I have *proofs*—or what seemed to me to be so, a few minutes back—of the charge that has so moved you, such as would amply justify my disbelief in your denial. But I honestly avow that I was wrong.'

'I thank you, Miss Rose Aynton, for your charity.'

'Spare your scorn, madam. It is no charity that moves me; nay, far from it. Convinced almost against my will, I own, by your unsupported assertion—your mere "No," I have withdrawn an accusation for which I have been patiently preparing evidence this long time—not, indeed, for your hurt, but for my own safety and convenience, and hereby confess it baseless and unjust. Now, on your part, I do beseech you, make amends to me. You, too, have had your seeming proofs of my disgrace; you, too, have heard and seen yourself, or through the eyes and ears of others, certain'

'Add not, lost, wretched girl,' interposed my Lady, 'deceit to sin! All that is left you is to pray to Heaven for pardon, and to leave that hospitable roof which you have disgraced.'

Rose Aynton's gipsy face grew drawn and pale. She had aimed her blow, and missed; the weapon in which she had put so much trust had proved utterly good for nothing. All her schemes of the last few months were rendered fruitless, and the discoveries to which she had attached such vast importance, and which she had attained to by such mean arts, shewn to be vain and futile. And now that she had humiliated herself by owning this, and thrown herself at this woman's feet, she would not extend so much as a finger-tip to help her.

'Lady Lisgard, as I hope for heaven, cried she in anguish, 'I am innocent of that with which you

charge me; I am honest as yourself, or Letty. Alas, you shudder, because I dare to compare myself with your pure daughter; you think that I soil that name, too, by uttering it. What shall I say—by what shall I swear, in order to make you believe me?'

'I would to Heaven I *could* believe you, Rose,' returned my Lady sadly, touched in spite of herself by the girl's yearning appeal. 'If you could erase this damning blot upon my son's fair name, and give me back my Walter—as I deemed him but an hour ago—I would be so grateful, girl, that you should almost think I loved you.'

'You *would*!' cried Rose with eagerness; then added bitterly: 'But no; you mean if I could say: "Your son has never pressed his lips to these, has never sworn to be mine, and mine alone." But you would not thank me for merely proving that in this, although he did it, he was not to blame.'

'What! not to blame?'

'No, madam—for even for *his* sake, I cannot longer bear this burden of undeserved shame. *Walter Lisgard is my husband*. We were married weeks ago, when I went to London in the spring.'

'Married, married!' gasped my Lady. 'Thank God for that! Far better to deceive me, boy, than this poor girl. I never thought to say: "I am glad you are my daughter-in-law, Rose Aynton;" but I do say so now.' She took both her hands in hers, and gazed upon her downcast face, now overspread with blushes, and tinged for once with genuine tenderness. 'It moves you, does it, that I am thankful to see the honour of my son preserved at some sacrifice of his prospects. How little do you know me, girl! yet I am glad to move you anyway. Rose, be a kind wife to him. I will not blame you for what has happened, although I have much cause. I must blame him rather. Who can wonder that you yielded when he said: "Be mine." So gentle and so loving as he can be! Now, too, I see it all. When you refused Sir Richard in the library, you were actually his brother's wife. Ah, Heaven, you must not remain here longer—not a day. I shall write to Walter'

'Nay, madam—*mother*,' exclaimed Rose beseechingly, 'I pray you let me write. I have broken my plighted word, and disobeyed my husband's bidding in revealing this. To please him, I had resolved to defend myself this morning as I best might, by returning thrust for thrust, without using this shield—my innocence—at all. But your bitter words—a shower of barbed darts—drove me behind it. He will be very wrath with me indeed, madam; but far worse if the news comes from you. He has much just now to make him anxious too.'

'Indeed,' replied my Lady hastily. 'How is it, then, that I have heard nothing of it? But I forgot; it is *you* who have his secrets now. Yes, you shall write, not I. Tell him that I am sorry—sorry that he should have deceived me above all; but that I forgive him freely. He knows that, however, right well. He must not come back to Mirk until he hears from me; and you, Rose, you must join him without delay. Every member of this household must learn at once that you are Walter's wife; but not till you have gone—for Richard's sake.'

My Lady's thoughts, as always, were for others; even when this great blow had well-nigh stunned her, she did not permit herself the luxury of selfish grief. She was already busy with schemes for the

benefit of her erring boy; how to contrive and where to save without prejudice to Sir Richard's interests (for that must be now avoided above everything) so that a respectable allowance might be meted out to the young couple. She could not respect and far less love the girl who had become her Walter's wife in so clandestine a manner; but still she *was* his wife, and therefore, in her eyes, a something precious. Then, bad as matters were, they might have been far worse; she had fully expected that they were so; and she felt in some sort grateful to accept this product of rashness and deceit in place of downright shame. Moreover, she foresaw in her own mind, for ever dwelling on such contingencies, that out of this evil a certain good might come, in case of that terrible misfortune befalling her, compared with which this present sorrow was as the prick of a pin's point.

Rose, upon her part, had certainly cause for congratulation upon the result of this interview. Although her weapon of offence had failed her—and she was genuinely convinced of the groundlessness of her late suspicions concerning Lady Lisgard—she had found in her mother-in-law a most generous adversary, and one certainly far more forgiving than she deserved. Even the worst of us, I conclude, are not bad at all times, and when my Lady, as they parted, touched her brow with her pale lips, and murmured once more: 'Be a kind wife to him, Rose,' that young woman mustered an honest tear or two—of which articles, to do her justice, she did not keep, like some women, a constant supply on hand for social emergencies.

Not until she regained her own room did she begin to think that she had been unnecessarily humble, and had weakly suffered herself to be moved by the show of forgiveness and good-will which my Lady had doubtless put on for her own purposes. However, the confession had been made, and upon the whole, most satisfactorily got over, the thought of which had oppressed her of late more than she cared to own, and made her bitter against her mother-in-law, as people generally feel towards those whom they are conscious of having wronged. And now there was that letter to write to Walter, which we have seen him peruse with such disfavour at his hotel in Town, acquainting him with her premature avowal of their common secret; and many a line of dexterous excuse she wove, and many a line of affectionate pleading, only to be torn up and recomposed again and again; for there was one person in the world beside herself whom Rose loved dearly, and yet of whom she stood in deepest awe; and he whom she both loved and feared with all the strength of her energetic nature, was her husband—Walter Lisgard.

NOT HUNG ENOUGH.

WE do not, as a nation, hang so many culprits as in bygone years. We may by and by cease to inflict this awful punishment at all. But so long as the law, and religion, and justice, and public sentiment are considered to warrant the continuance of this ancient mode of retribution, so long ought there to be no mockery, no mistake, no trickery about it. If a man survives after hanging, without a proof of his innocence accompanying his recovery, it would be infinitely better to society (of his wretched self we say nothing) that he had not been hanged at all; seeing that the sense of a just punishment would be swallowed

up in a kind of pity for the novelty of his position.

Now such things *have* occurred, sufficiently often to merit attention. Men have recovered their lives—or rather retained life under nearly desperate circumstances—in spite of what seemed to be a due infliction of the punishment of death by suspension. Something of this possibility of escape was owing to the mode in which the punishment was usually inflicted; and to many it may probably be unknown that a change has been made in recent times in the construction and arrangement of the apparatus for carrying out the last great penalty of the law.

For something like six hundred years, at any rate, such escapes have from time to time been recorded. In 1284, there was a woman named Inetta de Balsham condemned to death for collusion with robbers; she was hanged, and remained on the gibbet (if the records of the time are to be trusted) no less than three days; and yet she survived to receive pardon from Henry III. In 1313, Mathew of Enderby was hanged for some crime of which he had been convicted; he was cut down, and revived just before the body was about to be interred. In 1363, Walter Wynkeburn was hanged at Leicester; when cut down, he was carried in a cart to the cemetery of the Holy Sepulchre in that city; he gradually regained sensibility while the cart was rumbling along, and escaped with life. Similar cases occurred in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. The seventeenth century was exceptionally full of such instances. Dr Plot mentions the strange lot of a Swiss, on the authority of Dr Obadiah Walker, Master of University College; this man is said to have been hung no less than thirteen times without losing his life; his wind-pipe having been converted by disease into a substance almost as hard as bone.

No instance has been so much discussed and written about as that of Anne Green, which took place during the time of the Commonwealth. Judges and physicians alike referred to it, as affording illustrations for or against legal and medical testimony. This poor girl was executed at Marston in Oxfordshire, on December 14, 1650, for infanticide, a charge which could only be proved against her by much straining of the law; this severity, and a knowledge of the wrong she had suffered in other ways, made her an object of much public sympathy. The hanging was accompanied by certain coarse and shocking pullings and strikings of the body and limbs, which in those days were supposed to insure more effectually the death of the victim, and to lessen the period of suffering. After hanging the usual time, she was cut down, actually trampled on while prostrate, and left with the rope unslackened round her neck. She was put into a coffin, and consigned to the doctors for dissection. To the surprise of all, when the coffin was opened, the bosom was seen gently to heave; upon which, brutal blows and pressure were brought into requisition. The incident was too remarkable, however, to remain concealed; and men of superior position took up the matter. Sir William Petty, Dr Wallis, and Dr Clarke, who at that time filled the three offices of Professor of Anatomy, President of Magdalen College, and Vice-chancellor of Oxford University, being present at the intended dissection, perceived that the heaving of the bosom was followed by a slight rattling in her throat. 'Hereupon,' said Dr Plot, 'desisting

from their former purpose, they presently used means for her recovery by opening a vein, laying her in a warm bed, and using divers remedies respecting her senselessness, head, throat, and chest; inasmuch that within fourteen hours she began to speak, and the next day talked and prayed heartily. During the time of this her recovering, the officers concerned in her execution would needs have had her away again to have it completed on her; but by the mediation of the worthy doctors and some other friends with the then governor of the city, Colonel Kelsey, there was a guard set upon her to hinder all further disturbance till he had sued out her pardon from the powers then in being; thousands of people in the meantime coming to see her, and magnifying the just providence of God in thus asserting her innocence of murder.'

It is not stated by Dr Plot whether the medical men satisfied themselves concerning the cause, anatomical or physiological, of her preservation; but they sought to ascertain whether there were any peculiar mental phenomena connected with her recovery. They found that the half hour of hanging had left no special impression on her memory. 'She came to herself as if she had awakened out of a sleep—not recovering the use of her speech by slow degrees, but in a manner altogether [all at once], beginning to speak where she left off on the gallows.' Among all the printed narratives of this remarkable case, there is none that offers a clear explanation; and we are left to our surmises on the subject. There was a strong religious bias in the public mind at that period; and this feeling led to a belief in the direct interposition of Heaven in Anne Green's favour. The undergraduates of Oxford University viewed the matter in another light; they sought to exercise their wit and poetry on it; and there have been preserved twenty or thirty epigrams written by them, and signed with their names—one of which was 'Mr Christopher Wren.' Anne Green, having received a pardon after this strange resuscitation, retired with her friends to Steeple Barton, where she married, had a family, and died in 1659.

Somewhat about the same period, one Gordon, a highwayman, was condemned for execution. He found means, when his sentence was no longer doubtful, to obtain the aid of a young surgeon, who, shortly before the execution, fixed a small tube through an opening cut in the wind-pipe. The artifice failed in its intended effect in this case; the culprit, being a very heavy man, drew down with too great a weight; he breathed for a few minutes when removed after hanging, but did not recover. In 1658, a female servant was hanged for some crime at Oxford; she was kept hanging a longer time than usual, probably on account of the wonderful resuscitation of Anne Green a few years before. She was cut down, and the body allowed to fall to the ground with much violence; yet she lived; but the severity of the law insisted upon her undergoing a second and more fatal hanging. There has, it appears, been a difference of opinion among legal authorities concerning this double infliction of the sentence. Some contend that if a man is hanged, that is enough; if the executioners do their work clumsily, he ought not to bear the consequences, but rather should be given 'the benefit of the doubt.' On the other hand, it is contended that the sentence means execution, and that execution means hanging by the neck until

the culprit be dead; so that if the hanging fails once, it must be tried again.

In 1697, one Richard Johnson was hanged at Shrewsbury for murder. For a purpose which he planned while in prison, he obtained a promise that his dead body should be laid in a coffin without being stripped. His purpose was detected a little too soon; for life being observable in him after he had hung half an hour, a man was sent up the ladder to examine into the probable cause of this prolonged vitality. It was found that Johnson had twisted cords around and under his body, connected with two rings or hooks near his neck; a double shirt, and a periwig with flowing curls, concealed these contrivances. The poor wretch was stripped of his ingenious apparatus, and hanged a second time more effectually. In 1705, a burglar, named John Smith, was hanged at Tyburn; a reprieve came after he had been hanging about fifteen minutes; he was immediately cut down, removed to a neighbouring house, bled by a surgeon, and restored to life. The case of Margaret Dickson was one that excited great interest at Edinburgh in 1724. She was hanged for infanticide; the body was cut down, placed in a coffin, and removed in a cart to Musselburgh by her friends, with a view to interment in the parish churchyard. The jolting of the cart, and the admission of air through some injury which the coffin sustained, appear to have combined in resuscitating the woman; for she shewed evident signs of life before the cart had proceeded one-third of the distance. She was removed, revived, prayed with by a minister, and received back into the circle of her friends. She lived creditably many years afterwards, had a large family, and sold salt about the streets of Edinburgh—where she was known, on account of her strange escape, as 'Half-hanged Maggie.'

William Duell was one of those who have revived when almost under the dissecting-knife. This man was hanged for murder, on a gibbet put up at Acton, in 1740. After hanging for twenty minutes, the body was cut down, and taken to Surgeon's Hall for dissection. The attendants stripped and washed the body, and the surgeons prepared for their labour. Just as they were about to begin, however, they perceived faint signs of life in him; he groaned feebly, and his breathing became gradually more and more perceptible. They bled him; and in the evening he was able to sit up again. He was conveyed back to prison; but there was too much public excitement to justify the authorities in hanging him again. In two days he recovered his health. Fever and delirium had rendered his memory a blank, and he had lost all recollection of the hanging. It was supposed by the surgeons that a full flow of blood at the time had enabled his system to resist the tightening of the veins, and to have thus restored him to life—not to liberty, however, for he was afterwards transported. In 1752, Ewen Macdonald was hanged for murder. After the body was cut down, it was taken to Surgeon's Hall, and placed ready for dissection. The operating surgeon having to leave the room for a short time, was surprised on his return to see the man sitting up. Possessing more professional zeal than humanity, the surgeon took a mallet, and killed Macdonald outright, in order not to be disappointed of an opportunity for dissection. This atrocious case gave rise to much indignant comment at the time. In 1767, a tailor,

named Patrick Redmond, was hanged at Cork for highway robbery. After hanging less than the usual time, the body was cut down, and conveyed hastily to the house of an actor named Glover, who found means by friction and fumigation to revive him. Redmond had the incredible audacity to go to the theatre on the same evening, and, to the horror of the audience, publicly thank Glover for having saved his life.*

The present century has not been without its instances. About fifty years ago, a servant-girl was convicted of administering poison to the household of a farmer, in a fit of passion at some petty injury. A legal doubt having led to a postponement of the execution, the steady demeanour of the girl led to her being employed as a servant by the jailer at Durham. One morning, the governor received, much to his regret, and to the regret of many of the citizens, an order for the immediate execution of the girl. She was hanged, but the rope broke; and the wretched girl remained crying at the foot of the gallows, while a man hastened off on horseback to fetch a new rope. This distressing scene was perhaps scarcely a case in point, so far as concerns resuscitation after hanging; but it is one of the instances of *deferred* executions, which are so bad, because they give rise to hopes destined to disappointment. In another instance (mentioned, like the foregoing in *Notes and Queries*), a boy of only 13 or 14 was capitally convicted, but respited indefinitely on account of his youth. He remained in the jail at Worcester, was found to be a docile lad, and became a general favourite both with the jailer and the prisoners; everybody believing that his full pardon would come soon. One day, he was playing at ball in the yard, full of life and glee, when suddenly, to the utter dismay of the jailer and the inmates of the prison, an order arrived, after many weeks of delay, for the execution of the poor lad; and the execution accordingly took place. An instance more in point is that of a man who was executed at Tyburn, and whose apparently dead body was purchased by a surgeon for dissection, and brought to his house. A servant, wishing to see the body, stole into the room, and found the man sitting upright on the dissecting-table. The surgeon, a humane man, shipped him off quietly to America, where he amassed a fortune, which in gratitude he bequeathed to his benefactor. Sir Jonah Barrington, in his *Personal Sketches*, mentions the case of one Lanigan, who was hanged for the murder of Captain O'Flaherty. Lanigan survived, by some means which are not explained; and Sir Jonah saw him at the house of Mr Lauder in the Temple. He was smuggled over to Abbeville, where he died many years afterwards in the monastery of La Trappe.

Some of these momentous escapes have plainly depended on the imperfections of the *gibbet* as compared with the *drop*. These imperfections led to the abandonment of the one kind of dread apparatus for the other. Several statements have been made in the public journals, from time to time, concerning 'the last gibbet;' but many of these are destitute of meaning, unless we take into account the exact particulars of each case. In 1856,

the *Examiner* said: 'A few days ago (April), the last gibbet erected in England was demolished by the workmen employed in making the extensive docks for the North-eastern Railway Company at Jarroo Slake, on the Tyne.' This statement was shortly afterwards disputed; for, later in the same year, a gibbet was still left standing on Ditchling Common in Sussex. It was known among the surrounding villagers as 'Jacob's Post,' being named after a culprit concerning whom a copy of verses was long current in the neighbourhood, recording among other things that

At Horsham Gallows he was hanged there,
The thirty-first of August that same year;
And where he did the crime, they took the pains
To bring him back, and hang him up in chains.

It has been stated that the last gibbet erected in England was at Saffron Lane, near Leicester, in 1832; it was soon afterwards removed, by order of the Secretary of State for Home Affairs. Whatever may be the exact dates, however, when the last gibbet was erected, and the last demolished, it is certain that the drop has been almost, if not quite, substituted for it in England. In the old gibbet, the wretched culprit was turned off from a ladder, at a height which, it was supposed, would elevate him sufficiently above the ground or platform; whereas the drop consists of a trap-door, which, being suddenly opened by the withdrawal of bolts underneath, causes the whole weight of the culprit's body to be in an instant at the mercy of the noose. Some of the instances of escape are doubtless attributable to the careless way in which the prisoner was turned off the scaffold, or rather ladder, on which he ascended to the gibbet; some to the insertion of a tube which might prevent the constriction of the throat; some to the opening of an orifice in the windpipe by an expert surgeon; some to a natural hardening of the windpipe, which occasionally happens; and some to a steel collar, connected with an elaborate system of braces and bandages. These varieties offer elucidations of most of the cases of resuscitation that have been recorded.

Did Sir Walter Scott rely on his imagination alone, or was he depending on a real narrative, when he wrote the striking scene of Bonthon's execution in the *Fair Maid of Perth*? It will be remembered, by the readers of that novel, that Bonthon received a hint from Dwining, the physician, that an attempt would be made to preserve him from any fatal result of the hanging, and that the hangman would be a party to the manœuvre. The execution took place, apparently in the usual way, and the hangman remained near the suspended body about half an hour, after which he contrived by a *ruse* to get rid of the assembled multitude. Early next morning, when the populace returned to enjoy the spectacle of chaining the dead body to a permanent gallows, they were surprised and enraged to see that the body had been removed. At midnight, it afterwards appeared, three men had quietly approached the spot, cut down the body, reanimated the almost stifled wretch, and smuggled him away. One of them was Dwining the physician, and he explained to the other two in what manner Bonthon had been specially prepared to undergo his execution scathless. He pointed out that death by hanging results from a compression of the veins, which drives the blood to the brain instead of to the heart, and also

* This incident is given with much conflicting variety of circumstances, and even of date, but we follow the *Cork Remembrancer*.

that the lungs, owing to the ligature of the cord around the thorax, no longer receiving the needful supply of air, another cause of suffocation arises. The problem would be, therefore, how to effect the hanging so that neither the veins nor the windpipe should be too much compressed. Dwining solved this problem thus, as described by himself: 'I get me certain bandages, made of the same substance with your horse-girths, having especial care that they are of a kind which will not shrink on being strained, since that would spoil my experiment. One loop of this substance is drawn under each foot, and returns up either side of the leg to a cincture with which it is united; these cinctures are connected by divers straps down the breast and back, in order to divide the weight, and there are sundry other conveniences for easing the patient; but the chief is this. The straps or ligatures are attached to a broad steel collar, curving outwards, and having a hook or two, for the better security of the halter, which the friendly executioner passes around that part of the machine, instead of applying it to the bare throat of the patient. Thus, when thrown off from the ladder, the sufferer will find himself suspended, not by the neck, if it please you, but by the steel circle, that supports the loops in which his feet are placed, and on which his weight really rests, diminished a little by similar supports under each arm. Thus neither veins nor windpipe being compressed, the man will breathe as free, and his blood, saving from fright and novelty of situation, will flow as temperately, as your valencies', when you stand up in your stirrups to view a field of battle.'

Sir Walter's description thus involves one among many of the considerations relative to this peculiar kind of resuscitation.

BREAKING A JAM.

Few people have any idea of the dangers and difficulties that attend the trade by which Great Britain is supplied with the timber used in her various requirements. They observe large timber-ships discharging on her quays, and suppose, perhaps, that it is the result of a trade no more hazardous to life than that of any other product of this globe which they see complacently drawn within Britain's mighty commercial vortex. Very different, however, is the fact: in the production and handling of timber in all its stages, from the felling of the tree to its transport across the ocean, more lives are lost through accident, more coolness and contempt of danger called for, than perhaps in any other pursuit. The following incidents in my own experience will give an idea of the great danger attendant on any branch of the lumber-trade, that of driving or floating the timber down the river—on the ice of which it was deposited in the winter—to the port whence it is shipped to England.

I was born in Canada, and from the age of eighteen, have passed my life principally in the gloomy recesses of her woods, far from the abodes of civilisation, following the arduous and often ruinous pursuit of a lumber-man, as we who get out the timber are called, and amongst a class of men hardy and daring as the world can shew, had become noted on our river, from a chance escapade of mine one spring in 'driving.'

We were well down the river, and had united our gang with several others whom we had overtaken; there were perhaps one hundred and fifty

men altogether. We were running through a rapid, free from rocks, but still, from the enormous body of water pouring through a narrow passage, sufficiently wild to daunt the bravest among us, and prevent the men practising a favourite feat, and one in which lives are often lost—'running the rapids on a stick of timber.' I was working at the head of the rapid, shoving the timber from the banks, when I suddenly became aware that the stick I was on—a red pine spar about eighty feet long—was bound for the rapid, and that I could not avoid being an unwilling passenger. At first, I thought there was no great danger, my only fear being that either end of the long spar might strike the shore, in which case I should certainly be swept off, and most probably smashed by some other stick. However, we ran the rapid in splendid style, the spar keeping perfectly straight, and not rolling in the least; in fact, it was as steady as though it was on shore. The swells were running very high, and as I darted past the men who lined the banks, I saw by their alarmed faces that they thought I was in great danger; and now came the pinch; for as we drew near the tail of the rapid—boiling and seething like a Maelstrom—I saw that a collision with another stick of timber, which was being whirled round in an eddy, was unavoidable. I had a handspike in my hand, and thinking I might be able to get on the other stick, I ran towards the end of the spar. I had got within ten feet of the end, when the two sticks—going in contrary directions—struck, fortunately for me, exactly in the same line. I left my spar, of course, in a hurry, and describing a curve, alighted, after an aerial flight of some twenty feet, fair on the other stick. The handspike, grasped in both hands, and held in front across the body, saved me from falling. To spring up, run to the end of the stick, and swim ashore, was the work of a few moments. The men cheered, for they thought it was through my own agility that my life was saved; whereas, I was not a free agent in the matter, and had the sticks not met end on, should most probably have been drowned or smashed.

This feat established my reputation for courage; and the following adventure, almost unparalleled, I imagine, in the history of man's escape from apparently certain death, placed me at the head of our river, and I believe that the ignorant French Canadians who witnessed it think I bear a charmed life.

It was in the spring of '64. Embarking all my capital in lumbering, I had, during the winter, placed a very considerable amount of square timber on the Ko-wash-gong, a branch of the Madawaska, a large tributary of the river Ottawa; all my energies were strained to the utmost to get it down to market, for my future depended on the result. I had a gang of thirty good men, but unfortunately, as it turned out, I placed myself in all situations of danger; this, indeed, is always looked for from the 'boss of the drive,' but I ought to have engaged another man in that capacity. All went well for a time, and could I pass a dangerous and dreaded rapid without a jam—as an accumulation of timber, consequent on perhaps one stick jamming up the passage, is called—I felt secure of a profitable return for my winter work.

It is usual, before running timber through a rapid, to throw a boom across the river, at a short

distance above, to confine the timber, which being allowed to pass down in small quantities, and entirely stopped, if necessary, cannot, under proper management, jam to any extent; but such was the rapidity of the river at this point, that we were obliged to have our boom some three miles above the rapid, and the quantity of timber in that three miles was quite sufficient to cause a very large jam, should any hitch occur. I was well aware of the danger, and had my best men stationed at the rapid, to guide the timber into the channel, and was there myself most of the time. We had run a large number through successfully, and I was congratulating myself that all would go well, when, towards evening, a rush of timber came down; one large piece struck first one shore, slewed round, and caught the other. In a moment, a jam was formed. Now, could we have stopped the timber from coming down, we could have easily broken the jam, but the timber came down so fast upon us that our efforts were useless, and for that evening we gave up, and returning to camp, which was up at the boom, awaited the daylight with a similar feeling of coming danger that I should think hangs over an army the night previous to a battle. It was, we knew, almost a certainty that some of our small number would not live to see that jam broken. In the morning, we started for the rapid; I and another man went in a boat, the rest by land. About a mile above the large rapid was another one, at the head of which we were in the habit of leaving the boat, for the only attempt hitherto made to run it resulted in the death of the adventurers, two Yankees; but this morning I saw with dismay that a boat might live through it; the cause I well knew; it was caused by the jam damming back the water, and it enabled me to form an estimate of the pile of timber that must have accumulated during the night. Although there was nothing to be gained by running the boat through the rapid, I felt reckless, and determined to do what in all probability could not be done again; so, receiving an assurance from the man with me that he would risk his life on the issue, I put the boat in the channel. We passed in safety, though we had several very narrow escapes, and soon arrived at the jam.

What a scene it was, and how hopeless it seemed, that man could do anything amidst such a mighty rush of waters! I had seen a jam on which three hundred men had worked for three weeks before breaking it; but this looked worse: the snow-distended river, hemmed in between precipices thirty feet high, and still further obstructed by the huge mass of timber piled up level with the banks, was boiling with impetuous rage. The timber itself was matted and interlaced in every conceivable manner; some pieces reared right on end, and the whole forming a mass fully thirty feet above the ordinary level of the water, but which was now pouring over it. To make the matter worse, I found that only about ten men had arrived; the rest, having lost their way, did not make their appearance until evening. After a careful examination, I found that the mischief was caused by one stick lying across the channel, and I thought if that could be cut, the jam would break; but this was an operation of such extreme danger, that all the men hung back, and refused to attempt it. The only portion of the stick visible was in the centre of the stream, for the water, though pouring in masses over the sides of the jam, did not overtop

the middle. My idea was to fasten a rope to the stick, and then cut it nearly through; then, by means of the rope, all hands could break it, and all might be well. At length one of the men agreed to go down with me; but after working a short time, he became frightened, and went on shore. All at once, the stick broke, and the jam began slowly to move. My first feeling was that of joy, for I remember thinking I had made one thousand pounds by that operation; and even after I had attained the summit of the jam, and the timber was beginning to break up, I did not apprehend any great danger. I had noticed one place above the rapid where the water eddied into shore, and I felt sure that by jumping in there, I should be able to catch some overhanging branches, and be all right; but when I reached the spot, it was changed, and the water on both sides was running like a mill-race. I still ran on, now thoroughly alarmed, jumping from stick to stick, hoping to find some chance to get ashore. But I soon saw that though I was going very fast up the timber, I was also going fast into the rapid. I immediately turned, and ran down, hoping that perhaps the timber might go through without breaking up; but before me, as I opened the rapid, I saw a sight that at once took away from me all hope of going through alive. The banks, as I have said before, were about thirty feet high, and in the stream were here and there huge rocks, which broke the straight line of the channel: the whole ravine, as I now gazed, elevated above, and about to make the fatal plunge into it, was one tumultuous heaving mass of timber; hardly any water could be seen; but the huge sticks were thrown in all directions, many of them turning end over end. I knew no man could go through that and live.

Hoping that at least I should be killed at once, I sat down on a stick, and I distinctly remember seeing one of the men who had run down the rapid as soon as the jam broke, and managed to clamber down the rocks, making motions for me to seize his pole. I shouted to him: 'It is no use,' for I knew I should have pulled him in. An instant afterwards, I was struck in the back with a stick of timber, and this, which was the danger I most dreaded, proved the means of saving my life. I was thrown forward, and where I fell, the timber opened a little, and I slipped through. This was an extraordinary escape; for perhaps—so tightly was the timber packed—in no other part of the jam could I have done so, and it is to this I owe my life. From boyhood, I had been accustomed to diving, and it at once occurred to me, that though I must be killed on the surface, I might perhaps live through, if I could keep below the timber; and I found I had just hit the channel, which formed a sort of canal perhaps six feet deeper than the main floor of the rapid. The timber not being able to fill this up, the water was rushing along in an unbroken mass; but I question whether I should have been able to keep down, if I had not fallen in with a small stick of red pine, which, from its weight, had sunk below the main body of timber. I grasped this, placing my arm round it, but even in the fearful position I was in, I was cool enough to remember, that probably as we passed along my arm would be broken by contact with the rocks, so I changed the arm, merely putting my elbow on it. How anxiously I looked for light overhead! The noise was deafening, but all was dark. I have since calculated, by watching timber going through,

that I was about one and a quarter minutes under water, but to me it seemed never-ending. I had at last made up my mind that though it was certain death, up I must go, when I saw daylight overhead, and knew that we were through; I let go my stick, and struck out for the surface. I don't know how, in my disabled state, I managed to do it, but I soon found myself lying on a stick of timber, and whirling round in an eddy at the foot of the rapid. My situation was still full of danger, for I now found I could not move; I felt paralysed with the blow I had received when knocked into the water; I was also fearfully bruised by scraping against the rocks under water. The same man who had offered me his pole as I went into the rapid, and, indeed, the only one who saw me go down—for the rest seeing me run up the jam, had gone up to help me—here nobly came to my assistance, and at the imminent risk of his life, succeeded in gaining the stick I was on. He said: 'I need not ask you if you are hurt, for you would not lie there if you were not; can I help you?' I said: 'No; but if I fall off, you must jump in on the other side of the stick, and hold me up.' I told him he would likely be hurt, but he said he would stay by me until the men came up. We went spinning round for some time, for the men, when they did come, seemed afraid; but at length they succeeded in catching hold of the stick I was on, and I was saved.

For three days, I lay on the bank, unable to be moved; but thanks to a constitution that seems to defy bodily injury, I am now all right, excepting that my knee-cap was broken under water, and still pains me now and then; and this winter again sees me in the woods, again to drive timber, I hope with a better result, through the same rapid.

OCCASIONAL NOTE.

A FEW VULGARISMS OF MODERN WRITING.

WOULD that there were some functionary of the nature of a good watch-dog to prevent the intrusion of colloquial vulgarisms into the noble English language! He who pens these lines suffers a continual exasperation from this cause. Within the last few years, three or four malapert terms have made themselves particularly offensive, and, what could scarcely be expected, they shew their ugly snouts as much in the works of men of the highest talents as in inferior productions.

Oh, my good, clever friend Wilkie Collins, why will you so continually express the sense of the respectable old word 'also' by 'as well'? Believe me, it is not as well to do so. There are whole provinces in this island where nobody ever employs the term in the sense of also. I question if it is used at all in that sense beyond the hearing of the Park guns or the midnight boom of Big Ben. Wherever it is not so used, of course, your employment of it must appear as a vulgar provincialism. *Delectur!*

And, dear Mrs Henry Wood, you who have such a power of fixing our attention to your narratives, why will you always use the word 'like' for 'as'? Why pepper your clever books with this deformed phrase, to the offence of all whose praise is worth having?

There is a respectable old phrase, 'What can Jack be doing in the stable?', which most modern London writers intensify into, 'Whatever can Jack be doing, &c.?' No literary men belonging to other parts of the island *as yet* use this phrase. Possibly they will ere long be doing so, which will be a great pity, for

the phrase is certainly not correct English. Let us rather hope to see it denounced and put down, as good taste demands that it ought to be.

'There were ever so many people present'—Preach to me *ever* so much, it will be all in vain—are examples of what may be called a mistake rather than a vulgarism, which has of late come much into vogue. The word to be employed instead of *ever*, and which was employed by all past generations, is of course *never*. The late Mr Thackeray continually made this mistake, and living writers of his elevated grade are not exempt from it.

Another error which has lately become very prevalent is, 'It is no use'—the necessary particle 'of' being omitted. It looks petty-minded to economise in the use of particles, at the expense of a breach of grammar, and if it be a fault in common speech, it is thrice a fault in writing. Let 'of' be restored—let us say, 'It is of no use,' as our forefathers did, and as every classic writer continues to do; and so will one of my complaints be done away with.

If the English language were a rude one, only in the course of being formed, and devoid of classic models, it would be of little consequence that such errors as the above are committed by the writers of any particular province. As it is—viewing what an illustrious position it has long attained—we must unloose such a watch-dog as we have upon them.

THE FUNERAL PILE.

The rain was blowing in quick white gusts;
With yellow leaves the air was darkling;
The storm was moaning of death and graves;
No moon dared shine, no star was sparkling.

The elms were roaring around the house
With a frantic grief and a wild despair;
The wind gave a warning Banshee wail
From the beggared wood that was all but bare.

Then I opened the casket once so dear,
And took out the letters I'd kissed so oft;
The paper was still by the rose-leaf tinged;
Its breath was like hers—so sweet and so soft.

Slowly as one at a sacrifice,
With face averted, I fed the flame;
Ruthless and cruel, the serpent tongues,
Swift and eager and leaping came.

Hopes and joys, they were dreams and air!
I sat down sad by my funeral pile,
And heard the roar of the ruthless fire,
And 'God forgive her!' I moaned the while.

There was a blaze, and of crimson glare,
A wavering pyramid tall and keen;
Then there came a waft of smouldering smoke,
That rose in a circling vapour screen.

Meleager's fagot—so went my life,
Spring and summer, and autumn too;
Its daybreak promise, its ripper thoughts,
Its tears of sorrow, its sunshine dew.

I sat like a mourner beside the pile:
All I had loved had passed away;
Nothing for me but to hope for flowers
To bloom and gladden my burial clay.

There lay my life—a crinkling heap
Of curling ashes that fell to nought,
A glitter of one or two passing sparks—
That was all that my love had brought.

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A PRIVATE INQUIRY.

ONE evening, some months ago, I was seated before the fire waiting for my wife, whom I had promised to take to the theatre, when the servant brought in a card, saying that a gentleman particularly desired to see me. I looked at the card; it bore the name of 'Chr. Waitzen,' with an address, and in the corner, 'Private Inquiry Office.' The name was known to me merely from my having remarked it at the foot of mysterious advertisements; of the bearer of it, I knew no more than the card told me.

'Did he say what he wanted, Jane? I'm just going out.'

'No, sir; but he wish to see you most particular.—Missus won't be ready for a quarter of an hour,' she added.

'Shew him in,' I said.—'What the deuce can he want with me?' I muttered to myself, as I looked at the clock.

The servant returned in a few moments, ushering in a tall man, to whom I offered a seat. Mr Waitzen, who, I afterwards learned, had formerly been in 'the force,' had still about him marks of the policeman, in spite of his evident attempts to repress them. I have observed about detectives that they never appear quite at home in their clothes; I suppose that, from constantly assuming all kinds of garments as disguises, they never become thoroughly used to one style of dress. From this cause, or from some other with which I am not acquainted, it results that a detective's dress never has the individuality, which in some degree, however faint, marks that of the rest of men. Chr. Waitzen had deserted 'the force' for some years, but his old trade was discernible at times. The official boots, to which, in spite of the fact, that they at once betray any disguise, the ordinary detective clings as a drowning man to a hencoop—these, this gentleman had for ever discarded.

'Mr Waitzen?'

'That is my name, sir.'

'To what—to what fortunate occurrence, sir, am

I indebted for this visit?' I asked with a slight irony in my manner, for, to tell the truth, I did not feel very well disposed towards the race of 'Private Inquirers.' 'May I ask whether I am the object of some delicate inquiry?'

'Not at all, sir. I have come to beg your assistance in a matter of business: may I reckon on your aid?'

'That depends entirely on what you require. I must know first what is the assistance you desire, and for what purpose.'

'Of course, I should not for one moment think of asking you for any aid without giving you every assurance you could require that the information is sought for a proper purpose.' He took a little note-book from his pocket. 'You are skilful in reading ciphers?' he asked.

'Well,' I said, 'I've amused myself sometimes in that way; but how did you know it?'

'Excuse me; it is my business to know everything by myself or through others. You sent to the *Times* last autumn a solution of an advertisement in cipher?'

'I did; but'—

'I made a note of the initials (you did not sign your name) and of the address: I thought it might be useful some day. Your letter was dated from C—, a small watering-place in Dunshire. I intended, when I might be that way, to see whether you lived there (highly improbable), or if not, to get your address. I had no difficulty in finding the house at which you had lodged; but they had forgotten your place of abode in London. Very awkward! But you had had a cheque sent down to you, and that cheque you changed. The bank had not kept the name of the drawer, but the cheque was drawn on Coutts's. I found the name of the drawer'—

'My aunt,' I interposed.

'Exactly,' continued Waitzen: 'got your address, and here I am.'

'Well,' I said, 'this is a nice specimen of the way in which you look into people's private affairs!'

'What could I do, sir? If you had signed your

name, I should have been saved a journey. And now, sir, before asking your assistance, you, a gentleman of honourable and delicate feeling, will, of course, insist on knowing the object for which that assistance is required. You're quite right, sir; this system of private inquiries is very low and dirty, but what can I do? It's my trade. Will you aid me, if I convince you that all is straightforward?

'Let me hear,' I said.

He again looked at his note-book. 'Last settling-day on the Stock Exchange, J. C. disappeared, carrying with him, fraudulently, an immense number of bonds and other securities, which he can easily negotiate on any Bourse. The police are after him; but several members of the Stock Exchange, acting in concert, have, in addition, authorised me to make inquiry. I have reason to believe that he is in England, and I also believe, from the active pursuit set on foot immediately, and from other circumstances, that it is not likely he can have got off with all the securities in his actual possession. I have also reason to believe—I need not explain why, but partly from the word at the head—that this advertisement in cipher is either from him, or addressed to him. Now, sir, that I have told you my story, will you undertake to help me?' Here he handed to me an advertisement, cut from a newspaper. It ran thus:

FRED. (112-18) (236-49) (207-76) (132-3) (27-61) (142-54) (121-32) (12-32) (72-6) (202-30) (38-106) (262-51) (78-22) (63-94) (110-6) (262-51) (19-33) (160-60) (230-92) (37-51) (210-29) (204-79) (15-67) (143-61) (121-32) (236-54) (37-101) (21-17) (236-54) (238-78) (51-1) (175-75) (143-61) (13-7) (204-79) (114-2) (10-102) (121-32) (132-15) (78-112) (157-62) (100-58) (134-19) (264-30) (268-66) (5-1) (187-71) (80-45) (117-75) (265-62) (9-101) (245-62) (154-65) (158-46) (256-41).

'Well,' I said, after looking at it for a few moments, 'this cipher does not seem to be of the simplest kind! Before undertaking the task, I should like to know the terms.' He mentioned them, and I am bound to say that they were very liberal. 'But after all,' I said, 'this may not be J. C.'s advertisement. Yet I shall have the trouble all the same!'

'And the cheque also, my dear sir,' said Waitzen with fervour.

'Very good: on those terms, I undertake it. If I cannot succeed in reading the cipher, I agree to lose my pains.'

'One thing more,' said the private inquirer; 'you see the importance of my knowing the meaning of this advertisement as early as possible: when can you let me have the translation?'

'I'll do all I can,' I replied: 'will you look in at noon to-morrow? I shall have it for you by then, most likely, if I can decipher it at all.'

At this moment the door opened, and my wife entered, dressed for the theatre. Waitzen bowed to her, and then glancing with evident anxiety at my dress-coat, whispered: 'You will surely begin

at once? You are not going out? Only think of the little time you will have!'

'I really must go,' I said. 'I shall leave the theatre after the first piece, and shall have plenty of time; besides, I shall look over it at the theatre.'

He implored me to remain at home, and to begin work at once; but I was quite deaf to his entreaties, and taking my wife's arm in mine, went down stairs. At the theatre, I remarked, some half hour after our arrival, a face which seemed always turned towards us, except that when I looked in its direction, it became averted. After noticing this for two or three times, I discovered that the face was the face of Chr. Waitzen, who had come to the theatre in disguise, to see, apparently, whether I carried out my promise of looking over the cipher in my box. To punish him for his distrust, I kept my eyes on the performance the whole time.

On our return home, I bade my wife good-night, explaining that I was going to sit up to work. 'It's all very well to preach 'early to bed and early to rise;' but if you have any head-work to do, there's no time like that between 11 P.M. and 2 A.M., when all your household is asleep. Everything is quiet; even the street-noises, unless you live in a populous and late quarter, are hushed, and, above all, you are safe from interruption. As you sit in the genial warmth of a fire, with the light of your lamp concentrated on your papers or books, you hear, perhaps, now and then, a passing cab coming home from the theatre, or, later, the cry of some roysterer, singing the vulgar music-hall melody that he heard an hour ago, when a little less drunk than now; you catch the tread of the solitary policeman, and notice that he tries your door as he passes; but all these sounds are momentary, and do but serve to intensify the quiet. Mind and body are nicely balanced; body has had its proper allowance of exercise, but not yet tired, consents to let mind be at peace. But the morning! At what hour can you rise when you will not be disturbed by noises? You are hungry; ten months out of the twelve you are cold, for you are without fire; and the other months it is so fine, that body wants to be abroad in the bright smokeless day. No! if you want to do work, sit up late.

It was what, at all events, I made up my mind to do, so, after stirring the fire, I sat down to look at the mysterious scrap of paper left me by Waitzen. My first step was to get some inkling of the nature of the cipher—the plan on which it proceeded. Exclusive of the word at the head, I found that the specimen I had consisted of 252 figures, divided by brackets into 55 groups, a dot, in every case, again separating the figures within each bracket into two parts. The number of figures enclosed in each bracket varied from 2 up to 5; the proportions in which the various combinations were found differing widely, there being only 2 instances of groups of 2 figures each; 2, of 3 each; 13, of 4 each; and 38, or more than three-fifths of the whole number, of 5 each. Now, the object of these brackets and dots might quite possibly be merely to increase the difficulty of reading the cipher; it was, however, equally possible that they were there to serve their ostensible purpose—the division and subdivision of the figures. Carefully guarding against absolutely assuming the correctness of this latter view, I

sought in the cipher itself for something to lead me to its adoption or rejection. I found that the characters used were the numerals from 0 to 9. I looked at this '0' a little more closely, and found that it occurred 19 times. Now, had the division and subdivision of the figures been arbitrary merely, it would require no proof to shew that it should have occurred once, at the very least, at the beginning of a group. It did not so occur. The first step was gained; the division was a necessary part of the cipher.

The fact I had remarked led me on another step. Had the plan of the cipher been to represent certain letters by certain figures, I should have been entitled to expect the '0' at the head of a group; since, in English, the language in which the cipher was probably written, there is no letter of frequent occurrence which is not also an initial letter, a rule which holds good in all the European languages with which I am acquainted.

I should have been already almost justified in concluding that the meaning of the cipher depended on the grouping, but I found other proofs, which at the same time led me still further on. I have already remarked the frequency of groups of 5 figures. Now, this singular predominance of groups of 5 figures would scarcely harmonise with any plan which represented letters by single arbitrary signs, although it would no doubt be possible to compose sentences consisting chiefly of words of 5 letters, retaining or rejecting the vowels. But in the great majority of cases of 5 figures, I found 3 figures before the dot. To these figures before the dots, I, for the moment, restricted my attention. I found that (taking all the groups) they ranged, with intervals, from 5 to 268; in 37 cases out of the 55, there were 3 figures. Discarding repetitions, I found that under 100 there were 15; between 100 and 200, 15; and from 200 to the end, 13; a degree of uniformity higher than I had expected to find, and high enough to establish that it was the result of the grouping being dependent on a plan.

I had thus determined that the divisions were not arbitrary, and that the characters used did not singly represent letters; by inference, therefore, as they must be held to mean something, that in groups they represented letters or words.

I now went over the groups of figures after the dots, and found that they ranged from 1 to 112. Dividing the numbers between these points equally at 56, I found, discarding repetitions, that up to that number there were 27; above it, 22. With the light I had now got, all converging on one point, I should, in a long specimen, have expected a far more exact proportion; it was one of my difficulties that I had to deal with so short a piece of writing. The proportion, however, was, as in the former case, sufficient to prove the existence of a system. The numbers stopped short at 112, whereas, in the other groups, they went as high as 268; the two systems, regulating the groups before and after the dots, were therefore different. It did not absolutely follow that they depended one on the other, but the bracketing rendered it highly probable that they did. I considered myself justified in assuming that each bracketed group represented a letter or a word.

So far, the conclusions at which I had arrived had been almost forced on me. There was now, however, less certainty in my progress. My examination of the cipher had, nevertheless, shewn me

in what direction the probabilities lay. They pointed to a conclusion which might well have made Chr. Waitzen tremble for the success of my attempt. The first instinctive notion I had formed of the cipher had been confirmed by all I had arrived at; it was, that the numbers referred to a book—the first group of figures in each bracket indicating a page, and the second, a word or line in that page.

Now, when Poe, in his remarkable story of *The Gold Beetle*, tells us 'that it may well be doubted whether human ingenuity can construct an enigma of the kind' (he is speaking of cryptograms), 'which human ingenuity may not, by proper application, resolve'—a proposition safe in its vagueness—he must be held to speak only of ciphers which proceed on a plan the very method of which affords a guide to its solution. Taking the cipher in his tale, for example, each letter being represented by a distinct sign, the frequency of recurrence of particular signs leads to their identification with certain letters. His remarks can hardly apply to cases where, the signs used being purely arbitrary, their solution requires a knowledge of the pre-arranged plan. In the cipher, the meaning of which I was attempting to discover, I had reason to believe that the signs represented, in an arbitrary manner, letters or words. If this view was correct, the cipher did not contain within itself the means by which it might be read; I could only be successful by discovering the very book used in its construction, and the mode of using that book. The task, at first sight, appeared hopeless; but, upon consideration, I saw enough to induce me to proceed.

I remarked several repetitions. Now, in a cipher constructed with the ingenuity of which this gave evidence, it would have been very easy, had each sign, by the indication of a page in a book, and a line or word in that page, represented a letter only, to pick out dozens, or even hundreds of each letter, so as to avoid a recurrence of signs which might afford a solution to the enigma. The repetitions, on the other hand, were too few to allow of the possibility of each sign representing a distinct letter. The recurrence, but not too frequent recurrence, of signs led me to believe that each group of figures within a bracket represented a word. I had arrived at the conclusion, that the number before the dot gave the page; I was convinced that the number after the dot represented a line in each page. The highest of these numbers was 112; now, it must be a very empty page indeed which does not contain many times 112 words. The second number could, then, hardly refer to the sequence of words; it could only represent the line.

Now, what book would one take by preference for the construction of a cipher of this character? In any ordinary book, there would be extreme difficulty in finding the particular word required, amounting, in many cases, to impossibility; there is only one class of book which will furnish immediately, without labour, every word wanted—a dictionary. If a dictionary were used, there would be no necessity to indicate more than the line in which the word, in its alphabetical order, was found; with other books, three numbers would be required—for the page, the line, and the word respectively. This confirmed my supposition. By a fresh examination of the cipher, I might test this view, and I therefore arranged in a table, like the following, the numbers before the dots, indicating

by a mark, for a reason which the reader will see presently, the place of the absent numbers.

.	.	.	110	.	.	245
(2) 5	.	.	114	.	.	.
.	.	.	117	(2) 142	.	.
9	63	.	117	(2) 143	.	.
10 (2) 37	.	.	.	.	.	.
12 38	.	.	.	.	.	.
13	.	.	.	.	.	.
15	.	(3) 121	.	175	292	256
.	.	.	.	(2) 204	.	230
19	72	.	.	.	207	.
21	100	.	154	.	.	(2) 263
.	.	.	157	.	(2) 236	264
.	.	.	158	.	210	265
.	(2) 78	(2) 132	.	.	.	238
27	80	134	160 187	.	.	268

I had still something to do before I could apply my test, which was the frequency of occurrence of initial letters. The frequency of initial letters, as they occur in a dictionary, that is, without repetitions, is as follows: S, C, P, D, A, R, B, T, M, I, F, E, U, H, L, G, W, O, V, N, J, Q, K, Y, X, Z. But the reader will at once see that the recurrence of words of frequent and inevitable use may entirely upset this order. This is what does in fact happen. For my purpose, I had to ascertain the frequency of occurrence of initial letters as they are found in ordinary writing, or more properly for my purpose, in conversation. To arrive at this, I took up a number of 'Chambers' that was lying on the table, and made an analysis of a few pages of a tale written in the first person. I found that the order of initial letters was this: T, A, I, W, H, O, M, S, B, F, D, C, N, P, L, G, E, R, U, J, K, Y, V, Q, X, Z. The letter T predominates largely over all the others, owing to the frequent use of such words as *the, that, this, then, there, their, them, they, these, those, to*. Next comes A, owing to the frequency of the words *a, an, and, am, are, at, all, &c.*; then I, under which letters we have *I, is, it, its, in, into*; and next W, including many such words as *we, where, when, was, were, who, which, what, whose, with, would, will, &c.* In any moderately long specimen of 'conversational' writing, these four letters, as initials, will largely predominate over all others. Now, of these four letters, A is at the head of the alphabetical order, I at about the middle, and W at the end, except by a few pages, in large dictionaries. I now proceeded to apply my test, and found that the numbers lay in a cluster towards the beginning and end. Those quite at the end, I was justified in assuming represented words beginning with W. Taking the last number, 268, as giving, probably, almost the last page in the key, I found that in a dictionary of about that length the letter I should begin at about page 120, or a few pages before, since the small dictionaries omit numbers of words with the prefixes *in, un, and re*, which go to swell the latter part of large dictionaries, such as that I was using as a guide. On referring to my table, I found that there was no great indication of clustering towards the middle; but the specimen on which I was operating being so very short, I could scarcely expect to find all the points in my favour.

Had I had several pages to deal with, I could have indicated pretty correctly the limits of all the important letters.

The key required to read the cipher was, then, a pocket dictionary of about 268 or 270 pages. It was very late when I arrived at this result; but before going to bed, I just looked at another point which I had remarked. I found two groups of figures identical as regards the numbers before the dots, but varying in those after; they were (236:49) and (236:54). By calculating the proportion to be given to each letter in a dictionary of 268 pages, I found that the two words indicated by these numbers should begin with *th*. There was an interval of five words between them. The compilers of small dictionaries proceed with so little method, that this interval did not guide me to the positive identification of these two words, but assuming that they were of common occurrence, I thought I could determine that they must form one of five pairs—that, *the; the, their; their, them; them, then; these, they*.

I had now done all that I could for the present, and went to bed with fair hopes of being able to find the dictionary used as a key, for I reflected that two copies must have been required—one to compose, the other to decipher, the cryptogram. It would probably, then, be a dictionary in ordinary use, so ordinary, that two copies of it could be purchased at the same time, probably at the same shop.

In the morning, therefore, I took a cab to Pater-noster Row, where, as the reader probably knows, there are wholesale booksellers at whose warehouses small shopkeepers can supply themselves without the trouble of sending to different publishers in quest of works. At one of these warehouses, I was known, and was allowed to make an inspection of all the pocket-dictionaries in stock. I selected about half a score, that seemed more or less likely to meet my requirements, and then hurried home, having foolishly left my cipher behind me. On reaching home, I carefully tried my dictionaries one by one, in every way suggested by what I had already learned of the nature of the cipher. I at last found one, which, by taking the first number for the page, and the second for the word, not counting lines, but only words in their alphabetical order, gave sense. The title-page informed me that it was Webster's Dictionary, the 'one hundredth thousand,' and was published at 158 Fleet Street. With very little trouble, I made out the following:

FRED. I hear that search is being made in all directions a canal was drag d H was arrest on suspicion but servant saw another man in the cab at the time a policeman also saw him afterwards in it cab man not found stay where you a r e I will advertise twentieth N o v

I need only say in explanation, that where a word like 'are' was not in the dictionary, it was spelt by indicating the letter of the alphabet at the head of each division in the dictionary; a plan also adopted in the word 'dragged,' the termination being indicated by the separate 'd.' It was thus possible to spell any proper name or word which might not occur in the dictionary.

The contents of the cipher were so different from what Waitzen had led me to expect, that it was evident there was some mistake. Yet what could it be? He could not have given me a wrong slip,

for he had called my attention to the word at the head. I had fairly earned the promised reward, but there was so clearly a mistake somewhere, that I was anxious to ferret out the mystery. Waitzen had given me the date of the paper, and I therefore sent for a copy, which was got after some delay. Singularly enough, there was in it, just below the advertisement I had deciphered, another one, also in cipher. The second cryptogram was of the simplest description; one letter was substituted for another. In ten minutes, I had a translation of it lying before me. Here it is:

FEDE. I don't think that I am watched; not sure. Police went down to Liverpool after you. Get as soon as you can to A., where I will join you. I got the bag all right. Steamer sails on the seventeenth.

This looked much more like Chr. Waitzen's affair. I had just deciphered it when I heard his knock at the door. I shewed him my reading of the first advertisement; he looked at it in blank dismay, but when I assured him that there could be no mistake, and producing the key, shewed him, greatly to his wonderment, how to use it, he took from his pocket-book a cheque which he filled up, and handed to me. 'One moment!' I said, handing him the second: 'is that what you want?' I saw by his face that it was, and he assured me that the information given, slight as it was, was quite enough for him. I explained to him how I had hit upon it. But the words at the top! Well, after all, they were not very dissimilar, in the letters that composed them, at all events; and if they had got changed by some mistake, perhaps the confusion was not altogether without precedent. Chr. Waitzen enlarged the figures on the cheque, and was preparing to give immediate chase, when I stopped him. 'Do you know anything about the other affair?' I asked.

'Yes,' he said, 'and a curious affair it is; would you like to hear it?'

I nodded assent, and offered him a chair.

'Two friends, A. and the H. of the advertisement, went one day, about a month ago, to dine at a foreign restaurant at the West End, and having dined, returned home together in a cab, both living in the same neighbourhood—St John's Wood. H. lived nearer to town than A., and to his house accordingly the cabman drove first. It was a wet night, and the cabman got down to knock at the door, telling the friends as he did so that it was raining. It was perhaps lucky for H. that things so fell out, for the servant who came to the door, and who knew A., saw him in the cab. H., after bidding A. good-night, went into the house, and as he did so, saw the cab drive off with A. in it. A policeman whom the cab passed a little further on, also saw a man within it. That was the last seen of A. alive or dead from that time to this.'

'A curious story,' I said; 'what can it mean?'

'Don't know,' replied Waitzen; 'but A., who was very close on the subject, had passed years of his life abroad in Italy, roving about no one knew where or how. His disappearance may in some way be connected with his old continental life, and H. remembers a trifling circumstance that seems to make this probable. He observed that when at the restaurant, a foreign one, as I have said, A. suddenly started as if he had received a shock; in answer to H.'s inquiries, he refused to explain himself, but altered his position, so as to face round. There was a change in his manner notice-

able through the whole evening; and when he bade H. good-night, there was an earnestness in his tone that seemed to betoken apprehension of a coming evil. H. had wished to see him home, but this he refused. I can only guess at the rest. Some act of vengeance probably, the long dread of which had always kept A. silent on his foreign life.'

'But the police?' I said.

'And Foschini—and the Waterloo Bridge business?' replied Waitzen, shrugging his shoulders.

'The Waterloo Bridge affair?' I asked.

'Yes, there was an Italian brain at the bottom of that, as surely as Italians were concerned in the case of Foschini, whose habits, residence, and person were all known to the police, but who got off in spite of them. It was well done that Bridge business,' he continued, half closing his eyes, and with the tone of a critic who dilates on a masterpiece—'Italian beyond a doubt. A few months later, and the shells of Orsini burst in front of the Opera House. Such plans didn't bear interruption. The police are powerless before associations, where the tie is strong.—Good-day,' he added after a pause. 'If I don't call on you, as I hope you will permit me to do at times, I think you will hear of my man in the police reports in a few days.'

I did; Waitzen's 'man' was arrested, a few days later, at Southampton, on board a boat which was on the point of leaving for the West Indies, whence he would no doubt have made his way to America.

I never heard anything more of A. or of his mysterious disappearance, on the story of which I had so strangely stumbled. And here ends my history of A Private Inquiry.

THE POEMS OF MONCKTON MILNES.

POEMS may not be Great, nor even perfect in their own unambitious line, and yet they may not be Mediocre, and therefore despicable. If we were doomed to have but one poem wherewith to elevate our minds, perhaps we should ask for *Paradise Lost*—(although, also, perhaps not)—but since there is no such exigence, we are glad to welcome bards inferior to Milton. People who rarely read poetry, and do not quite comprehend it when they do, are great sticklers for 'Milton and Shakspeare, sir,' and affect to despise all the minor poets. But there are often occasions when the mind—and not the thing which that description of reader *calls* his 'mind'—demands some simpler music:

Not from the grand old masters,
Not from the bards sublime,
Whose distant footstep's echo
Through the corridors of Time,

but from some less exacting writer,

Whose songs gush from his heart
As showers from the clouds of summer,
Or tears from the eyelids start.

To write verse admirably upon even a small subject, is of course given to very few; and to pass such a comment as 'Not bad'—which we once heard from a professional critic—upon such a poem as Præd's *Vicar* is simply an impertinence. The piece is as perfect in its way as Wordsworth's *Intimations of Immortality*. But even below this standard of perfection in small things, there is much worthy of any man's admiration to be found in the works of English bards: songs that touch the heart, and even occasionally move us to thoughts too deep for

tears. The misfortune is that you have generally to read through a considerable quantity of—let us say verse of an inferior quality—before you arrive at these gems. Now, this inconvenience is partly done away with by the modern system of publishing *Selections*—a device unpardonable in the case of really great writers, but much to be commended in that of minor bards. We say *partly*, because even in their reduced bulk there is always too much of them. No poet can easily persuade himself that what he has written is not for all time, and when he uses the scissors, he seems to be cutting his own heart-strings. Thus, in the volume we propose to notice, *Selections from the Poetical Works of Richard Monckton Milnes, Lord Houghton*, there is much that ought not to be there, and which makes us tremble to think of the character of these pieces which his Lordship has excised, as *not* being specimens of his best style; but, on the other hand, there are several really excellent poems, not only clear and musical (as his verse always is), but deep-flowing too, the murmur of which haunts not only the ear but the heart.

If we had never heard that our author was a man of kindly feeling, prompt to do generous acts in a graceful way, it might be gathered from this volume; while, again, there is no evidence of his having belonged at one period of political life to an exclusive clique, the opinions of some of whom did little credit to their good taste. For it surely is the reverse of good taste in persons exceptionally well born to extol the virtues of good birth (for a man of title, for instance, to pray Heaven to preserve 'our old nobility' at the expense, if need be, of our Commerce), and such a mistake was made by the party to whom Lord Houghton once belonged. There is scarcely a trace, however, of his old '*Young Englandism*,' to be found in these *Selections*; and it is only natural that such a creed should be short-lived. One of our greatest living novelists held some such faith—until he was five-and-twenty. After that epoch, all his heroes were in 'the first full vigour of manhood;' when he had passed his next decade, they were all 'in the prime of life;' when, again, he had attained his fiftieth year, all 'had exchanged mere elasticity of mind for the sober and matured judgment of advanced years;' while in his present novels, the virtues are confined to persons who are Sexagenarians.

There is nothing in Lord Houghton's *Men of Old* which might not be assented to by persons of any age: a sensible, unprejudiced poem, with a just reproof in its second verse, addressed to Sentimental persons in love with those *Good Old Times*, to which no particular epoch has yet been positively assigned. Though by no means the best of his Lordship's poems, it is probably the best known.

THE MEN OF OLD.

I know not that the men of old
Were better than men now,
Of heart more kind, of hand more bold,
Of more ingenuous brow:
I heed not those who pine for force
A ghost of Time to raise,
As if they thus could check the course
Of these appointed days.

Still it is true, and over true,
That I delight to close
This book of life self-wise and new,
And let my thoughts repose

On all that humble happiness,
The world has since foregone—
The daylight of contentedness
That on those faces shone!

Man now his Virtue's diadem
Puts on and proudly wears,
Great thoughts, great feelings, came to them,
Like instincts, unawares:
Blending their souls' sublimest needs
With tasks of every day,
They went about their gravest deeds,
As noble boys at play.—

And what if Nature's fearful wound
They did not probe and bare,
For that their spirits never swooned
To watch the misery there—
For that their love but flowed more fast,
Their charities more free,
Not conscious what mere drops they cast
Into the evil sea.

A man's best things are nearest him,
Lie close about his feet;
It is the distant and the dim
That we are sick to greet:
For flowers that grow our hands beneath
We struggle and aspire—
Our hearts must die, except they breathe
The air of fresh Desire.

Yet, Brothers, who up Reason's hill
Advance with hopeful cheer—
Oh! loiter not; those heights are chill,
As chill as they are clear;
And still restrain your haughty gaze,
The loftier that ye go,
Remembering distance leaves a haze
On all that lies below.

Lord Houghton's volume has the usual fault of its genus in containing too many 'occasional poems' on personal matters, or the subject of which is evanescent; but most of these are really good of their kind. They are probably our author's favourites; the 'trivial fond records' of his loves and friendships, his hopes and their disappointments. Here is a sonnet of a kind which many have essayed, but few have more gracefully handled:

ON REVISITING TRINITY COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE.

I have a debt of my heart's own to Thee,
School of my Soul! old lime and cloister shade!
Which I, strange suitor, should lament to see
Fully acquitted and exactly paid.
The first ripe taste of manhood's best delights,
Knowledge imbibed, while mind and heart agree,
In sweet belated talk on winter nights,
With friends whom growing time keeps dear to me—
Such things I owe thee, and not only these:
I owe thee the far-beaconing memories
Of the young dead, who, having crossed the tide
Of Life where it was narrow, deep, and clear,
Now cast their brightness from the further side
On the dark-flowing hours I breast in fear.

Doubtless, that undergraduate time was full of palmy days of Friendship to such as he of whom we write. Few pleasanter companions could a young man have had than our author to pace with him beneath the murmurous limes, or, on the sloping river-bank to lie through the long summer afternoon in dreamy talk, broken by dip of oar and clash of bells. A loving and a charitable friend must Monckton Milnes have been, unless this poem belies him—certainly the most perfect in the whole volume, and breathing such a genial healthy

air as is seldom found in verse, and least of all in a bard disappointed in his friendship.

FAIR-WEATHER FRIEND.

Because I mourned to see thee fall
From where I mounted thee,
Because I did not find thee all
I feigned a friend should be;
Because things are not what they seem,
And this our world is full of dream—
Because thou lovest sunny weather,
Am I to lose thee altogether?

I know harsh words have found their way,
Which I would fain recall;
And angry passions had their day,
But now—forget them all;
Now that I only ask to share
Thy presence, like some pleasant air,
Now that my gravest thoughts will bend
To thy light mind, fair-weather friend!

See! I am careful to atone
My spirit's voice to thine;
My talk shall be of mirth alone,
Of music, flowers, and wine!
I will not breathe an earnest breath,
I will not think of life or death,
I will not dream of any end,
While thou art here, fair-weather friend!

Or, if I see my doom is traced
By fortune's sterner pen,
And pain and sorrow must be faced—
Well, thou canst leave me then;
And fear not lest some faint reproach
Should on thy happy hours encroach;
Nay, blessings on thy steps attend,
Where'er they turn, fair-weather friend!

Surely the above is a poem as manly as beautiful; not morose and murmuring, as an inferior writer would certainly have made his verse when treating such a subject, but content with such good as befalls, and even thankful for it; sound sense wedded to fitting rhyme.

Here is a charming 'bit' from Venice.

THE VENETIAN SERENADE.

When along the light ripple the far serenade
Has accosted the ear of each passionate maid,
She may open the window that looks on the stream—
She may smile on her pillow and blend it in dream;
Half in words, half in music, it pierces the gloom,
'I am coming—Stall—but you know not for whom!
Stall—not for whom!'

Now the tones become clearer—you hear more and more

How the water divided returns on the oar—
Does the prow of the Gondola strike on the stair?
Do the voices and instruments pause and prepare?
Oh! they faint on the ear as the lamp on the wall,
'I am passing—Premi—but I stay not for you!
Premi—not for you!'

Then return to your couch, you who stifle a tear,
Then awake not, fair sleeper—believe he is here;
For the young and the loving no sorrow endures,
If to-day be another's, to-morrow is yours;
May, the next time you listen, your fancy be true,
'I am coming—Sciâr—and for you and to you!
Sciâr—and to you!'

Whatever he touches, indeed, even though he may not adorn it as we would wish, it is impossible

* The Venetian words here used are the calls of the gondoliers: *Stall*—to the right. *Premi*—to the left.

Lord Houghton should spoil; his spirit is too reverent, his handling too delicate, his taste too good. Still, nothing in the whole volume gives us the expectation of anything so every way perfect as his *Flight of Youth*. If Coleridge had not written *Youth and Age* (which manifestly suggested it), we should say indeed that it was without peer; but as it is, the imitation is so admirable, that it scarcely suffers by being placed beside the original itself. The tone of thought is the same in each, and the metre almost identical, but the expression (although in both cases exquisitely graceful) is wholly different. If a true lover of poetry chance to read this paper, let him compare the elder bard's description of his lost youth with the following:

Alas! we know not how He went,
We knew not he was going,
For had our tears once found a vent,
We had stayed him with their flowing.
It was as an earthquake, when
We awoke and found him gone,
We were miserable men,
We were hopeless, every one!
Yes, He must have gone away
In his guise of every day,
In his common dress, the same
Perfect face and perfect frame;
For in feature, for in limb,
Who could be compared to him?
Firm his step, as one who knows
He is free, where'er he goes,
And withal as light of spring
As the arrow from the string:
His impassioned eye had got
Fire which the sun has not;
Silk to feel, and gold to see,
Fell his tresses full and free,
Like the morning mists that glide
Soft adown the mountain's side;
Most delicious 'twas to hear
When his voice was trilling clear
As a silver-hearted bell,
Or to follow its low swell,
When, as dreamy winds that stray
Fainting 'mid Æolian chords,
Inner music seemed to play
Symphony to all his words;
In his hand was poised a spear,
Deftly poised, as to appear
Resting of its proper will—
Thus a merry hunter still,
And engarlanded with bay,
Must our Youth have gone away,
Though we half remember now,
He had borne some little while
Something mournful in his smile—
Something serious on his brow:
Gentle Heart, perhaps he knew
The cruel deed he was about to do!

How admirable is the description of the approach of Middle Age in those last lines: and yet how truly painted is the abruptness of Youth's departure. Again, how immeasurable the distance between us and Him appears when once He has really fled.

Now, between us all and Him
There are rising mountains dim,
Forests of uncounted trees,
Spaces of unmeasured seas:
Think with Him how gay of yore
We made sunshine out of shade—
Think with Him how light we bore
All the burden sorrow laid;
All went happily about him—

How without his cheering eye
Constant strength embreathing ever?
How without him standing by
Aiding every hard endeavour?
For when faintness or disease
Had usurped upon our knees,
If He deigned our lips to kiss
With those living lips of his,
We were lightened of our pain,
We were up and hale again:
Now, without one blessing glance
From his rose-lit countenance,
We shall die, deserted men—
And not see him, even then!

Is there no hope, then? None: and those who fancy that they can hold Him with them a little longer, bitterly rue their mistake. Pleasure—the Pleasure of which youth is full—they can know no more. But there is something better which can yet be had, only we cannot persuade ourselves (so new to our sad loss) that it is better.

We are cold, very cold—
All our blood is drying old,
And a terrible heart-dearth
Reigns for us in heaven and earth:
Forth we stretch our chilly fingers
In poor effort to attain
Tepid embers, where still lingers
Some preserving warmth, in vain.
Oh! if Love, the Sister dear
Of Youth that we have lost,
Come not in swift pity here,
Come not, with a host
Of Affections, strong and kind,
To hold up our sinking mind,
If She will not, of her grace,
Take her Brother's holy place,
And be to us, at least, a part
Of what He was, in Life and Heart,
The faintness that is on our breath
Can have no other end but Death.

Of course, it may be said that it is small compliment to Love to welcome him after Youth has departed, and that the poet does not appear to recommend matrimony, except as a *pis aller*, when all one's wild oats have been sown. But his meaning is, that the domestic affections, the love of wife and child and home, naturally supply the place of Passion as it cools, and that the man who is without both them and Youth is miserable indeed.

M I R K A B B E Y.

CHAPTER XXIV.—NO LETTERS.

UPON the morning after the interview between Rose and Lady Lisgard, the latter again sent down Mistress Forest for the post-bag, and was once more disappointed at receiving no news from Arthur Haldane; not only did the interval of twenty-four hours make this matter additionally serious, and increase her former apprehensions that he had not received her telegram, and might find some means of forwarding Derrick's letter to himself—since it had certainly not come back to the *Lisgard Arms*; but there was a still graver cause for anxiety in the fact that Mary Forest also received no reply from Ralph to that rejection so decidedly yet courteously composed by her mistress, with the view of taking away all hope, and at the same time of leaving as little sting of anger as was possible. Lady Lisgard would have almost preferred to have

received from this man a declaration of open warfare—an expressed resolution of carrying away Mary as his wife, in spite of all obstacles—rather than this menacing No Answer. Contemptuous silence was not at all the natural line for one of his violent character to take, if he had decided to treat her waiting-woman's letter as final. He was more likely in that case to have penned a tornado of invective, and bidden both mistress and maid to have gone to the devil. It seemed only too probable, then, that he was determined—as he had threatened—to take no denial; and that he would return in person, sooner or later, to Mirk, to prosecute his suit.

My Lady made certain preparations for that extremity—nay, for the worst that could possibly arise—chief among which was the composition of a very long and carefully-conned epistle to her eldest son, that she put by in her desk undated and unsealed, so that additions could be made to it at pleasure. Then she waited in agonies of suspense day after day; and yet no letter came for her maid from Ralph, or for herself from Arthur Haldane. Moreover, although, in her absorbing anxiety about the more serious subject, this affected my Lady far less than it did Rose, no communication came from Walter in answer to her long and justificatory letter, acquainting him with the disclosure of their marriage. Our readers are aware that this last circumstance was simply due to the fact, that it was reposing in the 'address-box' of the *Turf Hotel*, until such time as it caught the eye of the overworked waiter, and was carried over with apologies to Walter's lodgings, whither he had given orders that anything addressed to him should be conveyed forthwith. But he had not particularly expected a letter from that quarter—or, at all events, felt very anxious to get it—for nobody but Rose would have written to him to the *Turf Hotel*, all others at Mirk and elsewhere believing him to be at Canterbury with his regiment, whence all communications were forwarded to him to his London lodgings. Thus, from the very deceit to which she had lent herself—to her peculiar information as to his movements—was this failure of Rose's letter to reach her husband owing. During this protracted interval, she suffered agonies of suspense, of mortification, and even of fear. It was wormwood to have to say to her mother-in-law every morning: 'He has not written yet,' and thereby to confess that Walter treated with indifference the embarrassing position in which she was now placed at Mirk Abbey; moreover, she surmised that her husband was too much enraged with her disobedience in betraying their secret, to write at all.

His wife knew—although few others did—that Master Walter was capable of being 'put out' to a very considerable extent. His very marriage with herself—although she fortunately did not know that—had been mainly owing to his impatience of opposition, and pique against his elder brother. Doubtless propinquity and opportunities of flirtation with a beautiful and accomplished girl, not by any means lavish of her smiles, but whose devotion to himself had been almost that of a slave for her master, had carried the handsome captain towards the gulf of matrimony; but it was the desire to thwart Sir Richard—who, his jealous eye perceived, was falling seriously in love with Rose long before she saw it—which was the final cause of his rash act. He eagerly

snatched at an occasion at once of self-gratification, and of humiliating his proud and arrogant brother. He was delighted to let him know that neither his wealth nor his title could weigh in the balance of a woman's favour against the gifts and graces which it was his habit to depreciate or ignore. We have said that he discovered Sir Richard's passion even before the object of it; but Rose's subtle brain was already preoccupied with himself. To give that scheming beauty her due, I think that even had she not been already Walter's wife, she would not have exchanged him for the baronet, at the period when he made her that dazzling offer in the Library. She felt that she had let slip a splendid prize, and was proportionally angry with Sir Richard, whose backwardness and hauteur had prevented her from recognising the possibility of its falling to her lot; but the feeling of disappointment was but transient; she was a bride of only a few weeks, and to get disenchanted of one like Walter Lisgard is a long process even for a wife. By this time, however, though she idolised him, still Rose had learned to fear him; and absolutely dared not pen another letter to inquire the reason of his silence.

Of those who waited, sick at heart, for the coming of the postman every morning, Lady Lisgard, therefore, was the first to lose patience. She wrote to Arthur Haldane a few urgent lines requesting his immediate presence at Mirk 'upon private and particular business'; and within an hour of their receipt he took the train, and appeared in person at the Abbey. My Lady had decided to consult him, in preference to his father, respecting the arrangements necessary to be made for the future maintenance of Walter and his wife, since it would be very unwise to make so much importance of the matter concerning Derrick, about which she was in reality vastly more concerned, and burned to know the truth.

'What is the matter, *ma mère*?' inquired he tenderly, when, not without the exercise of some address—for Sir Richard was always hospitable, and (especially in the absence of his brother) both gracious and attentive to all guests—Arthur and my Lady had managed to get an hour to themselves in the boudoir. 'You look very pale and anxious.'

'Yes, Arthur, I have enough to make me so. Walter has secretly made Rose Aynton his wife. Ah! you pity me, I see, and perhaps him also. Do not condescend with me, however. I have sent for you hither to help me to make the best—Alas, alas, you would not have believed it of my Walter, would you?' And my Lady, touched by the sympathising look and manner of the honest young fellow, burst into the first 'good cry' which she had permitted to herself since the calamity had been discovered; for when confiding the circumstance to Letty, it had been her duty to bear up, and when alone, a still more serious anxiety consumed her. Even now, her emotion, though violent, was soon over, and the indulgence in it seemed to have done her good. 'Pardon me, Arthur,' said she, with one of her old smiles; 'I won't be foolish any more.' And then, after narrating matters with which we are acquainted, she laid before him, as concisely as she could, what funds at her own disposal could be made available to form an income for the young couple, in addition to the interest which Walter's fortune of five thousand pounds or so, into the possession of which

he would come in some eighteen months, would yield. She little knew that on that very night—for it was the eve of the Derby Day—the unworthy boy, for whom she was making such sacrifices, was about to risk and lose more than a third of his patrimony, and that upon the next day the remainder was doomed to go, and much more with it.

'But this will pinch you, *ma mère*,' reasoned Arthur kindly, 'and narrow your own already somewhat scanty revenue sadly. Sir Richard will come into a very fine rent-roll in June, beside thousands'—

'But can we ask him to help Walter and his wife? And could Walter take it, even if his brother were generous enough to offer it?'

'Sir Richard is quite capable of such magnanimity, *ma mère*, unless I am much mistaken in his character. He would not like to see his brother—even were he but a Lisgard, let alone his so near kith and kin—in a position that would be discreditable to the family; while if one has really loved a woman, one surely does not wish to see her poor and struggling, simply because she has preferred some one else. As for Walter's accepting the help which his brother can so well spare—it may be a little bitter—but, in my opinion, that would be far preferable to receiving what would impoverish his mother. The arrangements you propose would leave you but three hundred pounds a year.'

'Yes,' answered my Lady hastily. 'I require that for a purpose, else half the sum would easily suffice my present needs.'

'It would do nothing of the sort, *ma mère*. Come, let us be reasonable. If you will leave this matter in my hands, I will endeavour to be the mediator between your sons. Sir Richard has an honest regard for me, I think, and Walter also, when he is himself.'

'Poor Walter!' murmured my Lady sighing.

'Yes, he is to be pitied,' answered the other drily; 'but also between ourselves—although I shall endeavour, after my lawyer instincts, to make it appear otherwise to his brother—to be somewhat blamed, *ma mère*. Since, then, I am prepared, under the cloak of arbitrator, to be the partisan of your darling—Yes, they are both your darlings, Lady Lisgard, I know, but with a difference.'

'Walter is in trouble,' urged my Lady pitifully.

'Yes, that is the reason, of course. However, will you put the case unreservedly in my own hands? for if so, although it is not an easy task, I will do my best to make your sons shake hands.'

'There is none like you, Arthur, none. Heaven bless you and reward you!'

'There may be none like me, *ma mère*, but there are also, I hope, many people a great deal better. And now that we have done with this matter for the present, may I ask, Why letters are directed to another person, under care to me, which I am at the same time directed by telegram to put behind the fire?'

'Oh, you got that telegram, did you?' said my Lady quietly. 'Mary Forest entreated me so to send it. The fact was, she accepted that person by letter—what was his name!—of whom we spoke together some time ago at the Watersmeet; but afterwards, persuaded by me (acting in accordance with your suggestion, you remember), she decided to refuse him. But the first letter was unfortunately posted before the second was written; and

the postmistress at Dalwynch positively refused to give it up, although I drove over there myself to request it.

'Well, upon my life, *ma mère*, but you're a bold woman,' exclaimed the young lawyer laughing. 'Why, of course, she wouldn't give it up. She would be stealing the property of the Postmaster-general if she had done so, and you would be the receiver with the guiltiest knowledge.'

'Well, at all events, she did not,' pursued my Lady simply. 'She would do nothing beyond directing the envelope afresh to your address.'

'Honest creature!' interrupted Arthur grimly.

'Under these circumstances, I telegraphed to you, knowing that you would be good enough to destroy the letter directly it reached you.'

'Yes, *ma mère*, and I did so,' returned Arthur gravely; 'but I feared it was not right, and now that you have told me this, I know that it was wrong. You may have had your reasons, dear Lady Lisgard, and doubtless very urgent ones, to wish the destruction of those letters.'

'Those letters!' exclaimed my Lady.

'Yes. I am certain, of course, that you intended no harm to any one, and that what you did was in ignorance of the law; but so suspicious was I of your having transgressed it—and at the same time, perhaps, a little annoyed that you should have chosen *me*, Lady Lisgard, for your instrument in such a matter—that I purposely omitted to communicate with you, to put in writing any evidence whatsoever of that transaction.'

'Yes, yes,' said my Lady hastily, and taking no notice of the young man's evident annoyance.

'But you speak of *letters*. There was only one letter directed to Pump Court.'

'There were two, Lady Lisgard, and both addressed in the same handwriting. The words, *Turf Hotel, Piccadilly*, were crossed out also, in each case, I remember, in red ink. It was the postmistress who did it, I have no doubt. If you led her to imagine that that was the wrong address in the one instance, she naturally imagined it to be so in the other, and probably made the alteration in all good faith.'

'Great Heaven, and so it must have been!' exclaimed my Lady, clasping her hands. 'O Arthur, this mischance—if my misconduct does indeed deserve punishment, has brought, I fear, a very harsh and bitter one—that is on Mary. The second letter should have reached the person to whom it was addressed without fail. He will now have heard nothing—this Derrick; and he will take the woman's silence for consent. O Arthur, Arthur, you little know what bad news this is.'

'I can see, *ma mère*, that it vexes you,' answered the young man kindly; 'and that is evil enough for me to know. Some sorrows are best kept to one's self, I think. Now, look you, this Mr Derrick will certainly, being a sporting-man, be in town to-morrow night. He will not have left his hotel before the Derby is over. Now, I will go and seek him out to-morrow with the letter in my hand that Mary shall re-write. We have only but a very little time, remember.'

'Dear Arthur, counsellor, and friend, and son in one, what comfort do you not give me in all straits!' She rose and offered him her pale but comely cheek, which the young man touched with reverent lips; then holding her hand in his, he said in a firm voice: 'And now, *ma mère*, even that is not fee enough for such an avaricious

lawyer as I am. I have promised myself a talk with Letty.'

'Do so, and Heaven bless you, my dear boy—ay, bless you both,' continued my Lady, when he had left the room, 'for you would take her for your wife even though you knew what I know of her unhappy birth. I have almost a mind to tell him; but then, with his stern notions of what is right—although, Heaven knows, I wrong no one by this reticence—he might—' "Some sorrows are best kept to one's self, I think," said he. And whether he suspects something amiss, and meant the words for my particular ear or not, it is sound advice. Sufficient for the day is the evil thereof. If I were always to be thinking of the morrow, I should soon go mad.'

CHAPTER XXV.—MR ARTHUR HALDANE MAKES HIMSELF USEFUL.

Some writers are very fond of describing interviews between betrothed persons, and there are undoubtedly readers who take a pleasure in reading such delicate details; and yet it seems strange that this should be so, with respect to the mere description of what in real life is undoubtedly tame and stupid to the looker-on; for what can be duller, or more uninteresting, except to one another, than 'an engaged couple.' With what meaningless emphasis they smile; what mysterious secrets (known to every adult in the company) they interchange; and how they go blindly feeling after one another's hands under the table, whenever the opportunity offers. I think it even profane to mention such tender mysteries. Arthur Haldane and Letty Lisgard were not indeed a betrothed couple when they met upon the present occasion, but they became so before they parted. Their subject of conversation being the marriage of somebody else, it naturally enough strayed to their own. 'I am not a good match for you, Letty, just at present,' said the young man frankly, during a lucid interval, 'but I do not despair of removing the disparity of fortune. I am getting on in my profession better than I could have hoped for.'

'I don't see why "disparity" of any sort, dear Arthur, should affect persons who really love one another.'

'That's my own sweet Letty,' replied the other (relapsing). 'But then your family—no exertions of mine can procure for me such a pedigree as you can boast of.'

'That is a matter of genuine congratulation, Arthur. Dear Richard often makes me wish that there were no such things as ancestors. I suppose it is a dreadful heresy, but it seems to me so strange that people are not taken for what they *are*, let their birth be what it will.'

'My Rose of Radicals!' exclaimed the young man with admiration; 'your words deserve to be written in letters of gold.' And so saying, he took out his pocket-book, and, in spite of her opposition, transcribed them then and there.

'Of what possible good can *that* be, you dear foolish fellow!'

'I cannot say for certain, Letty,' answered he gravely. 'But keep a thing long enough, and its use will come, folks say.'

Mr Arthur Haldane had, as we are aware, some other interviews awaiting him, less agreeable than the one on hand, which perhaps may account for his prolonging it to an inordinate length. There

was no difference of opinion expressed in this one ; and what is unusual in arguments between the sexes, the lady had not the last word at parting. Strictly speaking, neither had it. The farewell of each expired almost at the same instant, and was not breathed into the *air* at all : I say 'almost' advisedly, and from a desire to be accurate, for if each imprints a kiss upon the other's *cheek*, they cannot do it quite coincidentally ; and it is certain, if the statistics of the matter could be collected, that nine engaged couples (for, of course, no couple does it who are *not* engaged) out of every ten do salute one another in that way, and not press 'lip to lip,' as the poets make out ; in fact, it requires a particular and uniform conformation of nose—both must be 'snubs'—to render the thing practicable.

Sir Richard, whom we have been compelled occasionally to represent in an unfavourable light, did not fall short, in his interview with Arthur Haldane, of the high estimate which the latter had formed of his chivalric nature ; or perhaps it was through his overweening pride, that could not permit the woman upon whom his affections had once condescended to rest, to be inconvenienced by narrow circumstances ; but, actuated by whatever motive, his behaviour towards the rash young couple was liberal in the extreme. He accepted very willingly the explanation, given by the young lawyer with great tact, of his refusal by Rose Aynton. No utterance was given to the remark, that if he had pressed his suit a little earlier, doubtless no thought of his younger brother would have entered the girl's brain ; but the suggestion was, somehow or other, delicately conveyed, and in that Gilead there was balm. Strange as it may appear, the object of his rejected suit seemed to have won forgiveness not only for herself, but for her husband, to whose faults he had heretofore shewn himself so unfraternally alive. He certainly did not request Arthur to offer his congratulations to the young Benedict ; but he sent by him a conciliatory message, and a special request that Captain and Mrs Lisgard would not fail to visit the Abbey upon the occasion of the approaching *fête*. The period of his own coming of age would be a very fitting one for the newly-married pair to introduce themselves to the people of the county, while their presence at such a time would evidence that there was no family breach. In all this, there was doubtless a leaven of selfishness ; but there was considerable magnanimity also, and the manner in which the baronet spoke of Rose herself would have done honour to Bayard. In this matter, it must be even conceded that he shewed more nobility of spirit than the ladies of his household. His mother had forgiven the girl, after a fashion, it is true ; but her feelings towards her were anything but genial. One's heart cannot be made to yearn towards a sly and deceitful young person, just because she happens to be one's daughter-in-law. Her pity for Walter was great, but it did not beget Love for her.

With Letty, again, Rose stood even lower, or perhaps seemed to do so, from the higher eminence which she had previously occupied in the affections of her school-friend. A young lady who has sworn an eternal friendship, does not relish the discovery that the other party to that solemn transaction has been making a fool of her under her own roof for months ; nay, has been systematically deceiving her upon a matter mutual confidences concerning

which form the very basis of such compacts—namely, the Beloved Object. Young men do not encourage one another to communicate their honest love-secrets, although some are boastful enough of their conquests over the sex, where there is no pretence of the heart being concerned ; but with young ladies, this sort of information is the most prized of all. There is a tacit, if not an expressed understanding between female friends, that the first genuine 'attachment' formed by either shall at once be revealed to the other. The expectation of that tender avowal is what is uppermost in their minds whenever they meet ; and when it *has* been made, what an endless subject of sympathy does the unconscious swain become between these devoted young persons ! How the qualities of his mind are canvassed, and the colour of his hair ; how his religious principles are eulogised, and also his small feet ; and how, in short, the Betrothed and her faithful Confidante construct a mental and physical ideal for Jones, out of what they have read of the Admirable Crichton and the Apollo Belvedere. Letty Lisgard was as good a girl—in my opinion—as ever drew breath ; but she was human, and when she kissed Rose the first time after she learned she had become her sister, it was by no means the impassioned salute which it had used to be, nor had her 'my dear,' although delivered with emphasis, at all the genuine ring.

As for the other females at the Abbey, it was fortunate for Rose that she had not to apply to *them* for a character ; for although Mistress Forest knew her place better than to circulate scandal, Miss Anne Rees, no longer restrained by terror of the constabulary, indemnified herself for previous reticence, by favouring her fellow-servants with some very curious details indeed with respect to Mrs Walter Lisgard. My Lady's proposal, that Rose should take advantage of Mr Arthur Haldane's escort on the morrow to her aunt's house, until she should receive her husband's directions as to her future place of abode, was, I think, very generally welcomed, and felt to be a relief by the whole house.

During the long railway journey to town, however, she made herself agreeable enough to her companion, as she was well able to do, when so disposed, to all his sex. The young barrister was prudent and sagacious beyond his years, and what he knew of the lady's behaviour, did not certainly prepossess him in her favour ; but, nevertheless, he was obliged to confess to himself (although he omitted to do so to Letty) that Mrs Walter Lisgard was a very charming person. It is undeniable that a married woman may make herself twice as pleasant, for any short interval, like a railway journey, as any single one can do ; she is not afraid of being considered too forward, or of laying herself out to captivate ; while, if you are a bachelor with whose *tendresse* for any fair one she is acquainted, she will take you under her patronage, notwithstanding that you may be twice her age, and so sympathise with you, and identify herself with your absent intended, that you are half inclined to squeeze her hand, and cover it with kisses. Mr Arthur Haldane had much too judicial a mind to give way to any impulse of that kind, but it was very nice to hear Rose eulogise her 'darling Letty,' and protest that the man who married her would find himself united with an angel. He quite forgot, under this soothing treatment, that his impression on leaving the Abbey was, that the two young ladies

were not very good friends; nor did it occur to him at all that this privilege of maternally talk was being exercised by a bride not two months wedded, and whose surreptitious marriage had only been discovered about a week ago. When they had reached London, and were approaching her aunt's residence in the late afternoon, they found themselves suddenly in a broad stream of vehicles, for the most part furnished with four horses, but very unlike the usual spick-and-span London equipages, being covered with white dust, and bearing traces of recent rapid travel.

'I quite forgot it was the Derby Day,' exclaimed Arthur: 'these are the gentlemen of the road, and I dare say your husband is among them.'

Rose turned quite pale, and leaning back in the cab, did not again look out of window, until they arrived at her aunt's door, where the two companions parted very good friends indeed. Rose gave a little sigh as she thanked him for his escort, which went—not indeed to the young man's heart, but a good way too.

'I hope Master Walter does not ill-treat that poor girl,' soliloquised Arthur as he drove away; 'but I am almost certain that she's afraid of him.'

London after the Derby is more like Pandemonium even than on the night before; the winners are wild with joy, and inclined for any sort of dissipation; the losers also crave for the Circean cup, that they may temporarily forget their misfortunes. With the unusual roar of wheel and hoof in the streets, there mixes a still more unusual shouting; and from the open windows of places of entertainment, there streams forth the tangled talk which is confined within doors at other times. Before Arthur could reach the *Turf Hotel*, he learned from these sources, without further inquiry, that *The King* had won the race, in consequence of some mischance having happened to the jockey of *Menelaus*. He knew, therefore, that Walter Lisgard had lost money. Still, when upon reaching his lodging he first set eyes upon the young dragoon, moodily stretched upon the sofa, with eyes staring straight before him, and a face as pale as the tablecloth, on which stood an untasted meal, he was astonished and shocked. For the moment—such a rigidity was there about those exquisite features—Arthur thought with a shudder that he was dead. Even after he entered the room, lit only from the glaring street, not a limb stirred, not a muscle moved to mark any consciousness of his presence; but when he exclaimed: 'Walter! what's the matter, man?' the figure leapt up with a cry of pleasure, and took both his hands in his.

'I am glad to see you, Arthur,' cried he. 'This is very kind of you, and I do not deserve it. I thought it was that infernal scoundrel Derrick.'

'He is not here, then?'

'No; he may have come and gone, for all I know, for I believe I have been in a sort of nightmare; only it was a horse that caused it. Derrick's partner—or Derrick himself, for what I know—sold the race. I know what you are going to say, that you always told me how it would be—'

'No, indeed, Walter,' interrupted Arthur kindly. 'I am not come hither to reproach you. I am only the bearer of good news.'

'I should like to hear some of that,' said the other bitterly. 'Where is it? Have you brought a loaded pistol with you? That would be the most friendly action you could do me just now, I believe.'

'Walter, you should not talk like that,' answered Arthur very gravely, for there was a look in his friend's eyes which seemed to harmonise only too well with his despairing words. 'When we kill ourselves so philosophically, we forget how we wound others by that selfish act. Think of your mother, lad.'

'Yes. She would be sorry, would she not?'

'It would break her heart, Walter; that's all. And besides, you have a wife now—yes, we all know it, and you're both forgiven—and why you have not written to her in answer to the letter she wrote you, none of us can imagine.'

'I only got it this very day,' groaned Walter. 'Am I in a fit state to write upon business, think you?'

'Business!' echoed Arthur contemptuously; 'you're in a fit state to take a cab to Mayfair, and ask your poor wife's pardon. I brought her up to her aunt's house to-day myself.'

'That's well,' observed Walter reflectively; 'for between you and me, Arthur Haldane—'

'Well, what?' exclaimed the barrister impatiently.

'Why, I think she'd better stay at her aunt's house altogether. The fact is, I've got no money to keep her.'

'We know all about that, man!—'

'The devil you do!' ejaculated Walter grimly; 'then bad news must indeed fly apace. Look here, Haldane—I've lost *everything*. All that I have at present; all that I was to have when I came of age; all that I can expect from any human being who is fool enough to leave me anything in time to come. I am a beggar, and worse than that, for I am a defaulter, and shall be proclaimed as such in a few days. That is the whole state of the case. Now, do you not think that the kindest office which a friend could do me, would be to help me with the means of blowing out, what would be in another man, his brains? For not only do I recognise myself as a scoundrel, but as a senseless dull and idiot, a fool of the first quality, and a—'

'You must owe, then, near seven thousand pounds,' interrupted Arthur, with something like a groan.

'Just about that, so far as I have dared to look the thing in the face; all lost within twenty-four hours—most of it within three minutes.'

'We must keep this from your mother somehow, Walter. She has been sadly tried, and I doubt whether she could bear it.'

'She must know it sooner or later, man, even if she doesn't read it in the papers. When your *Turf* gentry do not get paid, they make a noise about it, you see, that being all they can do. I've a precious good mind to take myself off to Cariboo—that's where this fellow Derrick made his money—the climate's good, and with a little capital, one may do a good deal. Why should I not go there, and never let them have a penny? The law looks upon it as a swindle, you know that well enough; and it *was* a swindle, by Jove. Come, you're a barrister, Haldane; now, what do you say about it?'

'No, Walter, I cannot advise you to act in that manner, and I am sure you did not propose it seriously yourself.'

'O no, certainly not; I was only having a bit of fun,' rejoined the other bitterly. 'I am just in the humour for joking now, and can't resist it. Thousand devils! would you have me go to the workhouse, man, or where?'

'Nothing of that sort is at all necessary, Walter,' answered the other quietly. 'Of course, I was not prepared for this very unfortunate position of affairs; I had brought news that, through, I must say, the very generous behaviour of your elder brother, your income as a married man would in future be a very tolerable one; it has been made up to at least double what the interest of the sum you have lost would have produced. Thus, in addition to your pay, you would have had about six hundred a year, besides whatever your wife's aunt might think proper to allow her. Your mother, on the other hand, undertakes, if you should scruple to accept this kindness at Sir Richard's hands'—

'Scruple? Certainly not,' ejaculated Walter angrily. 'I confess that I did not think my brother would have had so much proper feeling, and I am much obliged to him, of course; but after all, he has only done his duty. What is three hundred a year out of the Lisgard rent-roll?'

'Still, he was not obliged to do it,' observed Arthur drily.

'That is true; and, of course, you take the lawyer's view of it. Moreover, when he comes to hear of these debts, perhaps his Serene Highness may think proper to withdraw his gracious assistance.'

'You do him very wrong, Walter,' answered Arthur with warmth. 'Your trouble makes you say things you ought to be ashamed of—yes, ashamed of. Your brother, with all his faults, is incapable of committing such an act of cruelty. He is quite willing that you should both return to Mirk as soon as you please, but particularly that you should be present at his Coming of Age, which I am sure you will not fail to be. But if you will take my advice, you will not make your position known at Mirk, for, as I have said before, your mother has had enough to trouble her. You must let your sporting friends understand it, however, and we must make the best arrangements we can for your paying your debts within a year; and for the future, till something turns up, instead of six hundred per annum, you must manage to do on three. Your wife, I am sure, is a most sensible young lady, and will easily perceive the necessity for economy.'

'Thank you,' answered the dragoon coldly. 'Perhaps you would like to run down to Canterbury, and choose our lodging for us; or do you think we ought to be content to live in barracks? I know that there is a great temptation to insult a man when he is down; but for giving unpalatable advice in an offensive manner, I do not know your equal, Mr Arthur Haldane.'

'Well, Walter, I have said what I thought right, and I do not intend to quarrel with you. I should wish, on the contrary, to remain your friend, if it were only for your dear mother's sake'—

'And somebody else's,' interrupted the captain with a sneer.

'Yes; for your sister Letty's, Walter; I frankly own that. Come, give us your hand, man.—Well, another time, then, when you are more like yourself.—But before I go, I want to find this man Derrick, for I have a letter for him of importance from Mistress Forest.'

'You had better ask as you go down stairs, Mr Haldane; I know nothing about him.' And with that, Captain Walter Lisgard deliberately turned his back upon his visitor, and looked gloomily

out of the window; while his white hand stroked his silken moustaches as though it were a pumice-stone, and it was his intention to stroke them off.

Arthur made his inquiry of the servant who opened the hall-door to let him out.

'Mr Derrick—if that was the gentleman with the large beard—had come and gone within the last quarter of an hour, while he (Haldane) had been talking with the other gentleman upstairs. He had called for his bill, and paid it, and packed his portmanteau, and there it was in the passage at the present moment.'

'Then he must come back for that,' exclaimed Arthur eagerly.

'No. He had left directions that it was to be sent on to him in a week or so to some place in the South. He had said that he should be walking, and therefore would not be there himself for several days. He had taken a knapsack with him as for a regular tour. He was a strange gentleman altogether.'

Arthur Haldane stooped down, and read the address on the portmanteau—*Mr R. Derrick, Cove-ton*; then stepped very thoughtfully into the roaring street. 'I don't know exactly why, and I certainly have no desire to know,' muttered the young barrister to himself; 'but of all the bad news I have learned to-night, I fear *ma mère* will consider this the worst. Why the deuce should this fellow be going to Cove-ton, of all places least calculated to attract such a scampish vagabond? Cove-ton, Cove-ton—yes, that is the place where my Lady came ashore from the wreck of the *North Star*.'

OVER THE WAY.

OF course, there are some few persons who can live even in a town without being bothered by 'over the way.' But I have nothing to do with such people as manage, by inheriting property, to elude the primeval curse which condemned them to eat their bread in the sweat of their brows, and can afford to wall themselves in. My private opinion upon the subject of coming into property, and so in a manner evading the divine command, may be that it is simply wicked; but I shall not avow such an opinion publicly. I think, however, I may say, without laying myself open to anything worse than a charge of saying what nobody denies, that the majority of our fellow-creatures who dwell in towns live in streets infested by 'over the way.' Of course, you are yourself 'over the way' to somebody else; but that is quite a different thing.

'Over the way' is bad enough when you have a house all to yourself and family, and when a single family occupies the house opposite yours. For, though strong friendships have been known to spring from so slight an affair as when the youngest son of one family has, with the prevailing appreciation of 'over the way,' put out his tongue persistently for some weeks at the eldest daughter of the other family, been complained of, received chastisement, and so led to an intimacy between the fathers or mothers of the two families; yet, on the whole, 'over the way' is generally looked upon with suspicion as well as aversion, is supposed to be of an inferior kind of flesh and blood, and is believed to have committed, or to be on the point of committing, or

to be quite capable, should opportunity offer, of committing considerable atrocities.

You are obliged to live in semi-darkness, for 'over the way' always 'does stare so,' you are forced to draw the blinds down for fear of being overlooked. And now that opera-glasses are so common, 'over the way' can watch you, if you do not take great precautions, even into remote corners. The secrets which have been discovered by detective officers in their character of 'over the way,' with a powerful field-glass, are said to be both numerous and curious. He who lives in a street where most of the houses are lodging-houses, suffers chiefly from this bane of civilisation. If you are a mere bird of passage, like the generality of lodgers, of course you don't mind 'over the way' so much; but if you are the permanent lodger (and there is nearly always one in every lodging-house), you get to regard 'over the way' with murderous feelings. 'Over the way' may be permanent also, and may take the form of an old woman of sallow complexion, who wears round her head a fillet of velvet. In this case, your lot in life is unenviable. You may think that after having studied you and your manner of life for a year or two, she will be either satisfied or tired. But it is not so: you may live opposite to her for a century, and the chances are ten to one that whenever you jump up suddenly, and look out of your window, you see 'over the way' peering in your direction, either round the edge of a curtain, or over the top of a blind. The effect is awful: you live the life of the haunted, without having the advantage of being a character in a novel. To poison this sort of old woman, is extremely difficult; she is far more cunning than a rat. It may be said you should change your lodgings, but there is not much choice between Scylla and Charybdis. You may get into lodgings where 'over the way' is always going and coming, so that you suffer as much from the intensity of curiosity in this case as you did from the persistency in the other, for each new-comer studies you and your habits with a zeal which would insure success in some useful line of life. Or you may find yourself opposite a swarm of creatures who all keep different hours, so that you will be under somebody's surveillance every minute of the day. Another thing which makes 'over the way' in a lodgings' neighbourhood more disagreeable than elsewhere, is the intimate relations which exist, if not between the different landladies, at anyrate amongst the various 'gals'—which is landlady's English for maidens-of-all-work. The consequence is, you can infer, from scraps of information let fall in your hearing about 'over the way,' that you might learn, if you only chose to encourage garrulity, a great deal that was discreditable to your neighbours, and that 'over the way' was similarly situated with respect to yourself. When 'over the way' is of the feminine gender, and pretty, you, perhaps, do not appear to be so great an object of interest as you might desire; but on one of the few occasions when my 'over the way' happened to be of the kind just alluded to, and I happened to break my usual rule of never giving my landlady any chance of relieving her surcharged bosom, I was rewarded by a burst of eloquence, indeed. I had read that the beginning of strife was as the letting out of water; but I thought that, in my landlady's case, one should for strife read speech. She was a woman of

delicate constitution, but of most determined spirit, so that, having begun her harangue as she was leaving the room, she was forced to support herself by clinging to the door-handle until she had exhausted her stock of information and breath. If she had been 'over the way's' own mother, I should not have thought she could have known so much about the 'uzzy,' or 'minx,' or 'precious lot,' or 'baggage—for all her airs,' whom it appeared I had mistaken for an incarnate angel. It seemed that she had 'treated'er 'usban' shameful,' and that she was the 'barefaced chit' whose 'case' had occupied four columns of that very morning's paper. Of course, I was not sorry when 'over the way' had her 'case' decided, and departed into a far country.

But I think I never suffered so continuously from 'over the way,' as when I lived opposite a duke or (as my landlady and her friends called him) a dook. For many a year I lived opposite that dook, and I really don't think he knew anything about it. I never saw him that I am aware of; for my lodging was, of course, opposite his back-door, and as he was completely walled in, I might have expected to have no 'over the way.' But dooks can afford what common mortals cannot; and my dook appeared to keep a man on purpose to stare at me. At least, I seldom saw the man doing anything else; once or twice, I observed him open the heavy gates to let in or out a majestic carriage; but generally he opened a little door in one of the gates early in the morning, and nearly all day long he stood at the doorway looking at 'over the way,' that is to say, at me. In the intervals when he was absent from his watch-place, I suppose he was taking refreshment—and I hope it disagreed with him. I had one day made up my mind to write to the dook, and ask him whether what he hired this man for was to watch my motions, and to inquire of what His Grace suspected me. But I was deterred by overhearing a conversation which took place between my watcher and the landlady of the next house to mine. The landlady was standing in easy *dishabille* at the door, and shouted across the road: 'Ow's the dook this mornin', sir?' (For noble-men's servants are nearly always called 'sir.')

'Ain't in town,' was the curt reply.

'Lor!' was the briefer comment.

'No more ain't the duchiss,' continued the servitor blandly.

'Lor!' was again the brief comment.

'Dowigy duchiss,' remarked the servitor, propitiated by the landlady's deferential ejaculations, 'she's in town.'

'Oh!' rejoined the landlady, snatching at this theme for gossip as the drowning snatch at straws; and pray, 'ow's she?'

'Ill a-bed o' the rheumatics.'

'Oh, then she do have the rheumatics!' exclaimed the landlady aghast, as if the 'rheumatics' had taken a liberty of attacking one of so exalted a rank.

'Reg'lar marchyer,' answered the other, from which I conclude that he meant the 'dowigy' suffered a martyrdom. The servitor then went in either for refreshment, or probably because he was wise in his generation, notwithstanding the low opinion my landlady had of him. She once confided to me her belief that he was 'a por stoopid feller;' and when I inquired why she thought so, she said: 'Oh, there's nothink in'im—you can't get'im to talk at all.' But I, knowing my landlady's gifts in that way, and how I had suffered

from them, had a very different idea of the intelligence of 'over the way.' I admired him for his persistent reticence, and made up my mind not to report him to the dook, his master. Besides, I consoled myself for being stared at and studied by the reflection, that 'over the way' had his own annoyances; for there hung outside the stable-door a wooden note of admiration, which was a bell-handle. I have reason to believe that the handle upon being pulled made a bell to clang close to the ear of 'over the way,' and summoned him from a sound sleep to open the ponderous stable-doors. He was generally sharp enough to look out through the little door first, to see what the clangour meant, but even then anybody who might, in absence of mind or in the fulness of his heart, have used the note of admiration to relieve his feelings, had time to be not only at the end of the street, but round the corner, before 'over the way' could with any regard for decency appear at the door. So often did I hear the sound of the bell, and note the opening of the door, and observe the wistful glance up and down the street of a night-capped head, and remark that there was not a soul to be seen, though I could catch the distant clatter of boots, and fancy I heard a low muttering of oaths, that I began to think 'over the way' had a hard time of it at night, though he had nothing to do in the daytime but to eat, drink, smoke, and stare at 'over the way.' The consequence was that I began to be glad to suppose that I and my doings were of the least service in comforting 'over the way;' and I sometimes exerted myself to amuse, alarm, interest, and puzzle him; so that I flatter myself he missed me when I moved. Don't let any one suppose I ever used that note of admiration; it certainly hung very handy if you passed by on that side of the way, but I have endured too much myself to do anything which could possibly annoy 'over the way.'

THE MONTH:

SCIENCE AND ARTS.

LONDONERS, who see but little of fields and hedgerows, and hear nothing of the warbling of birds, can nevertheless judge of the advance of the season by the social phenomena which appear around them; and when the soirées begin, then the citizens know that Spring, with her flowers, and sunshine, and sweet odours, is not far off. Among the earliest of these social gatherings occurs the first of the two held at Burlington House by General Sabine, as President of the Royal Society, invitations to which are much sought after, for there may be seen the elite of British science, with not a few of the personages distinguished in art, literature, and politics. Things are to be seen as well as men—namely, philosophical apparatus, mechanical inventions, and works of arts, all illustrative of scientific and artistic progress, of which we shall have something to say at a fitting opportunity.

Meanwhile, we invite attention to a scheme, which, while it excites the imagination by its magnitude, is full of promise for a large number of her Majesty's subjects: the scheme for the supply of water to London, devised and published by Mr J. F. Bateman, F.R.S. It is a great scheme, in the literal sense of the word, for it comprises the

building of an aqueduct more than one hundred and seventy miles in length, extending from the outskirts of London to the hills of Wales. It is the slopes of Plinlimmon and of Cader Idris, containing the head-waters of the Severn and of two minor rivers, which are to be laid under contribution; and a more favourable locality could not easily be found; for the water there is remarkably soft and pure, and in such abundance that London might take two hundred million gallons every day without exhausting it. The ground, moreover, is well suited for the formation of the huge reservoirs that are required; and as the elevation of these would be four hundred and fifty feet above high-water mark at London Bridge, the water would flow of itself the whole distance. From the reservoirs, two aqueducts, about twenty miles in length, would be built, and meeting near the town of Montgomery, a single line of aqueduct, crossing the Severn at Bridgenorth, and passing near to Stourbridge, Bromsgrove, Henley-in-Arden, Warwick, Banbury, Buckingham, Aylesbury, and Tring, would conduct the water to the great service reservoirs, which would be constructed on the high grounds about Stanmore, on the north-west of the metropolis. From these, about ten miles of pipes would be required to connect with the pipes of the existing companies, and, without pumping, the water would be furnished at high-pressure, and with constant supply, to all parts of London. The estimated cost of the whole undertaking is £8,600,000, and the works would require seven years for their execution. The cost is great; but when the benefit to health, the economy arising from the excellence of the water, and the promotion of health, are considered, the outlay may be regarded as reasonable. It has been calculated that Londoners spend £400,000 more every year than they would have to spend, were the water supplied to them as soft as that which Mr Bateman proposes to bring from the mountains. Moreover, London grows so rapidly, that great inconvenience must before long arise for want of a greater supply than that given by the present companies, who are quite at a loss where to look for an increase of their supplies. The question is thus one of quantity as well as quality. It has been proposed that government should advance the money to carry out the scheme, the interest being paid by the water-rate, and that they should appoint a board to superintend the affairs of the great aqueduct, and the metropolitan water-supply. Mr Bateman did so much good by bringing the water of Loch Katrine to Glasgow a few years ago, that we heartily wish him success in his new project.

To this we may very properly add the following, from a series of suggestions on water-supply, published a few months since by Mr R. Rawlinson, C. E. 'Water,' he remarks, 'at and below six degrees of hardness, is soft water, above this range it is hard water. Hardness in water implies one grain of bicarbonate or sulphate of lime in each gallon of water. Each degree of hardness destroys two and a half ounces of soap in each hundred gallons of water used for washing. Soft water is, therefore, commercially of more value than hard water, in proportion to the worth of five ounces of soap to each hundred gallons for each degree of hardness. But soft water is also more wholesome, and effects saving in other operations: notably in tea-making, and in generating steam-power.'

As an example of what can be accomplished by perseverance, for the advantage of science, we mention the practice of the Observatory at Kew in photoheliography; that is, in taking photographs of the sun. This department of the Observatory work is managed by Miss Beckly, daughter of one of the assistants at Kew, and whatever the weather, she, with exemplary patience, is always on the watch for opportunities; so that even on very cloudy days, photographs of the sun are obtained through the occasional breaks in the clouds. Hence, as the President of the Astronomical Society declared at one of their meetings, 'there is always a record at Kew.' The full significance of this declaration will be best appreciated by those who know how important it is to science that a series of observations should be uninterrupted. With these daily pictures of the sun, physicists will be able to arrive at some conclusions concerning light, heat, and other solar phenomena.

The *Journal* of the Linnean Society contains a report by Dr Kirk on a heretofore unknown dye-wood which he brought from the banks of the Rovuma, in Eastern Africa. It is of the genus described by botanists as *Cudrania*, and grows as a large shrub with thick central stem. On chemical examination, it is found to yield a colouring matter somewhat between quercitron-bark and fustic, and its value is estimated at L.6, 10s. per ton. Specimens of the wood and leaves are placed in the Herbarium at Kew, and also at Edinburgh, where they can be seen by persons interested in the subject. Perhaps, as Dr Kirk is about to revisit Eastern Africa, he will be able to make arrangements for sending over the wood in large quantities.

Signor Potenza, an Italian, produces what he calls *vegetable silk* from fine fibres in the bark of the mulberry-tree. By pruning the trees once in two years, he obtains a quantity of branches, which are exposed to the sun to facilitate the separation of the bark, and the latter is boiled in water pure, or acid, or alkaline, according to circumstances, after which the fibres are prepared for spinning either by hand or by a machine. Ten kilogrammes of branches yield one and a half kilogrammes of the vegetable silk. This can be woven by itself, but is said to be best suited for mixture with real silk in the fabrication of various tissues.

Mr Blume, a German, has published an easy method to distinguish natural red wines from wines coloured artificially. He has for years practised the art of a maker of artificial wines, and therefore speaks from experience. His method is based on the great difference which exists between the solubility in water of red subetances derived from berries and fruits, for example, and that of the colouring matter of natural wines, which can only be dissolved in weak alcohol. The method is: soak in the wine which is to be tested a small slice of bread, or a dry and perfectly clean sponge, and let it become completely saturated. Then place it in a china-plate filled with water. If the wine is coloured artificially, the water immediately acquires a reddish-violet tint, while, if it is natural, this same effect is produced at the end of a quarter hour or half hour only, and the water, moreover, first assumes a sensible opaline appearance. According to Mr Blume, this simple method can always be tried with confidence, and its results are much more certain than those commonly in use.

The last published Report of the Royal Cornwall Polytechnic Society contains, as usual, particulars concerning the works of art, specimens of natural history, and mechanical inventions and contrivances which were exhibited at the annual meeting at Falmouth. In the mechanical department, we find mention of efficient filters, so small that they may be carried in the pocket, intended for the use of troops, emigrants, and travellers.—A turbine, that is, a horizontal water-wheel, manufactured by the North Moor Foundry Company, Lancashire, though not more than three inches diameter, possesses the power of one man.—Schoolmasters were attracted by an ingenious form of desk exhibited by Mr A. Williams of Windsor. It is so contrived, with hinges at the ends, as to turn over and present a comfortably backed seat, which occupies no more room than an ordinary seat, or it can be made to form a desk and seat, or a dining-table with two seats at pleasure.—A safety exploring-lamp for use in mines, by Mr Higgs of Penzance, could not fail of attention in Cornwall. Its principal use would be in the examination of parts of a mine known to be dangerous, or in carrying assistance after an accident. The light of the lamp is maintained by condensed atmospheric air passing through a screw valve. It has been tried in the coal-mines of the north as well as in the Cornish mines, and with satisfactory results, as it gives a continuous and safe light for half an hour.—A new form of rotary engine was exhibited, which consists of a fixed narrow circular steam-chest, traversed by a central shaft, bearing fans of four feet diameter. Two steam-jets communicate motion to the fans, and thereby set the engine at work, with a saving, as is stated, of one-third in the cost of fuel as compared with an ordinary steam-engine.

In concluding his lecture *On the Sources of the Nile*, at the Royal Institution, Mr Baker gave some particulars which will be interesting to those who interest themselves in the natural phenomena of Egypt. A rainfall of ten months draining into the Albert Lake enables that great reservoir to send down to Egypt throughout the year a stream of sufficient volume to overcome the evaporation and absorption of the Nubian deserts. Without the White Nile, not one drop of water from the Blue Nile would ever reach Egypt in the dry season; it would all be absorbed and evaporated; but in the month of June, the Abyssinian rainy season floods the Blue Nile and the Atbara; and these streams added to the outpour from the Albert Lake, occasion the inundations in Lower Egypt.

'Thus is unravelled the whole secret of the Nile,' remarks Mr Baker; 'the mystery that had baffled both ancient and modern times has yielded to the influence of England, and the honour belongs to her of having printed the first footsteps where all was untrodden, and of having brought to light all that since the world was created has remained in darkness.'

Mr Baker appears to assume that the ancient world was as ignorant of the upper valley of the Nile, as the modern world was at the beginning of the present century. We have ourselves published evidence to the contrary.

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AN UNDISCOVERED WORLD.

It is not quite so difficult as it used to be for the better half of the world (by which, however, we do not mean the Wives, for *they* still complain of want of information) to learn how the other half dispose of themselves. For a shilling you can buy the *Night in the Workhouse*, perhaps the most striking and graphic description of real life that ever appeared in a newspaper, and be introduced into the arcana of the 'casual wards;' while for a little more you may procure the *Mysteries of the Court of London*, and learn (though we do not know upon what authority) how the other end of society pass their butterfly existence. A more prosaic, but not less trustworthy plan to arrive at the knowledge of the ways and means of his fellow-creatures has, however, been adopted by the present writer, the results of which are subjoined. We know how the outcasts pass their miserable nights; we know how the courtiers amuse themselves; the mode of life of the upper classes is exhibited, with more or less of fidelity, in every fashionable novel; the middle classes have had, of late years, their delineators in our very greatest writers; the Shopocracy have had one or two 'chiels' among them 'taking notes,' and not very complimentary ones either; domestic servants, with their 'perquisites' and their 'followers,' have occupied the columns of the *Times* for weeks together; and the agricultural poor have had a special commissioner, who has lifted our hair from our heads by the terrible details of his report. But of the artisan class, and of those who minister to their pleasures or their wants, we have had, with the exception of Mr Mayhew's *London Labour and the London Poor*, scarce any record whatever. Among them lies the fortune of some unborn Dickens, who shall mingle with them and describe them to us with the pen of genius, as he described Mr Pickwick and his associates, at a time when nobody under the rank of a baronet was considered eligible for the hero of a fiction. What a rich vein of human nature lies unworked for some enterprising miner, whose mandrel is his pen,

among those unknown tribes whom we meet by thousands in our streets, but know less about by far than the Zulus of the Cape or the Maories of New Zealand!

My advice to a young man whose future profession is to be that of literature, and who has chosen it because he is fit for it, not because he finds nothing else to do, is, to exchange his silk hat for a paper one, adopt the trade of a journeyman something, and migrate for a twelvemonth to the antipodes of that society among which he moves, but which he will find located not two streets off somewhere at the back of his own residence, and very likely down a Mews. For my own part, if I was but a little younger, and a little poorer, and a little less fastidious, and if my wife would give her permission—but I know *that's* out of the question—I think I could very profitably bid farewell for a season to the *Mæcenas* Club, and the dreary hospitalities of the Respectable, and take a humble lodging somewhere off Paddington Green, and live upon twelve and sixpence a week, and pretend to earn it. Not, mark me, that I pretend to be a person of transcendent talent, but that dealing with such perfectly new Material, it would be impossible that I could fail in interesting Mr Mudie's subscribers with the story I should have to tell, just as one eagerly listens to a traveller from previously undiscovered lands, whether he has the art of the *raconteur* or not. We have heard, it is true (through the police reports), of the ferocity and lawlessness of some of that class to which I refer; conservative statesmen have assured us that they are dangerous to trust with the suffrage; teetotal orators have represented them in anything but flattering colours; but I do not doubt that there is quite as respectable an average of worthy folks among them as among any other class—fathers and mothers, and maidens and lovers, not merely Drunkards and Wife-beaters—and of these we know nothing at all.

While turning my attention to this subject, and sighing my regrets that a residence, however temporary, in these out-of-the-way latitudes was rendered impossible in my own case, it struck me

that I might at least gain some information about them through their literature. 'Let me write the songs of a nation, &c.' was, of course, the quotation that involuntarily rose to my lips; but a perusal of the ballads most in vogue, or at least most exposed in the shop windows in the desired localities, did not afford me much information. They were the dullest affairs that I ever read in print; and the most stupid of all were those which professed to be amusing. As for their romances, the tales with a wood-cut in their thousand-and-one penny Miscellanies, they are all exactly alike, and would almost appear to have been turned out by machinery. If the upper classes would only accept the account of the habits of these unknown tribes with the same eagerness with which they welcome the details of high-life, as set forth in these periodicals, I have certainly not overrated the success that awaits their future literary explorer. Nobody in these romances, with any pretensions to wickedness, seems to have less than ten thousand a year, with the exception of the criminal characters, who, in the shape of Murderers and Kidnappers, are generally found hand-and-glove with the aristocracy in schemes of oppression, or as ministers of their revenge. The gorgeous descriptions of equipages and furniture remind one of the literary efforts of the late Mr George Robins; while the banquet scenes recall that column of the *Times* which treats of the Mansion House upon the 9th of November. For any news of my unknown friends, therefore, to be found in their popular literature, I might just as well have applied at Stafford House to view its State Apartments, in order that I might glean from them an accurate idea of 'interiors' in the New Cut.

There is, however, another species of literature affected by these secluded People, which is quite the reverse of imaginative, and altogether of another sort. I allude to those penny weekly newspapers, of which 'the respectable classes' know nothing, not even the names, but that, nevertheless, circulate in immense numbers among those whom they concern: the mere news whereof is like other news, except that a greater prominence is given to the Police Intelligence than is usual elsewhere, but the advertisement columns of which are very remarkable, and may fairly be taken as the exponents of the simple wants of the respective advertisers. Scarcely one of those standing advertisements, with which we are all so familiar in the Supplement of the *Times*, are to be found here; while offers of beer-houses and milk-walks crowd on one another as thick as bees. Almost all of these hint of limited means, and that ancient difficulty, even with the greatest conjurors, of raising the wind.

FREE BEER-HOUSE.—L.170.—*Brewers lend—Hammer and Down have—all over Counter—Excellent Dwelling—Low Rent—Good Position. Camden-Tn.*

With the exception of the names of the auctioneers, which have been altered, and that of the street, which has been suppressed, the above is exactly as it stands. How peculiar the grammar! How jerky and Mr Alfred Jingle-like the sentences! The little words are probably cut out for the sake of economy, as in the case of telegraphic messages.

FREE BEER-HOUSE.—L.50 Monthly—only L.180
—*Brewers lend liberally—Full Prices—Short Distance out—undeniable Reasons for leaving.*

The last statement does not seem quite as it ought to be, since the reasons may be very undeniable, but yet (to the purchaser) exceedingly unsatisfactory.

Here is quite an Arcadian advertisement:

FREE PUBLIC—30 Miles out, Herts—Trade L.80 a Month—Rent L.15—Pretty Bar—Health and Business combined—strongly recommended.

This is evidently addressed to the Sentimental; we have heard of a pretty barmaid being attractive, but never before of a 'pretty bar.'

COFFEE-HOUSE—W—Doing L.13 a week—This should be seen—Old Established—Good Premises—Hammer and Down—Stamp.

Was ever such curtness in an offer of a livelihood? Here follows a little piece of familiarity:

PORK-BUTCHER'S—Marylebone—Trade L.60 weekly—Hammer and Down want the right man for this [!].—Bustling Locality—every Convenience—Rent Low.

Let us hope the right man will be found.

BUTCHER'S—Doing 4 Beasts and 40 Small Things—Hammer and Down have this unusual bargain.

So we should think; or, at all events, an unusual method of expressing it. Doing 4 beasts? Killing, we suppose, they mean, 4 oxen. But '40 small things,' unless they refer to 'rats and mice, and such small deer,' is a riddle. This word 'doing' is used, it will be remarked, more classically than among the upper classes, and seems to describe almost every transaction of human life.

MILK-WALK—Doing 9 Barn Gallons daily—Mr Hammer offers this—and a good Shop Trade attached.

Nothing would induce us to bid for this however eligible Lot in my present state of ignorance with respect to the nature of a 'barn gallon.'

HAIRDRESSER'S BUSINESS.—For Sale—Commanding Shop—taking six cross roads—near a Railway Station.

We cannot see the advantage of the six cross-roads with respect to hairdressing, unless one of them should be what is called 'a short-cut'; neither should we run the risk of being late for our train, because this great temptation presented itself in the neighbourhood. It possibly means, however, that people who arrive too early at a railway station are glad to pass the time in getting their hair dressed.

WANTED, Good Translators for Old Work—Constant Employment Given.

This, one would imagine, at first sight, was a literary advertisement, and referred to some cheap periodical which did not scorn adaptations from the French: it is nothing of the kind, however, but is addressed To the Second-hand Boot and Shoe Trade.

We take shame to ourselves for not having given place *aux dames*, and hasten to repair the omission, but the fact is, we wished to keep them as far as possible from the beer-houses.

TO FEMALE DRAPERS' ASSISTANTS.—Wanted, A Young Lady, principally for the Fancy Counter [Fancy!]. Apply, or if by Letter, send 'Carte,' to Mr Goodjudge.

This seems a very genuine exemplification of 'one's face being one's fortune.' Addressed, we conclude, also to the fair sex are the numerous advertisements headed *Astrology*.

MR FARSIGHT answers any Questions, by Letter only, on Love, Marriage, Journeys, Delicate Difficulties, and all Events of Interest. Send Date of Birth, enclosing 18 Stamps, and Stamped Envelope for Reply.

This is a sort of gentleman who only crops up before the general public in examinations before a magistrate, but among the folks of whom we are now speaking, his profession is evidently recognised enough.

YOUR PLANET RULED, and Future foretold, on Courtship, Marriage, and Business, by sending Sex and 18 Stamps to Mr Lookahed.

We are glad to remark, however, that this important information can be got at less than half the price from other quarters:

YOUR FUTURE LIFE Revealed Correctly. Send Age and seven Stamps to Mr Underbid.

These advertisements are doubtless mischievous and significant of a wide-spread ignorance; but it is but just to remark, that among nearly a dozen of these low-priced newspapers, circulating, as we have said, only among a very humble grade of society indeed, there are scarcely any absolutely vicious advertisements; in fact, only ten in all.

Here is one which certainly looks slightly felonious, but we are bound to hope for the best:

WATCHES.—For Sale, Two Gold: a Lady's, Gold Dome, L.2, 15s.; a Gentleman's, 18 Carat Case, L.3, 15s.; a Long Chain, L.3, 15s.; an Albert Chain, 35s.—both nearly new, and handsome patterns. Queer St., City—Top Bell.

This may, of course, be only a method of raising money adopted by a gentleman and lady in difficulties, in preference to going to the pawnbroker's; but for our parts, if we wanted a watch, we should rather not apply to 'Queer St., City—Top Bell;' for after we bought it, it strikes us that it might be claimed by some previous owner.

Art and literature are both but scantily represented in these advertisements; but we subjoin a couple of really valuable specimens. The first emanates from the establishment of a tailor, and has no less an object than to attire our Unknown Tribes in Imperial garments, as well as to familiarise them with the countenances of most of the reigning families of Europe.

FORTY-TWO ENGRAVINGS (36 being **PORTRAITS**) represent the fashionable and most becoming attire for every age and every season, every size, and each occasion, every clime and every station. Thirteen young Princes represent the Clothing for young Gentlemen from three years of age. Twenty-one Emperors, Kings, and Princes represent the Fashionable Clothing for Gentlemen. Her Majesty and the Princess of Wales representing the Fashionable Riding Habits; and six suitable figures represent the Livery Suits. Price of the book 6d. post-free, which sum will be deducted from a purchase.

The second notice is couched not only in the poetical language suitable to its subject, but in verse that may be almost pronounced as Epic. Our only regret is that we have not room for the entire Extract—or (as we should say) Embrocation.

SWEET Poesy, arising from her rosy dreams,
Beholds, superior to all other themes,
One who inspires her truthful votive lays,
Excites her wonder, and compels her praise.
Where **ELLIMAN'S** famed **EMBRICATION** gleams,
She hastens swiftly from the land of dreams.

Lo! to mankind in gracious tones she cries,
With love and pity beaming from her eyes, . . .
Why should you still endure Rheumatic Pains?
Why suffer still with Lumbago, Gout, and Sprains?
With Toothache, Chilblains, Chaps so long distressed,

What powers unseen your outstretched hands arrest?

Grasp **ELLIMAN'S** great **EMBRICATION** pure—
Powerful to ease, to conquer, and to cure.
When our brave soldiers from our shores went forth,
To battle 'gainst the Despot of the North,
Thrice-armed they went—with sword and carbine true,

And **ELLIMAN'S** famed **EMBRICATION** too.

This wondrous Balm enjoys fair fame's sweet smile;
Its name has reached Caprea's sunny isle.
Glorious Italia's bravest, noblest son,
Brave Garibaldi, hears of **ELLIMAN**;
Receives his **EMBRICATION**—
&c. &c. &c.

The man who does not appreciate the above has certainly no taste—for humour. Conceive the Hero of Italy going down to posterity with a bottle of this gentleman's Embrocation in one hand, and enthusiastically rubbing some afflicted portion of his frame with the other! The above is the sole poetical advertisement which has rewarded our investigations: we were temporarily deceived by the florid announcement:

WHAT DO THE WILD WAVES SAY NOW?

But the context was prosaic in the extreme. They say that the 'Fiery Cross' has arrived, bringing some magnificent Kaisow Congous of delicious flavour, and which may now be had at a commission on the import price, of a tea company.

But the queerest advertisements that are to be found in these remarkable newspapers are, after all, those which relate to the amusements of our secluded friends. We are not certain even now whether the terms in which they are couched are used in fun or in good faith; whether they are honestly supposed by those who insert them to be found in Johnson's Dictionary; or whether (to adopt a favourite phrase with our unknown tribes) they are 'all Walker.'

We will begin with two legitimately funny ones:

ANERLY GARDENS, like *Newgate*, *Professes to be* furnished with an *ORDINARY*. This is a Meal at a fixed Price—not a Clergyman. Dancing every Monday and Saturday in the Enclosed Rotunda.—Delightfully warm.

Setting aside the liberty taken with the Church, and the want of novelty in the joke, the above is really not bad, considering the stuff that is considered to be Comic by our peculiar Public. What follows, would be amusing anywhere, and deserves quotation from its audacity in endeavouring to extract amusement (now a days) out of the *Edinburgh Review*:

A WILD, HIS-STORY. An Illustrated Comic Chant by Charles Hall. Sent post-free for twenty-four stamps. 'There is no such a thing as chants,'—*Edinburgh Review*. 'Finest moral out.'—*Educational Monitor*. 'I take it.'—*Philosophical Mother*. 'I chants it.'—*Popular Singer*. 'The illustrations are quite worthy of anybody.'—*Fine Arts Register*. 'This song ought to immortalise its composer.'—That's Hall.

And now let us be sober, and keep our minds as clear as may be among the 'Elephant Comic

Vocalists,' the 'Buffo, Sensation, and Characteristic Vocalists,' and (Heaven save the mark!) the 'Shakespearean Negro Artists.' What is the meaning of these terms, if they ever had any, and to whom is their invention due? Only listen to this talk of unknown tongues, premising that we only suppress the names and addresses:

WE ARE THE PEOPLE. *Mr and Mrs Nomatter, Sentimental, Serio-comic, and Comic Character Soloists, Duologists, &c. Now appearing at New Music Hall, Countydown, with unbounded success. Fourth and fifth call nightly. [One would think they were doctors in good practice.] At liberty, February 1, for one month. N.B.—First-class References and Good Collection.*

If this gentleman and lady are, as they state, 'the People,' it is high time we should know something about them, besides their very peculiar phraseology. What is 't'hey do? Who goes to see them do it? How much do they get a night?

MISS PENELOPE JONES, *Sentimental, Serio-comic, and Sensation Vocalist, now at the People's Hall, So-and-so; opens at the Hen and Chickens, Somecherelse. At liberty, February 3. 'Howling Swell' nightly.*

I think I should like that (for once) better than the Opera.

WANTED, a Serio-comic Lady. No Stamps. Three Days' Silence a Negative. *Miss Adelina Perkins may write; address, Theatre Royal, Brickville.*

Here are two advertisements in which the real names are retained:

MESSRS OATES and ALBERT DE VOY, *the Great Niggers, now performing with Unabated Applause at So-and-so.*

ALBERT DE VOY, *the Original, Eccentric, Sensational Comic and Dancer. . . . At once became a favourite, having to appear four or five times each turn, at Somecherelse. N.B.—Albert de Voy, the original Comic, 'not the Negro!'*

Conceive there being two popular favourites of this very singular name, and our never before having heard of either of them! One of them seems to have been hinting that Black is White, and has to suffer this public contradiction. It is sad to see even 'stars' at variance.

MESSRS TATE and BRADY, *Duologue Character Artists and Champion Swordsman, with their Wonderful Dogs Montargis and St Bernard, are now at liberty.*

So also is that *Star Versatile Comique, Alf. Onalove.* Very much the reverse is the case with *The Cleopatra of Serio-comic Artists, Miss Kate Binks,* who is engaged till August; which seems a singular way of stating a young lady's engagement. The *Bounding Brothers of the Black Forest* seem also much in demand.

Among the *Wanted*, and likely to be *Wanted*, if the advertiser is looking for us to apply for his situation, is *One Lion-tamer to perform with Lions.* Also *One Tent-master and Seven Men to go on the Continent* (we suppose with a menagerie or circus).

WANTED, to open immediately, for a first-class Free-and-Easy, a Young Lady Pianist, to live in the House. To a suitable person, this will be a comfortable home.

Surely, here is a chance for a young woman of spirit, much preferable to being a governess in a serious family at L.40 a year; and consider the

opportunity, if, in addition to piano-playing, she has any talent for putting into writing the result of her experiences! An English lady has lately given us an account of the private life of an eastern despot, including 'interiors' of his Harem; but what are they, in point of mystery, to the details of existence at a Free-and-Easy! We acknowledge with humiliation and shame that we do not even rightly know what a Free-and-Easy is. We shrewdly suspect, however, that it has something to do with the following advertisement, also addressed, one would imagine, to a rather exceptional class of person:

WANTED, an A1 Chairman; to open immediately, No Stamp. Silence a negative. Mr Beau Nash may write.

We may conclude that the gentleman required must be able to drink a good deal of spirits; to use a microscopic hammer; and to propose the health of the Royal Family in rounded periods. Do broken-down masters of Ceremonies at our fashionable watering-places come then at last to this! And is there some recognised publicans' *Lloyd's* at which 'chairmen' are classed A1 and otherwise? Finally, what does the advertiser mean by 'no stamp'? Is it possible that the Chancellor of the Exchequer ever placed a tax upon this article, as being one of luxury, and that he has of late been induced to remit it?

Wanted, a Partner. For life? No. One, on the contrary, whose profession is likely to lead to his or her speedy extinction. One that can tumble and mount the Trapeze. Did you ever? There is not one word about the capabilities of the advertiser who may be as common-place a character as you or I, or even have the gout in his extremities! In a calling of this precarious nature, I should think the position of Sleeping Partner was even more preferable than usual. However, all persons are not so unadventurous or lazy as ourselves, it seems.

WANTED, to learn Step-dancing and Hornpipe. State Lowest Terms and Particulars. H. B., Royal Exchange.

The idea of a commercial man—as we cannot, from his (genuine) address, but suppose that H. B. is—wanting to learn the Hornpipe! Perhaps some eccentric and exacting young lady has bidden her swain accomplish this difficult feat, in order to prove the depth of his affection! Perhaps it is Lord Brougham himself, who has suddenly recollected that he knows everything except the hornpipe, and is desirous to repair the omission. Nothing that can be imagined is too unlikely to account for this abnormal desire.

The advertisements of the music-halls, which seem to be by far the most favourite places of amusement for our undiscovered friends, are exceedingly grandiloquent. 'The Great' Jones, or 'the Great' Robinson, attract their thousands nightly. 'All the Talent in London' is engaged at each of them; and *Ri-fum-ti-fum* and *Ko-ko-ri-ko* are two of the names of the entertainments in which that Talent is employed.

Let us now take one peep behind the scenes of the more legitimate drama, ere we let down our curtain.

THEATRE-ROYAL So-and-so. A whole Company wanted.

Here has evidently been a slight disagreement

between manager and artistes. It is as though Her Majesty's Servants of the Privy Council had been all sent packing, and nothing but a Clerk of the Hanaper (whatever that may be) and a Black Rod or two were left to carry on the business of the State.

WANTED, a *Leading Gentleman with a Right of Manuscript Pieces*; also a *few Useful People*. *Stars liberally treated with. Two Clog-men may write: also Concert-room Talent.*

How very cavalierly the 'few Useful People,' so invaluable in real life, are thrown in! The clog-men who 'may write' are those wooden-shoed gentry who make such a dreadful clatter with their double-shuffles.

WANTED, a *First Old Man*. *To save Time, state Terms and References.*

If this is the curt way in which old age is treated by theatrical managers, even in its highest representatives, how objectionable must be the nature of their transactions with a Second or Third Old Man!

WANTED, a *competent Leading Gentleman, and a few Useful People* [again], *for a first-class Portable Theatre*. *Those accustomed to Portable Theatres preferred. Terms—shares.*

Would it be indecorous to inquire whether a Portable Theatre is a euphemism for a Booth? or whether a company which is 'accustomed to it' are not what the public understand by strolling players?

WARDROBE.—A *Leading Gentleman, retiring from the Stage, wishes to dispose of his Entire Wardrobe.*

We only trust that this gentleman will not have his wishes gratified; or that, having disposed of his 'Entire Wardrobe,' he will not only retire from the stage, but also from public life, otherwise let him beware of the police.

Among the dramatic profession, there does not seem to be an excess of sentiment, or, at least, it does not make too prominent an appearance in their advertisements: its professors keep a steady eye to the main chance, and a very poor one, alas! it seems to be. Still, we very much doubt if the following is not an offer of marriage, couched in professional terms. We cannot help thinking that 'To Lady Amateurs,' means, in the language of everyday life, 'to ladies of independent means and without encumbrance.' At all events, the advertiser does not think *vin ordinaire* of himself:

TO LADY AMATEURS.—A *Gentleman occupying a high Position as a Leading Actor, is about to commence his Provincial Starring Tour, and is consequently enabled to offer a First-class Amateur Lady, desiring an opportunity of improvement under the best conditions, the advantage of playing a series of principal Characters, together with the tuition of a thoroughly competent Instructor.*

Finally:

WANTED, *Two Serio-comic Ladies for the Cholton Museum.*

Beyond this, we cannot go. To add any other advertisement would be a Bathos. Are these ladies required alive or dead? If alive, why put them in a museum? If dead—unless we except that terrible grin often seen on the lips of a Mummy—how can they be *serio-comic*?

Since the foregoing was written, our attention

has been drawn to the advertisements of two very remarkable dramatic spectacles, one of which, at least, we should imagine was almost without a parallel, even among our Undiscovered Tribes.

The first informs them that at the Great National Standard Theatre, Shoreditch, the Transformation Scene of the Pantomime will have the benefit of science in the shape of *Herr Kosenow's Patent Steam Shaft*, and that the scenery will include a most truthful representation of a village green, *with live Cattle grazing and live Sheep in the sheep-fold.*

The second conveys the curious intelligence that at the *Royal Britannia Theatre, Hoxton*, the *Survivors from the wreck of the 'London'* have kindly consented, *for one week only, to appear nightly upon the stage.*

MIRK ABBEY.

CHAPTER XLVI.—THE LETTER FROM PARIS.

It is the morning after the Derby Day, and Sir Richard, who has never had a shilling upon that national event, yet reads with interest the prose-poem upon the subject in the *Times*, over the breakfast-table, and even favours Letty—which is so unusual a piece of graciousness, that it almost suggests the idea of making amends for something—with extracts from the same, aloud. He and his sister are alone at the morning meal, for my Lady, as is often the case now, has had her tea and dry toast sent up to her in her own room, as also a couple of letters—one from Arthur Haldane, and one with the Paris post-mark, and in a foreign hand.

'Lord Stonart is said to have netted forty thousand pounds: just think of that, Letty.'

'Yes, Richard; but then think of the poor people that lost it.'

'Poor people should not bet,' returned the baronet severely. 'I am sorry for Mr Chifney, since, if he had not quarrelled with his Lordship, the winner would have come out of his stables. As it was, he very nearly accomplished it with that French horse *Menelaus*—a success which I should, as an Englishman, have much deplored.'

'Dear me! was not that the horse in which Walter was so much interested?'

'I am sure I don't know, Letty. I should think my brother had no money to spare for the race-course, under present circumstances: he could surely never be such a fool.'

'Very likely not, Richard. I never said a word about his risking money; I only said he was "interested."'

'Ah!' rejoined the baronet significantly, 'I dare say;' and then he began to whistle, as was not unusual with him when thoroughly displeased. Presently, however, recollecting that this was not a sociable sort of thing to do, Sir Richard abruptly observed: 'Mamma had a letter from Paris this morning, and in a foreign hand; I wonder who her correspondent is. I do not think she has heard from abroad since immediately after our poor father's death. Then I remember several of her old French friends wrote to her.'

'I hope it is no ill news of any kind, for I am getting quite anxious about dear mamma, Richard. Ever since Christmas last, she has seemed to get more and more depressed.'

'I have only observed it lately,' answered the baronet, rather stiffly; 'and I am sure we have not far to look for the reason.—By the by, there was a letter for her from Arthur Haldane also.'

'Oh! was there?' said Letty carelessly, but turning a lively pink. Then after a short pause, during which the baronet resumed his paper: 'If you will not have another cup of coffee, Richard, I think I will go up and see mamma.'

At that moment, the door opened, and my Lady herself entered the room. Her cheeks were ashy pale, but her eyes were beaming with excitement, and the hand in which she held an open letter trembled as she spoke. 'Oh, I have got such good news, Richard!'

'What! from Arthur?' cried Letty. 'Ah! I thought he would arrange everything as it should be.'

Sir Richard frowned, and seemed about to speak, but did not do so.

'Yes, I have heard from Arthur too,' said my Lady; 'and very satisfactorily, although, perhaps, there may be matters which may require my presence in town for a day or two.'

'You may always command my services, mother: I can start at five minutes' notice,' said Sir Richard gravely.

'No, my dear boy; if I have to go at all—which is not certain—I shall certainly go alone, or rather with nobody but Mary. You will be full of preparations for your *fête*, I know, for one only comes of age once in one's lifetime; and besides, to tell you the truth, you would be of no use at all.' Here she kissed him tenderly, and pushed her fingers through his brown curls lingeringly, as though she was already wishing him farewell. 'But the good news I speak of is a much more selfish affair than you dream of. I have had a letter from my dear old friend, Madame de Castellan, who used to be so good to me when I was no older than you, Letty, at Dijon.'

'I remember her,' said Sir Richard. 'She came to stay at the Abbey when I was about nine, did she not, and took such a fancy to dear old Belcomb! She said that she and I would marry so soon as I got old enough, and set up an establishment in the little cottage. A charming old lady, with snow-white hair, but a slight deficiency of teeth.'

'Just so,' answered my Lady. 'She always vowed she would have nothing false about her, as long as she lived, and she is alive now, and apparently very hearty. But she has had some money losses, as well as certain domestic misfortunes, which induce her to seek an entire change of life. It is a most singular thing that you should have recollected her passion for Belcomb, for it is about that very place that she has written. She wishes to know whether she could be our tenant there, at all events for the summer. The matter is in your hands, Richard, or will be so in a week or two, but I confess I should like to have her for a neighbour exceedingly.'

'Then by all means write and say "Come,"'

cried the baronet; 'and why not let her have Belcomb rent free? I dare say she would not mind our having our picnics there occasionally; and it is really no loss to me, for I don't believe anybody but herself would dream of taking it, except in the shooting season.'

'Then that is arranged,' answered my Lady joyfully. 'I am to write by return of post,' she says; 'and if the letter says "Yes," that then we may expect her any day. She will bring her own French maid; and I will drive over to-day, and arrange about old Rachel and her husband, who, of course, must be no losers, if they have to leave. That must be Madame's own affair, if she is really to have the place for nothing. See how affectionately the dear old lady writes, and what a capital hand, considering her advanced age!'

'Yes, indeed,' said Sir Richard, elevating his eyebrows: 'only, to say the truth, I am not good at French manuscript.'—

'Although a master of that language, when in printed books,' interrupted Letty.

'Well, the fact is they didn't teach that sort of thing at Eton in my time,' answered the baronet frankly; 'or, at all events, they didn't teach me. However, French is not so bad as German, that I will say. One can pronounce it without speaking from the pit of one's stomach.'

'Yes, one can—after a fashion,' laughed Letty a little scornfully; but her elder brother seemed resolved to take all her bantering in good part that morning, as the imperial lion will sometimes tolerate the gambols of a companion kitten. 'I don't think, however,' she continued, 'Madame de Castellan, who comes from Paris, will quite understand you, Richard.—How nicely she speaks of Mary, mamma. Why, how comes she to know so much about her?'

'Why, when I went to Dijon, before my marriage, Mary Forest went with me, you know, and remained there several years.'

'Ah, yes, of course; I had forgotten.'

'And when we were at the—the college,' continued my Lady, with a slight tinge of colour, 'Madame took pity upon us both, being foreigners, and was kind to us beyond all measure. Many a happy day have we passed in her pretty chateau together; and indeed I think I owe my Parisian pronunciation—of which you seem to make so much, Letty—at least as much to Madame de Castellan as to my paid teachers. She never could speak English, if you remember, Richard; everything she addressed to you had to be translated.'

'Dear me,' answered the baronet hastily, 'I don't like that. I hope she has learned English since then. It places one in a very humiliating position to be talked to in a language one does not understand; unless you can treat the person as a savage, which, to say the truth, I always feel inclined to do.'

'Well, Richard,' said my Lady smiling, 'if I am not at your elbow when Madame de Castellan calls, there will be always Letty here, who is cunning in such tongue-fence, to protect you; but, as a matter of fact, we shall see my poor old friend but very seldom. She is a good deal broken, I fear, by time, and still more by trouble'—here my Lady's own voice began to quaver a little—'and all she seems to desire is quiet and seclusion, before her day of rest at last shall dawn.'

'She will be very welcome,' answered Sir Richard tenderly. 'I hope that you will cause

everything for her comfort to be looked to at Belcomb, and I will again repeat my orders to Rinkel that the place is to be kept quite free from trespassers.'

He rose and kissed his mother, then, as he left the room, delayed with his fingers on the door-handle, saying: 'Have Walter and—and his wife consented to be present at my Coming of Age?'

'Certainly, dear Richard: they will both be very pleased to come—nay, Arthur thinks that they may return to the Abbey immediately. It is scarcely worth while for them to take a house, or rather lodgings, at Canterbury, since they are to be here so soon. Walter has leave now, it seems, and there will be no difficulty in getting it prolonged almost indefinitely: he can do anything he likes with his colonel, you know, as indeed'—

'Exactly,' interrupted Sir Richard drily. 'Then I suppose they will be back in a few days.' And with that he placed the door between himself and the threatened eulogy upon Master Walter.

'Was there any particular message for me, mamma?' inquired Letty demurely.

'From Walter? No, dear. He sent his love to us all; but of course he feels a little embarrassed, and perhaps scarcely understands that he has been forgiven. Oh, I forgot: you meant was there any particular message from Arthur Haldane, you exacting little puss! Why, he only left us yesterday morning! But don't be vexed, my darling. You have won the love of a man who knows your worth almost as well as I do. He may not be so brilliant or so handsome as our darling Walter—and indeed who is!—but I must say he has shewn much better taste in choosing a wife. He has both wisdom and goodness, my darling child, and I firmly believe your future happiness is assured.'

'Yes, dearest mother, I do believe it; but'—Here Letty's eyes began not only to sparkle, but to distil pearls and diamonds in the most lavish and apparently uncalled-for profusion.

'Why, what is the matter now, my love?' inquired my Lady.

'Nothing, mamma—nothing at least that I should have thought it worth while to tell you, had I not been overcome by your kind words. I know you have got troubles enough of your own; I did not mean to tell you, indeed I did not; I tried to forget it myself. Only last night, after you had gone to bed, Richard sat up with me talking about his future, and it seems he has made some plan for mine. He spoke of Mr Charles Vane as a person he would like to have for a brother-in-law. He bade me be particularly civil to him at the coming *fête*; and when I said that I did not very much care about Mr Vane—and, in fact, that I had already— O mamma, Richard said some very cruel things. He reminded me that one member of the family had already made a disreputable marriage'—

'That was an ungenerous speech, and very unlike my Richard,' interposed my Lady with emphasis. 'Why, he would have married Rose himself.'

'So I have sometimes thought,' replied Letty simply: 'but to do him justice, I think he was referring to the clandestine character of the marriage rather than to the match itself. However, when he used the word disreputable in connection with Arthur Haldane, he made me very angry, I own. I told him that Arthur was worth all the Vanes that had ever been born, whether

there might have been nineteen generations of them (as he boasted) or a hundred and ninety. And I am afraid, dear mamma, that I snapped my fingers, and said I did not care *that*, when he accused dearest Arthur of not having a great-grandfather. At all events, Richard stalked out of the drawing-room vastly offended; and although he has been endeavouring to be extra civil to me this morning, I know that it is only that he may again introduce the very objectionable subject of Mr Charles Vane; and when I say "No" with decision, as of course I shall do, I fear that he may take it upon himself to write to Arthur; and then, dearest mother, the Haldanes are so proud, you know, that I don't know what may happen.'

Strange as it may seem, there had fitted across my Lady's face during this recital a look of something like Relief—for it surely could not have been Satisfaction—but it speedily gave place to that expression of distress that had become only too habitual to her once serene and comely features. Perhaps, accustomed to mischance as she now was, she had expected even more unwelcome news, and had felt momentarily thankful matters were no worse; but now all was gloom again.

'You were quite right to tell me this, Letty, even though it does give me a new cause for grief. If I know Arthur Haldane, he will not desert his betrothed wife on account of any slight that may be put upon him by any other human being. You may be quite at ease about that, I am very sure. But these dissensions and disagreements among my own children—I know it is not your fault, dear Letty—but I feel that I cannot bear up under them. You will not have me with you here much longer.'

'O mamma—dear, dear mamma, how selfish it was of me thus to afflict you further. But don't, don't talk like that. What should we do without you—you the sole bond that unites your boys together: and I? O mother, what would become of me? You don't know how I love you.'

'Yes, darling I do. You are tender-hearted as you are dutiful. And my boys, to do them justice, they love me too; but they are wearing me into my grave. At least, I feel it would be far better if I were lying there.'

'O mamma, mamma,' sighed Letty, covering my Lady's tearful face with kisses, 'you will break my heart if you talk so.'

'You will have somebody better able to take care of you even than I, dear child, when I am gone. And I will see that it is so. Yes, I will leave directions behind me—you will find them in my desk, Letty; remember this, should anything happen to me—about that matter as well as other things. Richard will respect my wishes in such a case, I know, and will offer no opposition.'

'But dearest mother, do you feel ill,' cried Letty in an agony, 'that you talk of such things as these? Let us send for the doctor from Dalwynch. How I wish that Arthur's father could be prevailed on to come and see you! O mamma! I would rather die than you, although I am sure I am not half so fit for death!'

'Dear child, dear child!' sobbed my Lady. 'It will be a bitter parting indeed for both of us—when the time comes. Perhaps it may not be so near at hand as I feared. In the meantime, rest assured, love, that if I feel a doctor can do me any good, he shall be sent for at once. But it is the mind, and not the body, which has need of medicine.—There,

dry your eyes, and let us hope for the best. You will drive over with me this afternoon, will you not, to Belcomb? There is no time to lose in getting things ready there for our new tenant.'

CHAPTER XXVII.—MADAME DE CASTELLAN.

Upon the fourth day after the reception of her Paris letter, my Lady had to leave Mirk for town on business connected with Walter's affairs—for, after all, she cannot permit his elder brother to bear the whole brunt of these unexpected expenses. Her visit was to the family lawyer, and she went alone save for the attendance of Mistress Forest. Under any circumstances, she would rather it were thus, she repeats, even if the preparations going on at Mirk did not take up so fully Sir Richard's time, and render his accompanying her out of the question. For this Coming of Age was a case wherein surely a man might busy himself even though the whole affair was to be held in his own honour; the very name of Lisgard being in a manner at stake, and obnoxious to censure, if everything should not be on a fitting scale and perfect of its kind; nay (though certainly more remotely), might not the Great Principle of Territorial Aristocracy have been almost said to be upon its trial upon the coming occasion? The business must have been pressing indeed, remarked the baronet a little pointedly, that took the mistress of Mirk from home at such an important epoch; and he thought in his heart that his mother might have put off this signature of a few parchments until after the fête-day. However, it was plain that my Lady considered the call to town imperative, since she started thither upon the very morning of the day on which her old friend Madame de Castellan had appointed to reach Belcomb; and although she hoped to be able to return on the ensuing afternoon, in company with Walter and his wife, whose marriage had been in the meantime publicly announced, it was not certain that her affairs could be transacted within such time as would permit her to do so. And so it unfortunately turned out. About an hour after luncheon, the carriage having been despatched from the Abbey to the Dalwynch station just so long as would admit of its return with its expected inmates, the sound of wheels was heard in the avenue, and both Sir Richard and Letty felt the colour come into their cheeks. Each imagined that it was the Return of the Prodigal (in this case rendered more embarrassing by the fact of his bringing his wife with him). Suppose their mother should have been prevented from accompanying Captain and Mrs Lisgard! How very awkward and disconcerting would this first interview be; and especially for the poor baronet, who had never seen Rose, at least to his own knowledge, as a married woman. His brother's bride, too! Sir Richard rather repented for that minute or two that he had made such a point of the young couple returning to Mirk so soon. He felt quite grateful to his sister when she placed her hand upon his arm, and whispered: 'Had we not better go out to meet them, Richard?' At any other time, he would perhaps have resented her offer to share the duties of host; for was it not his place, and his alone, to bid guests welcome to Mirk Abbey? But upon this occasion he accepted it gladly; and it was lucky for him he did.

Instead of the gay barouche and glistening steeds

from his own stables, he beheld, when he reached the hall steps, the Dalwynch fly—for the little town only boasted of one such conveyance—a yellow single-seated machine, which had once been proud to call itself a post-chaise, and been whirled through the air by panting wheelers and leaders; but it was now dragged along by animals so melancholy and slow, that but for their colour and shortness of tail, they might have been hearse-horses; while the driver had a lugubrious expression too, as befitted one who felt that he should never buckle on his single spur again, or crack his whip in triumph, as he came up the street of the county town at a hand-gallop. But the tenant of this vehicle was a far more old-world-looking object than itself or its belongings; a very ancient and silver-haired lady, looking almost double even as she sat, and only able, painfully, to alight from her carriage by aid of Mr Roberts's arm and a crutched stick. Her complexion was an agreeable gingerbread; she had not above three teeth, which, however, were very white ones, left in either jaw; and her head shook from side to side with the palsy of extreme old age. But despite these disadvantages, she had by no means an unpleasant expression; and Sir Richard, with his fête-day running in his head, was somehow reminded of one of those beneficent old fairies, who, at considerable personal inconvenience, used to make a point of being present at the christening, marriage, and other important occasions in the life of the young prince with whose royal mother they had been such great friends in years gone by. He hurried down the steps to offer his arm to this strange visitor, and bid her respectful welcome.

'Madame de Castellan, for I think it can be no one else,' said he; 'it is most kind of you to treat us thus. We ought to have been at Belcomb ourselves by this time, instead of your being here, and indeed we should have been there yesterday, had my mother been at home; but important business has taken her to London, and I much regret to say that she has not even yet returned, although we are expecting her every minute.'

Either the exertion of alighting, or the reception of this unexpected news, set the poor old lady shaking to that degree, that it seemed a wonder that she did not shake to pieces. She fell to kissing Letty, doubtless partly from affection, but also perhaps as an excuse for not immediately commencing the ascent of those dreadful stairs.

'You don't either of you remember me, I dare say,' mumbled she in the French tongue.

Sir Richard, smiled and bowed, as being the safest reply he could frame to a question of which he understood nothing.

'Ah, Heaven, he does!' cried the old lady with evident delight. 'That is an excellent young man; and yet he was but a very little boy. And Miss Letty? No, she does not remember—how should she? she was too young! And Walter—the pretty boy, so *spirituel*, with his black velvet frock and short sleeves tied with scarlet ribbon—where was he? What! grown up and married? Was it possible! How time had flown; alas, alas! And the good Dr Haldane and his wife, was he here as much as usual; clever sarcastic little gentleman?'

Not even the allusions to their own childhood gave Richard and his sister so vast a notion of the time that had elapsed since Madame de Castellan's previous visit to the Abbey, as this last remark of hers; for the occurrence which had shut out the

good doctor from the Abbey had happened so long ago that it was almost legendary; and they were so accustomed to his absence, that they could not picture to themselves the state of things to which this patriarchal old lady referred as a matter of course. As for Mrs Haldane, they had heard of the existence of such a person, and that was all. That good woman had not made much noise in the world when she was alive, and she had been among the Silent now for more than eleven years. How far back were the explanations to begin, thought Letty and her brother, that would make this female Rip Van Winkle *au fait* with the present order of things?

But the old Frenchwoman was fortunately not nearly so anxious to be answered as she was to talk, a feat which she accomplished with much more distinctness than could have been expected, notwithstanding that Sir Richard subsequently ascribed to her paucity of teeth the fact that he only understood about two words out of her every five.

It was very amusing to watch the poor young baronet listening with fruitless diligence to her rapid syllables, and then turning an imploring glance upon his sister and sworn interpreter for aid and rescue. He was obliged upon two occasions to frame some halting reply with his own lips; once when Madame openly complimented him upon his good looks and gallant bearing; and secondly, when she thanked him for the readiness with which he had placed the cottage at Belcomb at her disposal; but for the rest, the burden of conversation rested upon Letty.

'And how is Marie—how is the good Marie, who was to your dear mamma like a servant and a sister in one?' asked the old lady, when they had got her with some difficulty into the drawing-room.

'She is well, Madame; but in some trouble about a certain suitor, whom' (here she pouted a little) 'Sir Richard here considers to be undesirable.'

Madame raised her rather shaggy eyebrows, and looked towards the young baronet as if for an explanation. He knew that they were speaking of Mistress Forest, and that was all.

'An admirable person,' said he earnestly; 'most trustworthy in every way. We have all cause to be more than satisfied.'

'Ah, then he does not object after all!' exclaimed Madame triumphantly.—'And Master Walter—what sort of a wife has he got? Beautiful? That is well; it would be a pity if it were otherwise. And clever? Excellent! And also good, I hope?'

'Well, Madame, she will be here in a minute, so that you may judge for yourself,' answered Letty smiling, but by no means displeased to hear the crunch of carriage-wheels upon the gravel of the terraced drive. These home questions concerning her new sister-in-law were getting rather difficult to answer, and especially in Richard's presence.

'Will your mother be with them?' inquired Madame, gathering from the faces of her companions, rather than from any sound which could have reached her tardy ears, that the arrival of those expected was imminent.

'As I said before, Madame, I cannot promise; but I sincerely trust, for your sake—as, indeed, for her own—that it may be so. I am sure mamma will deeply grieve to have missed you.'

The next moment, Captain and Mrs Lisgard were

announced. Richard walked straight up to Rose, and taking her hand in his best Sir Roger de Coverley manner, bade her frank but stately welcome. Then, 'How are you, Walter?' said he, giving his brother's fingers an earnest squeeze, and simulating cordiality all he could. 'Here is a very old friend of our mother's, Madame de Castellan, who remembers you in a velvet frock with short sleeves and cherry-coloured ribbons.'

For the first time, Sir Richard blessed this old lady's presence, which was so greatly mitigating to him the difficulties of this dreaded interview; but Walter appeared to be but little embarrassed; less so, indeed, than Madame herself, who, overcome, doubtless, by the strong resemblance to his mother in the young man now presented to her, began to tremble again almost as much as she had done a while ago.

'And this is Master Walter,' said she in broken tones. 'I think I should have known that without any introduction.' Here she held him with both her hands at arms' length. 'I suppose, now, you do not remember me at all?'

'Madame,' returned the young man in bad French, but briskly enough, and with a very pleasant smile, 'I cannot say I do. Little folks in velvet frocks have very bad memories. But I have often heard my dear mother speak of you most affectionately; indeed, she wrote to me of your expected arrival at Belcomb with greater pleasure than I have known her to take in anything for years.'

'Except your marriage, Mister the Captain, eh?' returned the old lady archly. 'Come, introduce me to your lovely bride. Ah, Heaven, what a young couple! Well, I like to see that—I who might be the great-grandmother of both of you.—How are you, Madame Walter? What do they call you? Rose! Ah, a charming name.'

But though the name was so charming, and the young lady was so lovely, Madame de Castellan did not take her to her arms and embrace her as she had taken Letty. Indeed, if it was possible for Rose to look disconcerted, she would have done so now, as she stood with cast-down eyes, exposed to the same steady scrutiny as her husband had just been subjected to; but there was by no means so much affection in the old lady's gaze on this occasion. When she had regarded her sufficiently, she dismissed her with a petronising tap upon the head, and once more addressed herself to Walter.

'And what have you done with your mamma, sir?' 'I have done nothing, Madame,' answered he laughing. 'She has never given me the chance of making away with her, if it is of that you suspect me; for she never came to see us in town at all. We were to meet at the station this morning, but she was not there. I am afraid, therefore—for she dislikes travelling at night—that we shall not see her before this time to-morrow.'

Master Walter was in very different cue from that in which we saw him last. The burden of his difficulties had been lifted from his shoulders, at all events for the present. He had been saved at least from Ruin, and that, though he might be henceforth compelled to live the life of a poor man, was a matter of congratulation; just as one is thankful, in shipwreck upon the desolate seas, to land on even a barren rock. His spirits were always buoyant, and they were now asserting themselves after a period of severest pressure. In short, Master Walter was himself again—good-humoured,

graceful, and as desirous as well fitted to please all with whom he came into contact. It was plain that he had made a complete conquest of this old Frenchwoman.

'And Marie, have you hidden her anywhere, you naughty boy?'

'Not I, Madame. If you saw her, you would understand that she is not easily hidden. You remember her plump, I daresay; but plump is now no word for her. Even love—and she is love-sick, poor thing, at five-and-forty, or so—does not render her less solid.'

'Ah, wicked, to laugh at Love!' replied the old lady, holding up a reproving finger, of whose shape and whiteness she was evidently proud, and not altogether without reason; 'and worse still, to laugh at Mary. I love that dear Mistress Forest; and mind you, tell mamma, if ever she parts with her, that she is to come straight to me. What would I not give for a waiting-maid like that—devoted, prudent, to whom I could confide my little love-affairs!—Why do you laugh, rude children? It is, I see, time that I should go.—Seriously,' continued she, when the chorus of dissatisfaction had died away (for every one except, perhaps, Rose, was pleased with this sprightly old lady, and all felt her presence to be, under the circumstances, an immense relief), 'I must be going home at once.—Thank you kindly, Sir Richard, but to stay to dinner is impossible. The night-air, at my time of life—more even than "five-or-forty or so," Mister the Captain—is very unwholesome. You must all come and lunch with me shortly. A *fête champêtre* upon the—what is it you call it?—Lisgard Folly. You will give this kiss to mamma for me, Miss Letty, and tell her I must see her to-morrow—no, the day after, for she will be tired. I will not have any of you young people on that day. I shall wish to talk to her alone about so many things. Will you please to ring for my—that droll conveyance which you call *mouche*—"fly?"—Adieu, Madame Walter; take care of your handsome husband, for I have fallen in love with him.—Adieu to you, naughty boy.—Now, Sir Richard, if you will give me your arm, by the time we get to the front door, and down these dreadful steps, the *mouche* will be at the door, though he walk slow, as though he had just escaped out of treacle.'

As the pair made their way to the hall, at the pace of chief-mourners, Madame de Castellan, to Richard's surprise and joy, began, for the first time, to speak in broken English. 'Your mother is very fond of you all,' said she; 'I hope you are fond of her.'

'I hope so indeed, Madame: we should be very ungrateful if we were not.'

'That is well, young man. Be good to her, for our mothers are obliged to leave us, you know, long before we go ourselves.'

'God forbid, Madame, that we should lose her these many years,' answered the baronet fervently.

'Yes, yes; but mind this,' answered the old lady testily, as she climbed into the *mouche*, 'that if Mistress Forest should want a place—here am I at Belcomb, very glad to receive her. Good-bye.'

Sir Richard, thunder-struck, stared at the slowly departing vehicle like one in a dream. 'I never heard such a speech,' soliloquised he—'never. Can that old harridan be really calculating upon my mother's death giving her a new lady's-maid? How selfish is extreme old age! I could not have believed it possible. How it would have distressed

mamma, could she have heard her. And yet, but for that speech, she seemed an affectionate and kindly old creature enough. I have often heard that Frenchwomen have no hearts, but only manners—and I suppose that so it is.'

PROVINCIAL MUSEUMS.

THE formation of local museums has constantly been advocated by the highest scientific authorities; but notwithstanding all that has been written and said on the subject, there are as yet very few provincial towns in England which can boast of possessing a museum where the naturalist can study a complete series of specimens illustrating the geology and mineralogy of the surrounding district, or where the antiquary can see those relics of former ages which may at different times have been discovered in the neighbourhood.

Our provincial museums in general contain nothing but a heterogeneous mixture of curiosities, brought from all the four quarters of the globe; and if any specimens of local interest are comprised in the collection, they are either so much in the minority, or so intermixed with the miscellaneous productions of foreign lands, as to be rendered comparatively useless for purposes of reference.

The late Professor Edward Forbes, in one of his lectures, most admirably sketched the prevailing character of provincial museums. He says: 'When a naturalist goes from one country into another, his first inquiry is for local collections. He is anxious to see authentic and full cabinets of the productions of the region he is visiting. He wishes, moreover, if possible, to study them apart—not mingled up with general or miscellaneous collections—and distinctly arranged with special reference to the region they illustrate. . . . In almost every town of any size or consequence, he finds a public museum; but how often does he find any part of that museum devoted to the illustration of the productions of the district? The very feature which of all others would give interest and value to the collection, which would render it most useful for teaching purposes, has in most instances been omitted, or so treated as to be altogether useless. Unfortunately, not a few country museums are little better than rare-shows. They contain an incongruous accumulation of things curious, or supposed to be curious, heaped together in disorderly piles, or neatly spread out with ingenious disregard of their relations. The only label attached to nine specimens out of ten is "Presented by Mr or Mrs So-and-so"; the object of the presentation having been, either to cherish a glow of generous self-satisfaction in the bosom of the donor, or to get rid—under the semblance of doing a good action—of rubbish that had once been prized, but latterly had stood in the way. Curiosities from the South Seas, relics worthless in themselves, deriving their interest from association with persons or localities, a few badly-stuffed quadrupeds, rather more birds, a stuffed snake, a skinned alligator, part of an Egyptian mummy, Indian gods,

a case or two of shells, the bivalves single, the univalves decorticated, a sea-urchin without its spines, a few common corals, the fruit of a double cocoa-nut, some mixed antiquities, partly local, partly Etruscan, partly Roman and Egyptian, and a case of minerals and fossils—such is the inventory and about the scientific order of their contents.

Professor Forbes allowed, however, that several towns in England formed brilliant exceptions to this rule; and during the thirteen years which have elapsed since his lecture was published, it would be unjust to assert that no improvement has taken place.

Every provincial town ought to possess a collection of purely local specimens, and it is to the development of such museums that Professor Forbes looked, more than to anything else, for the future extension of intellectual pursuits throughout the land. Mechanics' clubs and scientific institutions are now so universal, that if the committee or council of each of these clubs were to set apart a small room in their building, or even fit up in their library or reading-room a glass-case for the reception of local specimens, such a collection would very quickly get formed; and not only would it serve to promote the study and love of science amongst the inhabitants of the district in which it is situated, but it would also most materially assist those geologists or antiquaries who may happen to be pursuing some special branch of inquiry, and may therefore be obliged to consult museums in different parts of the country, so as to enable them to compare the productions of one specific locality with those of another.

Thus, in the case of a geologist wishing to study the fossils of some particular district, it is often quite indispensable that he should have a local collection to refer to. The London museums (not excepting even the British Museum) cannot be expected to have a complete suit of specimens labelled and arranged, so as to illustrate the fossil remains, mineral wealth, and antiquarian treasures found in some given area; and if the chief town of the district is also deficient in this respect, by what means can the scientific visitor obtain that knowledge which it is necessary, and in many cases indispensable, for him to possess? He may indeed make the town his head-quarters, and thence take expeditions in different directions, and so endeavour, by traversing the country, to find out for himself as much as it is possible for him to do. But if—as it often happens—his time is limited, this is at the very best an unsatisfactory mode of proceeding; and a survey of this description can be neither a perfect nor exhaustive one.

If, on the other hand, a naturalist has a moderately good local museum to consult, he may, with the aid of a map, learn more in one hour, than by spending a fortnight in a succession of tedious, and perhaps expensive peregrinations, for in such a museum he would see specimens found by resident collectors, who have had the opportunity of noting the particulars of every discovery as soon as it is

made, and who are able to watch carefully the progress and results of every fresh excavation, whether it be in quarries, tunnels, cuttings, drains, wells, or foundations for houses; and thus to accumulate, not only a large number of specimens, but also a quantity of valuable data, such as measurements of sections, drawings of contorted rocks, &c., which it would be impossible for any stranger to obtain for himself in a passing visit.

Suppose a tunnel for a railway is in course of formation. Whilst the work is in progress, a local collector has plenty of opportunities for taking measurements of the various strata through which it is cut, and will often find amongst the *débris* rare and valuable specimens. If these are preserved in a local museum, they become in a few years doubly valuable in the estimation of a geologist; for as soon as the tunnel is finished, and the *débris* carried away to form embankments, the place becomes inaccessible, and not another specimen can be obtained from that locality. The geologist will therefore regard those which are deposited in the museum with a double interest—first, on account of their intrinsic value for purposes of reference; and secondly, because they were found in a situation from which it is impossible that any more can be procured.

Another advantage of a local museum is, that it forms a safe depository, not only for photographs or drawings of neighbouring ruins, ancient camps, abbeys, stone crosses, &c., but also for certain kinds of portable antiquities, such as coins, weapons, seals, or pottery, found in the vicinity, which, if rare, choice, and in a good state of preservation, would otherwise get swallowed up in the omnivorous jaws of the British Museum; or, if less valuable, would probably find their way into the hands of individuals (not collectors), who would keep them for a short time as ornaments for the chimney-piece, only to consign them, when their novelty is gone, to the depths of the lumber-room.

In some places, the naturalist will find a private collector possessing a series of local specimens, arranged so as to make them of the greatest use in illustrating the productions of the neighbourhood; and thus in some degree he will be compensated for the loss of a public museum. In other places, he will find in operation the rival interests of both public and private collectors, each striving to outdo the other. Now, geological and mineralogical specimens are generally to be obtained in sufficient numbers to give both parties a chance of rendering their respective collections equally perfect—provided they use equal diligence in making their search; but when these emulative spirits come to deal with antiquarian relics, it becomes a serious question, to whose care unique specimens should be intrusted—which should carry off the spoil—the public museum, or the cabinet of the private collector.

This point was ably discussed in the course of a correspondence on 'Treasure-trove,' carried on in the columns of the *Times* between two well-known antiquaries, Mr T. G. Faussett, Honorary Secretary

to the Kent Archæological Society, and Mr J. Evans. The former laid down that any discouragement to private collections 'is a step in the right direction.' The latter strongly urged that to discourage private collections were to 'do away with the principal promoters of that taste for antiquities to which the existence of the local historical and antiquarian societies is due.' We are, for our part, convinced of the importance of local museums, whether they are public, or whether they belong to private individuals, and it only remains for us to offer one or two simple hints on the formation of such collections.

If a local museum is to be established in a provincial town, or if one already existing is to be rearranged, it is most necessary, if the space is limited, to begin by making, at the very outset, a stringent rule not to accept any specimen unless it is found within a certain area or district, of which the town should be the centre. This area may be great or small according to circumstances, but for a town, a radius of from ten to fifteen miles will generally be found quite sufficient; or that for a collection in a city might be made co-extensive with the county of which it is the capital. In either case, the map published by the Ordnance Survey should be procured, and the exact limits of the district clearly laid down. The map, hung up in the museum, would not only serve the stranger as a guide to the geography of the neighbourhood, but would also shew at a glance the boundary-line, beyond which specimens cease to be regarded as local. If the space at command is unlimited, all specimens, local and non-local, may be received; but in order to make the collection of any real value, those which are found within the prescribed area should be placed distinctly apart from all the others; they should be put in separate cases; they should be classed separately, and in every way treated as if they belonged to a different collection.

In the same manner, if an old museum is to be rearranged, it may not be possible, or even expedient, to make a clearance of all the non-local specimens, but the best and most satisfactory plan undoubtedly is to break up the existing arrangement, and begin *de novo*, putting together by themselves all those specimens which have been found in the neighbourhood. This apparently simple operation will, however, be found anything but an easy one, if the collection has hitherto been arranged according to a scientific system, and especially difficult if the specimens happen to be numbered with consecutive figures, for then this mode implies not only a complete rearrangement, but also the work of putting fresh numbers or labels to every individual specimen, besides making an amended catalogue. In such a case, the simplest thing to do is, to affix to each local specimen either a card or label bearing some conspicuous and distinctive mark to show its local origin. As an illustration of this mode of pointing out particular specimens, I may refer to the plan which is adopted in the public museum at Bern, where the arrangement of minerals is carried on in a continuous series of cases, extending from one end of the gallery to the other; and in these, minerals from all parts of the world are classified according to a scientific system, totally irrespective of their nationality. As a means, however, of calling especial attention to those specimens which have been found in Switzerland, a red cross, the emblem of

the confederate states, is printed in a conspicuous position on their labels.

The other plan I have mentioned—namely, that of entirely separating the local from the non-local specimens, is best exemplified—though, of course, on a much larger scale—by the collection in the Ferdinandeum, or University Museum, at Innsbruck, where special rooms are set apart to contain all the natural productions of the Tyrol; and the rocks, minerals, and fossils of that most interesting district being arranged with special reference to the geology of the region they illustrate, can thus be studied without any interruption being caused by the miscellaneous collections with which the other parts of the building are occupied.

UNCLE INGOT.

'If ever you or yours get five pounds out of me, madam, before I die, I promise you, you shall have five thousand; and I am a man of my word.' So spoke Mr Ingot Beardmore, drysalter and common-councilman of the city of London, to Dorothea Elizabeth, his widowed sister-in-law, who had applied to him for pecuniary succour about three months after the death of his younger brother Isaac, her husband. There were harshness and stubborn determination enough in his reply, but there was no niggard cruelty. Mrs Isaac wanted money, it is true, but only in the sense in which we all want it. She was only poor in comparison with the great wealth of this relative by marriage. Her income was large enough for any ordinary—Mr Ingot said 'legitimate'—purpose, but not sufficient for sending her boy to Eton, and finishing him off at the universities, as it was the maternal wish to do. Mr Ingot hated such genteel intentions; Christ's Hospital had been a fashionable enough school for him, and he had 'finished off' as a clerk at forty pounds a year in that very respectable house of which he was now the senior partner. With the results of that education, as exemplified in himself, he was perfectly satisfied, and if his nephews only turned out half as well, their mother, he thought, might think herself uncommonly lucky. Her family had given themselves airs upon the occasion of her marrying Isaac—'allying herself with commerce,' some of them called it—and Ingot had never forgiven them. He gloried in his own profession, although government had never seen fit to ennoble any member of it, and perhaps all the more upon that account; for he was one of those Radicals who are not 'snobs' at heart, but rather aristocrats. He honestly believed that noblemen and gentlemen were the lower orders, and those who toiled and strove, the upper crust of the human pie. When he was told that the former classes often toiled and strove in their own way as much as the others, he made a gesture of contempt, and 'blew' like an exasperated whale. It was a vulgar sort of retort, of course, but so eminently expressive, that his opponent rarely pursued the subject.

He rather liked his sister-in-law, in spite of her good birth, and would have, doubtless, largely assisted her had she consented to bring up her

children according to his views; but since she preferred to take her own way, he withdrew himself more and more from her society, until they saw nothing at all of one another. He had no intention of leaving his money away from his brother's children; he had much too strong a sense of duty for that; and as for marriage, that was an idea that never entered into his hard old head. He had not made a fool of himself by falling in love in middle age, as Isaac had done (in youth, he had not time for such follies), and it was not likely that at sixty-five he should commit any such imprudence. So his nephews and nieces felt confident of being provided for in the future. In the present, however, as time went on, and the education of both girls and boys grew more expensive, Mrs Isaac's income became greatly straitened. Her own family very much applauded the expensive way in which she was bringing up her children, and especially her independence of spirit with relation to her tradesman brother-in-law, but they never assisted her with a penny. The young gentleman at Cambridge was therefore kept upon very short allowance; and the young ladies, whose beauty was something remarkable, affected white muslin, and wore no meretricious jewellery. Their pin-money was very limited, poor things, and they made their own clothes at home by the help of a sewing-machine. If Uncle Ingot could have seen them thus diligently employed, his heart would perhaps have softened towards them, but, as I have said, they now never got that chance. Julia, the elder, had been but six years old when he had last called at their highly-rented but diminutive habitation in Mayfair, and now she was eighteen, and had never seen him since. Although she had of course grown out of the old man's recollection, she remembered his figure-head, as she wickedly called his rigid features, uncommonly well; and, indeed, nobody who had ever seen it was likely to forget it. His countenance was not so much human as ligneous; and his profile, Nephew Jack had actually seen upon a certain nobbly tree in the time-walk of Clare Hall at Cambridge—much more like than any silhouette ever cut out of black paper. They had laughed at the old gentleman in early days, and snapped their fingers at his churlishness, but it had become no laughing matter now.

That remark of Uncle Ingot's, 'If ever you or yours get five pounds out of me, madam, before I die, I promise you, you shall have five thousand; and I am a man of my word,' had become a very serious sentence, condemning all the family to, if not Poverty, at least very urgent Want. What it meant of course was, that he was resolutely determined to give them nothing. In vain the young ladies worked for Uncle Ingot slippers and book-markers for his birthday, and sent to him their best wishes at Christmas in Rimmel's highly-scented envelopes; in vain Jack sent him a pound of the most excellent snuff that Bacon's emporium could furnish, at the beginning of every term. He always wrote back a civil letter of thanks, in a clear and clerly letter, but there was never any

enclosure. When Mrs Isaac asked him to dinner, he declined in a caustic manner—avowing that he did not feel himself comfortable at the aristocratic tables of the West End—and sent her a pine-apple for the dessert, of his own growing. He had really no ill-feeling towards his relatives, although he kept himself so estranged from them; but I think this sort of conduct tickled the old gentleman's grim sense of humour. If he could have found some legitimate excuse for 'making it up' with his sister-in-law, within the first year or two of their falling out, perhaps he would have been glad to do so; but time had now so widened the breach that it was not to be easily repaired. What he had satirically written when he declined her invitation, had grown to be true: he rarely went into society, and almost never into the company of ladies, the elder portion of whom he considered frivolous and vexatious, and the younger positively dangerous. He had a few old-bachelor friends, however, with whom he kept up a cordial intercourse, and spent with them various festivals of the year as regularly as they came round.

On the 31st of December, for instance, he never omitted to go down to Reading, and 'see the old year out, and the new year in,' in the company of Tom Whaffles, with whom he had worn the yellow stockings in these school-days that had passed away more than half a century ago. Tom and Isaac had been even greater cronies as boys than Tom and Ingot, but the latter did not like Tom the less upon that account: secretly, I think he esteemed him the more highly as a link between himself and that luckless family whose very existence he yet chose to ignore. Mr Whaffles had intimate relations with them still; they came down to stay with him whenever his sister paid him a visit, and could act as their hostess; but this never happened in the last week of the year. Tom was never to speak of them to his old friend—that was not only tacitly understood, but had even been laid down in writing, as the basis of their intimacy.

On the 31st of December last, Mr Ingot Beardmore found himself, as usual, at the Paddington Station, looking for an empty compartment, for his own company had got to be very pleasing to him. Having attained his object, and rolled himself up in the corner of the carriage in several greatcoats, with his feet upon a hot tin, and his hands clothed in thick mittens, and looking altogether like a polar bear who liked to make himself comfortable—when everything was arranged, I say, to the old gentleman's complete satisfaction, who should invade his privacy, just as the train was about to start, and the whistle had sounded, but one of the most bewitching young ladies you ever set eyes on!

'Madam, this carriage is engaged,' growled he, pointing to the umbrella, carpet-bag, and books, which he had distributed upon all the seats, in order to give it that appearance.

'Only engaged to you, I think, sir,' replied the charmer flippantly. 'Happy carriage! I wish I was. Isn't that pretty?'

Mr Beardmore had never had anything half so shocking said to him in all his life, and if the train had not been already set in motion, he would have called upon the guard for help, and left the carriage forthwith. As it was, he could only look at this shameless young person with an expression of the severest reprobation. At the same time, his heart sank within him at the reflection, that the train

was not to stop till he reached his destination—Reading. What indignities might he not have to suffer before he could obtain protection! She was a modest-looking young lady, too, very simply dressed, and her voice was particularly sweet and prepossessing, notwithstanding the very dreadful remarks in which she had indulged. Perhaps she was out of her mind—and at this idea Mr Ingot Beardmore broke out, notwithstanding the low temperature, into a very profuse perspiration.

'Now, what will you give me for a kiss, you old—you old polar bear?' asked the fair stranger playfully as the train flew by Ealing.

'Nothing, madam, nothing; I am astonished at you,' answered Mr Beardmore, looking anxiously round the carriage in the desperate hope of finding one of those newly-patented inventions for affording communication with the guard.

'Well, then, I'll take one, and leave it to your honour,' continued the young lady with a peal of silver laughter; and with that she lightly rose, and before the old gentleman could free himself from his wraps, or ward her off with his muffetees, she had imprinted a kiss upon his horny cheek. Mr Beardmore's breath was so utterly taken away by this assault, that he remained speechless, but his countenance was probably more full of expression than it had ever been in his life. 'O no, I am not mad,' laughed she in reply to it; 'although I have taken a fancy to such a wonderful old creature. Now, come, if I kiss you again, what will you give me?'

'I shall give you in charge to the police, madam, the instant that I arrive at Reading.'

'Give me in charge! What for, you curious piece of antiquity?'

'For an assault, madam; yes, for an assault. Don't you know that you have no right to kiss people without their consent in this manner?'

Here the young lady laughed so violently that the tears came into her eyes.

'Do you suppose, you poor old doting creature, that anybody will ever believe such a story as that? Do you ever use such a thing as a looking-glass, you poor dear? Are you aware how very unprepossessing your appearance is, even when you don't frown, as you are doing now in a manner that is enough to frighten one? You have, of course, a perfect right to your own opinion, but if you suppose the police will agree with you, you will find yourself much mistaken. The idea of anybody wanting to kiss you will reasonably enough appear to them preposterous.'

'What is it you require of me, you wicked creature!' cried the old bachelor in an agony of shame and rage.

'I want payment for my kiss. To a gentleman at your time of life, who scarcely could expect to be so favoured, surely it is worth—what shall I say?—five pounds.—What! not so much? Well, then, here's another for your other cheek.' Like a flash of lightning, she suited the action to her words. 'There, then, five pounds for the two, and I won't take a shilling less. You will have to give it to the poor's-box at the police station, if not to me. For I intend, in case you are obstinate, to complain of your disgraceful conduct to the guard at the first opportunity. I shall give you into custody, sir, as sure as you are alive. You will be put upon your oath, you know, and all you will dare to say will be that I kissed you, and not you me. What "roars of laughter" there will be in court,

and how funny it will all look in the papers!'

Here the young lady began to laugh again, as though she had already read it there. Mr Beardmore's grim sense of humour was, as usual, accompanied by a keen dislike of appearing ridiculous. True, he hated to be imposed upon; still, of the two evils, was it not better to pay five pounds than to be made the laughing-stock of his bachelor friends, who are not the sort of people to commiserate one in a misfortune of this kind?

In short, Mr Ingot Beardmore paid the money. Mr Thomas Whaffles found his guest that evening anything but talkative. There was a select party of the male sex invited to meet him, by whom the rich old dysrhalter was accustomed to be regarded as an oracle; but upon this occasion he had nothing to say; the consciousness of having been 'done,' oppressed him. His lips were tightly sealed; his cheeks were still glowing from the audacious insult that had been put upon them; his fingers clutched the pocket-book in which there was a five-pound note less than there ought to be. But when his host and himself were left alone that night, 'seeing the old year out, and the new year in,' his heart began to thaw under the genial influences of friendship and gin-punch, and he told his late adventure to Tom Whaffles, not without some enjoyment of his own mischance.

'I could really almost forgive the jade,' said he, 'for having taken me in so cleverly. I dare say, however, she makes quite a profession of it; and that half a score of old gentlemen have been coerced before now into ransoming their good name as I did. And yet she was as modest and ladylike looking a girl as ever you saw.'

'Was she anything like this?' inquired Mr Whaffles, producing a photograph.

'Why, that's the very girl!' exclaimed the guest.—'Ha, ha! Tom; so you, too, have been one of her victims, have you? Well, now, this is most extraordinary.'

'Not at all, my dear fellow. I know her very well; and her sister, and her mother, and her brother too. I can introduce you to her if you like. There's not the least harm in her; bless you, she only kissed you for a bit of fun.'

'A bit of fun!' cried Mr Beardmore. 'Why, she got a five-pound note out of me!'

'But she does not mean to keep it, I am very sure. Would you like to see her again? Come, "Yes" or "No"?''

'If she will give me back my money, "Yes."'

'Very well,' returned the host; 'mind, you asked for her yourself; and he rang the bell pretty sharply twice.

'Here she is: it's your niece, Miss Julia. Her mother and sister are now staying under this very roof.'

'Yes, uncle,' said the young lady demurely. 'Here is your five-pound note: please to give me that five thousand which you promised mamma if ever she or hers got five pounds out of you; for you are a man of your word, I know. But what would be better still would be, to let me kiss you once more, in the character of your dutiful niece; and let us all love you as we want to do. It was an audacious stratagem, I admit, but I think you will forgive me—come.'

'There go the church-bells!' cried Tom Whaffles. 'It is the new year, and a fitting time to forget old enmities. Give your Uncle a kiss, child.'

Uncle Ingot made no resistance this time, but

avowed himself fairly conquered; and between ourselves, although he made no 'favourites' among his newly-reconciled relatives, but treated them with equal kindness, I think he always liked Niece Julia best, who had been the cause of healing a quarrel which no one perhaps had regretted more at heart than Uncle Ingot himself.

NOTES ON LIONS.

LIONS appear to be monogamous. The lioness carries her young five months, and has two or three at a birth. According to Jules Gerard, the cubs begin to attack animals, as sheep and goats, that stray into their neighbourhood, as early as from eight to twelve months old. About two years old they are able to strangle a horse or camel, and from this time until maturity (about eight years), he adds, they are truly ruinous neighbours. They kill not only to obtain food, but apparently to learn to kill. The age to which lions attain appears doubtful: Pompey, the lion in the Old Tower Menagerie, reached his seventieth year; and fifty years has been sometimes given as the ordinary limit reached by them; but this, most likely, is over the mark. Dr Livingstone has observed that they appear to suffer from loss of teeth as they advance in years. A great number of these animals would appear to have existed in the earlier ages of man's history, and must have presented an important obstacle to the spread of the human race.

Taking Holy Writ as the earliest record to which we now have access, it is remarkable how often the lion is referred to in a figurative manner by the writers. In the original text, we find various names used to distinguish the lion at different periods of his existence. Thus (according to Dr Kitto), we have *gur*, a lion's whelp, as in Jeremiah li. 38, and Ezekiel xix.; *chephir*, a young lion just leaving his parents, the most destructive period of his existence, see Psalm xci., and Ezekiel xix. 3 and 6; *ari*, a young lion having just paired, as in 2d Samuel xvii. 10, and Numbers xxiii. 24; *sachel*, a mature lion, as in Job iv. 10, Hosea v. 14, and Proverbs xxvi. 13; and *lailah*, a fierce or black lion, as in Job iv. 10, and Proverbs xxx. 30. Regarding the last expression, we may remark, that black lions—that is, those with a blackish muzzle, and black tips to the hairs of the mane—are to this day accounted the most formidable both in North and South Africa.

Lions appear to have been the object of special worship at Leontopolis in ancient Egypt; and in one of the Egyptian bas-reliefs, to which Sir G. Wilkinson assigns an antiquity of three thousand years, some Egyptians are represented hunting with tame lions, much in the style chetahs are used to this day in the Deccan.* If not one of the

animals universally regarded as sacred in ancient Egypt, the lion still seems to have been a universal favourite, for in every possible form of ornament we find the head and claws reproduced in water-spouts, chair-legs, and sword-handles.

M. Gerard has remarked that, in North Africa (besides a considerable destruction of human life), the damage done by carrying off and killing cattle cannot be estimated at a lower figure than three hundred pounds per annum for each lion.

Lions appear to attack game by seizing the flank near the hind-leg, or the throat below the jaw—points which instinct seems quickly to teach dogs of all kinds to assail, when in pursuit of the larger animals. Dr Livingstone, while bearing witness to the enormous strength of the lion, truly wonderful when compared with his size, remarks, however, that all the feats of strength, such as carrying off cattle, that have come under his observation, had been performed by dragging or trailing the carcass along the ground. The tales of lions never devouring game save when killed by themselves, are unfounded. We have ourselves seen a family of lions (they often hunt in families) in the Transvaal territory quarrelling, like a pack of hungry hounds, over the putrid carcass of a horse, which had died of Paardisiké (pleuroneumonia) a few days previously, while the plains around were teeming with those countless herds of migrating game (antelopes and quaggas), of the numbers of which it is so difficult to convey an idea to the fireside traveller.

A point where imagination has wrought wonders is in the matter of the lion's voice. This fancy has been also demolished by Dr Livingstone. 'To talk of the majestic voice of the lion,' he writes, 'is merely so much majestic twaddle. I have never found any one who could fairly distinguish between the roar of the lion and that of the ostrich, although the former appears to proceed more from the chest. To this day,' he adds, 'I am unable to distinguish one from the other, except by knowing that the former roars by night, and the latter by day only.'

Jules Gerard is, however, more enthusiastic in his appreciation of the vocal powers of his favourites. He remarks, that the sound of a lion's voice a league off, appears to an inexperienced observer as if close at hand; and that he has frequently tracked lions at a distance of three leagues (nine miles), by the sound of their voices; he also testifies to a certain musical grandeur in the sound.

Naturalists have generally considered the Asiatic lion as a distinct species from the African, but this appears by no means well decided. There are several varieties of the African lion. The Arabs in North Africa distinguish three—the yellow, the gray, and the black; and M. Gerard states, that while individuals of the two former varieties have been known to roam over immense tracts of country, specimens of the black-maned lion have been found to inhabit one spot for over thirty years. Mr Gordon Cumming, on the other hand, whose opportunities of observing these animals were only second to those of Jules Gerard, states that he

* The ancient Egyptians seem to have been very successful in utilising the *Felina* generally. In several bas-reliefs, fowls are represented accompanied by cats in place of dogs, and in one, an animal, apparently of that kind, is depicted in the act of retrieving. A tame lion may often be still met with in Cairo, though lions in a state of nature are not found nearer, we believe, than Abyssinia in the present day.

is satisfied that the two varieties of South African lion (the *Vaal*, or yellow, and the *Blaauw* or *Zwaart*, or black) are one and the same species at different ages; that their manes invariably become darker as they increase in years; and that the thickness of the coat, and the luxuriance of the mane, appear to depend on the nature of the cover frequented by the animals, being always greater where there is least shelter.

A CITY LYRIC.

My home is the city; to and fro,
I wander o'er it from day to day,
Hearing its myriad pulses play,
Watching its life-waves ebb and flow;
Little I see, and little I know
Of rustling woods or flowery fields;
On the sights and sounds that the city yields,
My heart and my fancy feed and grow.

Out from my casement, narrow and high,
When the summer morn in the east is low,
Over the long streets, row on row,
I love to look with a dreaming eye;
While half of them still in black shadow lie,
And half of them shine like burnished gold,
And only the wreathing smoke outrolled
From the giant chimneys streaks the sky.

Then I think how soon the clangorous beat
Of bells will call to their tasks again
The thousands who labour with hand or with brain;
And I wonder how many the call will meet
In hope and courage, or patience sweet,
Glad hymns silently singing within;
How many with weights of sorrow or sin
Heavily hanging on heart and feet.

Moving on with the moving throng—
A single drop in the roaring stream—
Electrical currents of sympathy seem
To dart through my veins as I hurry along;
Something I feel of the strange wild thrill
The soldier knows in the maddening rush
Of rank on rank as they onward rush,
Heedless of bullet or bristling steel.

Leisurely strolling at close of day,
When duty is done, and the mind is free,
Each passing face is a problem to me;
Stolid or eager, grave or gay,
Young and blooming, or aged and gray;
Solving it right, or solving it wrong,
Pleasantly musing, I saunter along,
Giving to fancy her wilful way.

This one I know by his cheerful air,
And the smiles on his lip that go and come,
Sees before him the light of home,
And loved ones waiting to welcome him there;
This one I know by the cloud of care

That darkens deep on his wrinkled brow,
Has gambled and lost, and is planning the how
Of a luckier move the account to square.

A piano's soft and silvery din
Comes tinkling merrily out on the air,
And I paint to myself a maiden fair
Playfully touching the keys within;
I give her an eye to the stars akin
When eve hath deepened the bright sky-blue,
A cheek of the delicate wild-rose hue,
And a smile that a lover would die to win.

Here at this window are sitting a pair—
Father and mother—for shining between
The head of a little girl is seen,
With a hand of each on her golden hair;
Visions before me float in the air
Of the might have been, and the yet might be,
If *she* had but listened, nay, if *she*
Had a soul as true as her form is fair.

Often again I look out on the street
When the glittering lamps are all alight,
Gemming the skirts of the dark-robed night,
When the only sounds that my hearing greet
Are mysterious murmurs the sense that cheat,
Or the wakeful watchman's heavy footfall
Echoing up from the hollow wall,
As he wearily paces his lonely beat.

And then I think of the aching brow
Cooled on the pillow of peace and rest;
Of lovers the favouring hours have blest
Thinking of kissing and parting now;
Of happy circles all aglow
With the light of the heart that beams from the
eyes;
Of the anxious student in haste to be wise,
Still pondering the page that bewilders him so.

O poets may sing of streams that flow
Braiding their ripples in the sun,
Of shadowy wood, and moorland dun,
Of scented brakes where wild-flowers blow;
Little of these I see or know;
My home is the city—and day or night,
On its sights and sounds, with a strange delight,
My heart and my fancy feed and grow.

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THE SAVAGE AT THE QUARTET.

It has been written of Poetry, as most people are aware, that when only commonplace or ordinary, it is not to be tolerated by gods or men, or publishing establishments; though, as for these last, if Horace had lived in our times, he would scarcely have thought it necessary to mention them, for even good poets do not now a days find favour in their eyes. It has also been said by a great wit concerning Painting, that the worst sort of ochre that can be used in that profession is the Mediocre. But why has nothing been remarked of an equally caustic character respecting the sister Art of Music? Why is every young lady taught to strum on the pianoforte, as though the possession of ten fingers were sufficient for excellence in that accomplishment, notwithstanding the lack of an ear for music? Why do musical folks tremble to go out to dinner, for fear they should be doomed to suffer for it afterwards in the drawing-room of their entertainer at the hands of a young-lady amateur? She is led up, after a conventional resistance which affords no hope, since they are well aware how it will all end, to the piano, like Iphigenia to the sacrifice, only, instead of her suddenly turning into a goat (which would be an unspeakable relief), the sacrifice is fully completed—that is, of the audience. Conversation is made to cease until this inexperienced performer has struggled through some piece totally beyond her powers, and then it is ten to one if some injudicious or malignant person does not remark in that hypocritical tone peculiar to such a request: 'Oh, thank you, Miss Blundertips; we trust you are not going to limit us to one'— And before the man can finish his sentence, she has removed the glove which she had only made a pretence of resuming, and begins again with something worse.

Mr Dickens has been accused of making crude young ladies in some of his novels wield an influence over the rest of his *dramatis personæ*, which it is urged they are not seen to do in real life; but certainly at the pianoforte they are paramount, and all must alike submit to their harmonious (?)

rule. Honest folks who intend to inflict this punishment upon their guests, should acquaint them with the fact when they send their invitations, at the same time enclosing their bill of fare; then persons of taste might strike a balance between the threat and the promise—the infliction and the treat—and decide to accept or refuse accordingly.

It is very unselfish and disinterested in the present writer to suggest this course, for it so happens that he has no ear whatever. Of course, I possess a pair of those singular excrescences, which, although they have been likened to very many pretty things, are certainly held in admiration in inverse proportion to their size; but for musical purposes, I might almost as well be without them. I know a B flat when I see it, but not when I hear it. A whole advertisement column of the *Times* is devoted daily to matters about which I know no more than a native of the Andaman Islands; and, indeed, the last named is much given, I understand, to playing upon the 'tom-tom,' and has so far clearly the advantage of me, for I don't know what the tom-tom is, unless it is a chorus of cats.

What kind of people they are who attend Signor Screechi's *Après-midi Musicales*, I cannot even guess at; nor when they don't go, but stay at home for 'chamber music,' have I any idea what that means, unless it is the only too common domestic fracas popularly known as 'hammer and tongs.' What is a *Matinée Musicale d'Invitation*, and in what does it differ from a simple *matinée*? They sound to me like musical *entrées*, the one with, and the other without the *sauce piquante*. The advertisement of the New Philharmonic Concerts always attracts me very much, no less from its magnificence of diction than from its profound obscurity. The repetition of the word 'fugue,' for example, affords one an agreeable entertainment analogous to that of investigating ciphers—nay, the pursuit is even still more exciting, since, besides the mystery of its meaning, there is the doubt as to its pronunciation also. The frequent appearance of the expression 'Bach' is also very embarrassing,

but I suppose refers to the repetition of the same strain again and again, which is to me so especially abhorrent, both in music and singing—like volunteering an 'encore' which none of the audience has demanded. To-morrow, I perceive, there is this treat awaiting me, if I only choose to take advantage of it. 'The Choral Symphony of Beethoven, the ninth and last which he composed, stands Op. 125 in the catalogue of his works, and was written when the third and last epoch of his style had attained its full maturity.' Now, do musical people talk to *one another* in this gorgeously ridiculous style? Because if they do, the art-critics in painting, who have long enjoyed the reputation of wrapping up the least possible sense in the greatest possible amount of words, have no right to such pre-eminence, but should give way at once to the disciples of music. Compared with either of these classes, I am proud to say that the art-critic in Literature (though misty enough, I grant) assumes the position of a reasonable being.

But let us still further examine this Wonder: 'Beethoven had long cherished the idea [Fancy!] of giving a musical expression to Schiller's *Ode to Joy*—a poem which, in glowing and harmonious numbers, apostrophises Hope and Faith, inculcates a belief in the Good, preaches the doctrine of Universal Brotherhood, and glorifies the beauties of Nature.* Such a poem was just the one to impress Beethoven, and it enjoyed his entire admiration; but whatever may be said of its merits, its greatest triumph was that of having originated one of the finest inspirations of the human mind.' If musical folks put these sort of things in their advertisements, what do they put in their works themselves? For the small sum of one shilling I can go to-night and listen, it seems, 'to one of the finest inspirations of the human mind,' and yet, I know I should come away no better than I went, and probably with a headache. I should not be aware where this extraordinary performance commenced, nor where it ended, nor when it was going on, although I think if they ventured upon Bach (as they insist upon spelling it), I should find *that* out, and publicly object to a second infliction. The audience would, in fact, possess an extra sense in which my inferior organisation is totally deficient.

This is really very strange; and I quite admit that it is I who am to be pitied. But a musical friend of mind has lately ventured to go much further than that, and to term me (habitually) 'the Savage.' Now this, I thought, was hard, inasmuch as I have always acknowledged my imperfection, and put it out of my power to insult a musical performance through want of appreciation, by the simple expedient of never attending one. Instead of being touched, however, by this humility of mind, my friend Fidelle (as I will call him, for he is faithful, and also plays the violin) was enraged at it: he informed me that as no order of human intelligence was so low that it could not be elevated, so no ears were so dull but that the divine mystery of music might be made to steal into them sooner or later; it was as much my duty, he said, to cultivate this art, in which I was so far behind, as for a mute to take advantage of the opportunities afforded by a deaf and dumb asylum; nay, he addressed me from even a loftier elevation, as

though I were a benighted heathen, and besought me to let him be the Missionary who should introduce me to the Great Harmonies of Art. As the offer comprehended an invitation to dinner, or other festive entertainment, upon every occasion when I was to be thus instructed, I permitted myself, without much reluctance, to be persuaded. I accompanied my Mentor to the 'Monday Popular Concerts,' not the least singular peculiarity of which is, that they sometimes take place on Saturday afternoons: I heard Herr Joachim 'lead' in Mozart's quintet in C minor, 'the first movement of which is' (I was informed) 'its author's *capo d'opera* in chamber music;' an assertion I am not prepared to dispute. Then followed a *chaconne*, 'executed,' said a critic on my left, whose head seemed mechanically contrived for keeping time, 'with genial humour;' although I confess I did not see the joke. Finally, there was an *adagio*, that I was given to understand was 'one of the grandest and most pathetic slow movements in existence,' but which was succeeded by another one even slower, and executed by the entire strength of the audience—ebbing out of St James's Hall. It was an example, I could not help remarking, of the *moto continuo prestissimo*, which I should not forget in a hurry.

This observation, as savouring somewhat of flippancy, and a mistake which I fell into regarding the name of one of the performers, which, notwithstanding his world-wide reputation, I had never so much as heard of before, combined to irritate my preceptor.

'If you call Piatti *Pianetti* again,' said Fidelle with severity, 'you shall have no oysters for supper;' and he made me carry home a half-yearly volume of the *Tonic Sol Fa Reporter*, by way of imposition. That is a very pleasant and interesting magazine, I have no doubt, to those who can understand it; but it is a little obscure and technical. From what I could gather, it seems to set before its readers, as the object most to be aspired after by the human mind, the position of a 'Certificated Solfaist.' If it does not involve any surgical operation, I should like to be that myself; but I have my apprehensions.

My education went on without much visible good result, but my tutor was hopeful still. I never, it is true, evinced any unseemly prejudice in favour of one piece of music over another; but where any very broad difference existed between particular tones (if one had the cymbals, for instance, and the other hadn't), I was able to detect it. Whenever I heard the drum, too, I rarely failed to cry out: 'That's a march,' which pleased Fidelle very much, and particularly when I happened to be right. Moreover, under the influence of melody, I very often went to sleep, which he said was a good sign. It shewed that there was at least no active antagonism to music in my unfortunate constitution. This favourable symptom in my case turned out, however, to be the ruin of my musical prospects as well as (almost) those of my preceptor himself. Fidelle, I should have told you, is a member of that select and fashionable musical society which goes by the name of the *Wandering Minstrels*, a sort of glorified *Ethiopian Serenaders*, without, however, the charming 'Bones,' whom I humbly consider to be at the very summit of the musical profession, and to be far the best worth hearing of any instrumental performer within my now considerable

* All this is clearly a trespass upon the domain of the art-critic of literature.

experience. Also, they make the very great mistake of not blacking their hands and faces. However, they are an aristocratic institution, and my Fidelle (who has the instincts of an Englishman, I hope) cleaves to them fondly; drives miles and miles to take his part in their performances; and willingly accompanies them when they make those tours of charity in the provinces which do them so much credit. All honour to the opheicleide which can raise the wind for the Widow and the Fatherless; blest be the catgut that scrapes sovereigns—with gentle violence—out of the pockets of rich men to feed the poor!

When my friend and patron observed one morning: 'I tell you *what*, Man Friday' [because I was a Savage, you see], 'I'll take you to the *Wandering Minstrels* this very evening,' I knew that I ought to feel obliged. 'It's a "smoking concert" to-night,' he continued, 'so that you need not be deprived of that cigar, after which I know you pine even in the very opera-house itself; and there is as much gin and water given to you as you choose to drink. Moreover, there are beautiful books in the room with pictures in them; but for all that, I expect you to listen to the quartet in E flat, which (although I say it you shouldn't say it, since I play the first fiddle) will be well worthy of the attention of—everybody, in short, above the level of the beasts. It is the only one in which I appear this evening, so you will know when it takes place for certain.'

The Minstrels, though Wandering, have, as everybody knows, a local habitation; a plain but admirably-built concert-hall, the body of which is well filled, on the occasions when smoking is permitted, by gentlemen-guests, some of whom the combined charms of music and tobacco allure for the whole evening, and by others who 'drop in,' after having favoured other entertainments with their presence. On little tables along the walls are arranged bottles of that purest spirit, at the presence of which I have already hinted, and there is plenty of water to mix with it. On standing desks, too, are placed handsome books and portfolios, full of engravings and etchings, to suit the tastes of those who are not wholly given up to music.

Fidelle having introduced me into this elysium, took his own place in the populous orchestra, leaving me in the good care of a *habitué* of the misty scene. This gentleman was full of anecdotes, and had an enviable power of relating them, without appearing to lookers-on to be so much as moving his lips; in fact, I believe people thought it was I who kept up that low but unbroken murmur which permeated the rich torrent of orchestral sound throughout the evening, a suspicion that was only too intensified by what finally occurred.

My neighbour, however, if not exactly cut out for a listener, was very agreeable to me, and seemed to think me quite a character for preferring the drum (next to 'the Bones') above all other musical instruments. I like to see it banged with that mushroom-headed stick, and then the hand applied to the wounded part, as though it were a sentient being, who demanded the promptest reparation; but why people who play the drum should have such dirty hands, the proof of which may be read on the parchment, is altogether beyond my comprehension.

'I should think you were the sort of man who likes the opheicleide,' observed this gentleman

insinuatingly. 'It has so fine a volume of sound, as well as such a very imposing personal appearance. Where it is bad, however, it rather disconcerts the other performers. I remember, in one of the Western States of America, a very respectable theatre which was rendered intolerable to musical folks by a self-willed and tyrannical opheicleide. He had a part-share in the house itself, and therefore could not be turned out of the orchestra; but it was the wish of all who heard him that the breath was finally out of his body, and that he had blown his last. Upon one occasion, a dreadful disturbance broke out in the gallery, and a gentleman, who had given offence to his companions, was about to be precipitated by them, in his shirt-sleeves, into the pit, when suddenly a commanding voice was heard: "Stop, stop: don't waste him, my good friends; but drop him on the opheicleide." And they did it.'

Here more than one indignant cry of 'Silence, silence!' misdirected to poor me (who was merely laughing), compelled me to remove myself from the dangerous vicinity of this *raconteur*, and to transfer my attention to a portfolio of engravings. I felt that, standing up, it would be almost impossible for me to go to sleep, an exposition of which I found, as usual, stealing upon me under the harmonious influence of catgut; while even now I saw by Fidelle's face that the quartet in E flat was about to begin, to which he had so especially directed my attention. It did begin forthwith; with such an 'exquisite movement'—uncommonly like the fluttering of a bird—that I did not venture to interrupt it by turning over the immense pages before me, but remained, like one spell-bound, staring hard at a particularly uninteresting picture of Milan Cathedral; architecture, says somebody, is 'frozen music,' and to one who does not care for music, even when unfrozen, it is not an attraction. My mind wandered from it and the quartet to other scenes: it revisited the haunts of my boyhood, and recalled those days when I used to execute *fantasias* myself with a bit of brown paper and a small-tooth comb. A terrible apprehension that I was falling asleep overshadowed me dimly, and yet I had no power to rouse myself; I thought it was Christmas Day, and that I was home for the holidays, and in the family pew at afternoon service, after eating to repletion of roast-beef and Yorkshire pudding; I heard my uncle the clergyman 'droning, droning' like a black bumble-bee, and I knew that I, his nephew, would presently fall off my seat, and carry the family Bible with me, the position of which upon the slanting desk without a ledge, was always a great source of anxiety. With a great effort, I opened my eyes, and recognised the whole position; beheld Fidelle working away at his violin as though his life depended upon it; clearly remembered that the quartet—no, the quarto; was it a book or only a portfolio? (Here my eyelids slowly closed.) What a curious expression was that employed by the *Pandects* of Aristophanes, 'a minister without a port'—I suppose I had put my hands out to assure myself that the thing was there, but all of a sudden, there was a most hideous crash. Something fell upon me—it seemed like the roof of the building—which struck a thousand sparks out of my eyes. . . . I knew that it would be best to shut my eyes, and pretend to be dead, until they got me home; I did not dare meet the gaze of my injured Fidelle.

As a matter of fact, however, I had suffered very little harm. On the other hand, I had pulled down a range of standing desks with their giant burdens; broke thirteen bottles of gin; and made such a termination to the quartet in E flat (Op. 44) as Mendelssohn never imagined in a nightmare.

W A T E R - S P O U T S.

FERDINAND COLON, the son of Christopher Columbus, reports that among other terrors which assailed the ships in a gale off the Zorobaro Islands, 'which are near the confines of Nueva Carthago and the province of Veragua,' there was a water-spout so dangerous, that if it had not been dispersed by saying the gospel of St John, they had certainly been sunk.

This recourse to the gospel of St John seems to imply a belief in Colon that water-spouts were an invention of the devil. It is not strange that he should have thought so; for though it must be supposed that he had seen or heard of these meteors in European waters, yet he probably had not seen them of so great size, or under the peculiarly trying circumstances in which this one appeared to him. The sight, the whir, the danger with which its presence was fraught to the ships, were calculated to strike terror into the hearts even of brave men, unaccustomed to navigate these seas, and not as yet quite sure they were not guilty of impiety by thrusting themselves into a region of the world which had hitherto been hidden from the sight of Europe. Even now, ignorant people who know not what water-spouts are, and know not how to avoid the peril, get frightened at the enemy risen from the deep which threatens to overwhelm them.

The term 'water-spout' is a misnomer if it be intended to describe the phenomenon as something which has a distinctive origin. It is correct only if it be intended to describe the effect which a cause operating equally on land as at sea produces, when the object upon which it happens to work is water. A more accurate title would be air-spout, for this which so forcibly impressed Ferdinand Colon, and was dispersed by means so singular, was nothing else than a revolving column of air—a small whirlwind—of the same family with those meteors seen in deserts, and known as sand-spouts, and which in India are called, *par excellence*, 'devils.' Water-spouts, sand-spouts, 'devils,' are but specific names by which different members of the class 'whirlwind' are known. They have a common origin, but display themselves in distinctly different ways. They are not under the same law as the greatest of whirlwinds, the cyclones and the hurricanes, for they do not always revolve in the same direction, but they partake of their character so far as to exhibit the same inclination to travel with the wind at the wind's velocity, and over a very much smaller space to work with equal fury, shewing in the rapidity of their own internal gyrations, and in the damage they inflict, that 'though they be but little, they are fierce.'

The eddies which are frequently seen whirling round leaves or dust gathered from the roads in this country, are akin to those which draw up water, though it is suggested that in these the elevation of the leaves and dust is due to an operation purely mechanical; whereas in the larger manifestation of the same influence, the friction caused by the rubbing together of many particles of air in rapid revolution evolves an electrical

power which lends its aid to heighten the effect of the cause which has set it in motion.

It was largely maintained at one time, that electricity was solely responsible for water-spouts; and an experiment which is easily tried, gave countenance, if it did not give rise to the supposition. Dr Bonzano of New Orleans gives the directions for the experiment. They, and his remarks upon the experiment, are as follow: 'From the conductor of an electrical machine, suspend by a wire or chain a small metallic ball—one of wood covered with tinfoil—and under the ball place a rather wide metallic basin, containing some oil of turpentine, at the distance of about three-quarters of an inch. If the handle of the machine be now turned slowly, the liquid in the basin will begin to move in different directions, and form whirlpools. As the electricity on the conductor accumulates, the troubled liquid will elevate itself in the centre, and at last become attached to the ball. Draw off the electricity from the conductor to let the liquid resume its position: a portion of the turpentine. Turn the handle again very slowly, and observe now the few drops adhering to the ball assume a conical shape, with the apex downward, while the liquid under it assumes also a conical shape, the apex upward, until both meet. As the liquid does not accumulate on the ball, there must necessarily be as great a current downward as upward, giving the column of liquid a rapid circular motion, which continues until the electricity from the conductor is nearly all discharged silently, or until it is discharged by a spark descending into the liquid. The same phenomena take place with oil or water. Using the latter liquid, the ball must be brought much nearer, or a much greater quantity of electricity is necessary to raise it.

'If in this experiment we let the ball swing to and fro, the little water-spout will travel over its miniature sea, carrying its whirlpools along with it. When it breaks up, a portion of the liquid, and with it anything it may contain, remains attached to the ball. The fish, seeds, leaves, &c. that have fallen to the earth in rain-squalls, may have owed their elevation to the clouds to the same cause that attaches a few drops of the liquid, with its particles of impurities, to the ball.'

But while it is undoubtedly true that the electrical condition of the air is disturbed by the tremendous mechanical action which is set up, so that it even vents itself in the shape of 'balls of fire,' 'flashes of light,' &c., which have been observed to accompany water-spouts; and while it is quite possible that some of the effect produced may be ascribed to electricity acting upon the objects drawn up, in the same fashion that the electricity in the experiment acts upon the water in the cup; it is now generally believed that the electrical display is rather accidental than otherwise, an incident growing out of a cause independent of it—certainly not the *primum mobile* which may be said to cause the water-spout. The cause of that is one with the cause which in a smaller sphere produces the leaf-whirling eddy, and which is a mechanical, not an electrical one.

The following account of a water-spout—*e uno diece omnes*—seen by Captain Beechey, R.N., off Clermont-Tonnerre, one of the islands in the Dangerous Archipelago, latitude nineteen degrees south, longitude one hundred and thirty-seven degrees west, is taken from Sir William Reid's *Law of Storms*:

'While we were off Clermont-Tonnerre, we had a narrow escape from a water-spout of more than ordinary size. It approached us amidst heavy rain, thunder, and lightning, and was not seen until it was very near to the ship. As soon as we were within its influence, a gust of wind obliged us to take in every sail; and the topsails, which could not be furled in time, were in danger of splitting. The wind blew with great violence, momentarily changing its direction, as if it were sweeping round in short spirals: the rain, which fell in torrents, was also precipitated in curves, with short intervals of cessation. Amidst this thick shower, the water-spout was discovered, extending in a tapering form, from a dense stratum of cloud to within thirty feet of the water, where it was hid by the foam of the sea being whirled upwards by a tremendous gyration. It changed its direction after it was first seen, and threatened to pass over the ship; but being diverted from its course by a heavy gust of wind, it gradually receded. On the dispersion of this magnificent phenomenon, we observed the column to diminish gradually, and at length to retire to the cloud from whence it had descended, in an undulating form. . . . On the present occasion, a ball of fire was observed to be precipitated into the sea, and one of the boats, which was away from the ship, was so surrounded by lightning, that Lieutenant Belcher thought it advisable to get rid of the anchor by hanging it some fathoms under water, and to cover the seamen's muskets.'

Many times, water-spouts come and go without any of the violent accompaniments above described; indeed, they are often seen on calmest days and in lovely weather, when there is no indication of anything like a storm. But Captain Beechey's account is true of some; and, divested of its stormy features, is substantially correct of all water-spouts. Such being a description, what is the cause of them?

Now, it seems that, by reason of the equal distribution of the atmosphere about the surface of the earth, no violent movement in it can take place except by means of a vortex or whirlwind; and to the continuance of any vortex in action, it is necessary that there should be an external propelling force, and a constant spiral discharge from that extremity of its axis towards which is the tendency of motion. In the case of the water-spout, these conditions are fulfilled. A whirlwind is caused by an operation which will be mentioned presently. There is an external propelling force in the pressure of the surrounding atmosphere upon all sides of the whirling column; and the constant spiral discharge towards the upper extremity is witnessed by the suction drawing up from below, by which the sea-spray is hurled into the broad area of the whirl, to be flung down again in the shape of briny rain.

The cause of the vortex, which is the first thing needful for the existence of a water-spout, is to be found in the conflict which goes on between two strata of air—one warm, lying on the surface of the earth, and the other cold, lying in the layer above it. They could not mingle if theirs was merely the case of a stratum of cold wind just overlying a stratum of warm air; if the line of stratification were clearly and evenly marked, there would not be anything to suggest a mingling of the two. But if any inequality existed in the top and bottom of the two strata respectively, if an entrance

were given to the cold air, so that it could disturb the repose of its under-lie, then there would be that beginning of a winding in and out of particles of air, which the weight of the surrounding atmosphere and the tendency of the particles themselves would combine to make a circular motion. The external pressure alone would not produce rotation, but the upward movement of the warm air into the region of the cold wind having commenced, in, as it would be, a spiral form, the particles near the exterior of the column yield at a little more than a right angle, to the external pressure, in their spirally approximating course towards the rarefied centre; so that the circular form first taken by the spout, yield as it may to the onward velocity of the wind prevailing at the time, and liable as it is to sway about, or wither under the pressure put upon it, is retained until its decease—for the external pressure having fitted in, as it were, to the outsides of the whirl, will not suffer it to change its shape, though it may force it to change its course. Here, then, is the vortex, revolving at a rate on its inmost round, sometimes ninety miles an hour.

The spiral discharge, which is also an essential of a water-spout, is thus accounted for. The air at the upper extremity of the whirling column, owing to its elevation, is rarer than that at the base; and the column itself, especially in its central portion, is mechanically rarefied by the centrifugal effect of its own whirling motion; so that there is a sort of rarefied chimney into which the denser air at the base of the column is continually forced by the pressure of the surrounding atmosphere; not to ascend in a separate current, and be discharged at the top, as in a chimney, but entering into the organisation of the vortex to supply the place of air gone before, which, winding inwards and upwards, has been discharged from the upper extremity; just in the same way that the tops of a whirl of a revolving eddy in water, having passed through each section of the eddy, beginning at the smallest, merges again in the surrounding water, when the force which set it in motion has spent itself, or rather when it has got beyond the influence of that force. So, also, of the breaking-off of smoke-wreaths from the top, as is seen in the peculiar wreath of smoke, apparent when a gun has been greased at the muzzle, and known as the 'gunner's ring;' or in the curl which ascends from the bowl of a tobacco-pipe when the breath of the smoker is sent down the stem.

It is through the action of this vortex that the sea-water is forced up with a force that at times is truly terrific, and flung down again in huge gouts, like those which fly through the air during a hurricane at sea, and which are nothing but the tops of the waves cut off, whirled about in the air and violently restored to the place whence they came. It is a common notion that water-spouts are among the agencies by which a supply of water is obtained for the clouds to throw down again in the shape of rain; that the water taken out of the sea by them is kept up in the clouds till it can be kept no longer, and is then precipitated as rain.

But this notion is erroneous; for not only, if it were true, would rain-water be salt, there being no suggestion that the salt is got rid of in any way, but it becomes necessary to suppose that the water, carried up through a medium of warm air by sheer force, finds a *locus standi* in a medium colder than the one below; so cold, indeed, that it condenses

the particles of moisture which are floating about in the heated atmosphere, and throws them down in the form of rain. Rain cannot exist in the clouds otherwise than in a vaporised state, and when it is precipitated, the fall is due to the action of the condensing higher stratum upon the floating moisture held in suspension by the lower one. The sea-water in a water-spout is taken up bodily, without changing its character. Whether in the form of spray or of compact water, it is still the same, and in both these shapes it is taken up into the clouds, whence it is once more flung down to rejoin its companion waters, but in a sluicing deluge, lifted up, and then suffered to fall—never in the shape either of dew or rain. So long as the whirling column of air comes low enough to bear upon the surface of the water, so long will water continue to be sucked in and drawn up; but when, having passed through the different sections of the mighty revolving tube, the water reaches the top, and passes beyond the whirlwind's influence—or when the impulses which set the column in motion have ceased to operate, then the water rapt from below, with whatever it may hold, falls to its former place through the force of gravitation. It is of course quite possible that the winds, which are known to carry up dust, seeds, and other light matters to a great height, and then to transport them to great distances—as the wind which received the mass of ashes thrown up by the Souffrière of St Vincent in 1812, and carried it over and contrary to the trade-wind, to Barbadoes, seventy-five miles off—and the wind which carries dust away from the valley of the Amazon, many hundreds of miles, to deposit it at the Cape de Verdes, and even on the southern shores of Europe—it is quite possible that such winds could hold in confinement a body of water for some considerable time. But to do so, they must be blowing far and continuously at such a rate as to overcome the tendency downwards of the water, which has a specific gravity so much greater than either the wind or the light articles just mentioned as being borne by it. As soon as any counter-current of air should be met, a wind-conflict of any sort be commenced, or from any cause the suspending power of the wind be withdrawn, down would come the imprisoned water in one mighty splash, and, of course, as salt-water, not as fresh-water rain.

It has been found that, at different times and places which have been noted when practicable, showers of fishes, crabs, dwellers in the ocean of some kind or other, have fallen. Such unusual occurrences are only to be explained through the agency of water-spouts, which have sucked the creatures up, perhaps from a great depth—for it is not known how far below the surface the ocean is affected by the whirlwind—and carried them off with the water in which they swam. Sometimes the fish have been very numerous, at other times few; and in one case a single fish fell on board the *Princess Charlotte*, in Toulon harbour, just after she had been struck by a water-spout, and thoroughly drenched.

In India, these falls of fishes are by no means rare. The list of authenticated cases is a large one, and some curious facts are recorded. In America, small eels two and a half inches long have been found, which fell from the clouds; and Humboldt reports the fall of many fish in the southern part of that continent, although, for special reasons, he attributes their upheaval to volcanic causes.

There are several well-attested cases recorded as having happened in England, one in 1666, when 'about a bushel' of small whittings, sprats, and smelts, the size of a man's little-finger, fell into a field near which there were not any fishponds, during the course of a violent storm. In 1833, at Lake Gwynant, in the county of Caernarvon, 'a servant woman was engaged in washing a pail at the edge of the lake, and a number of children were with her. While she was thus employed (the time was about eight o'clock in the evening), she was astonished by a shower of small fishes, which fell upon her and about her, partly into the lake and partly upon the land. They resembled herrings, but were much smaller. The children picked many of them up, and threw them into the lake. A heavy shower of rain had preceded the descent of these fishes, and the day following them was much thunder, and very much rain indeed.'

The size of the fish varies very much in the different accounts. In some cases, they are reported to be 'about the size of small gudgeon;' 'a little longer than a man's hand;' 'of the size of a man's little-finger;' and in one case it is said that fish a cubit in length, and weighing three pounds, fell from the clouds. In some instances, they were alive, in others, putrid and headless.

Besides these phenomena, there are to be mentioned, in connection with whirlwinds, the sand-spouts which are so much dreaded by travellers who are exposed to them. These proceed from the same causes as the water-spouts, and merely exhibit the different effect of a like whirl acting upon a different substance. Bruce saw them in Nubia—on one occasion eleven of them all at once. He speaks of them as 'pillars of sand at different distances, at times moving with great celerity, at others stalking on with a majestic slowness. . . . The tops often separated from the bodies; and these once disjoined, dispersed in the air, and did not appear more. Sometimes they were broken near the middle, as if struck with a large cannon-shot.' Bruce says they were 'one of the most magnificent sights in the world.'

The whirlwinds which, under certain circumstances, produce the results above mentioned, are not unfrequently seen far above the surface of the water, to which perhaps they never attain. They are distinguishable from the adjacent clouds by their peculiar funnel-shape, terminating downwards in a wavy stem. They are darker or lighter in colour according to the amount of moisture they contain, and to the degree of hostility to which the warm stratum has been roused against its overlying enemy of a colder temperature. If the action between these two be very great, there will be that dark convoluted appearance so commonly seen in the thunder-storm, both in the whirlwind and the adjacent clouds. It has been known that a ship becalmed, lying with her sails all loose and flapping, has been suddenly approached by one of these whirling air-spouts, which has left her *in statu quo* as regarded her deck, but twisted off and carried away some of the upper gear. It had not descended low enough to get to work on the water, though the violence with which the flag-end of the stem acted upon the rigging shewed what would have been the result of contact with the sea.

It was at one time thought that water-spouts partook of the nature of hurricanes, or, at all events, obeyed the same laws of gyration and progress. It is now clearly shewn that, as they have different

causes, so are they under different orders of revolution. In the northern hemisphere, a revolving storm whirls in a direction contrary to that in which the hands of a clock move; in the southern hemisphere, the rotation coincides with the movement of the hands. Now, in the case reported by Captain Beechey, off Clermont-Tonnerre, that is to say, in the nineteenth degree of south latitude, the gyrations of the water-spout were in a direction *contrary* to the hands of a watch. There were special circumstances which caused Captain Beechey to observe the direction in which the column revolved; and he found that it was not in accordance with the law which regulates hurricanes in the southern hemisphere. Other observations made, both north and south of the equator, go to prove that the circular movement of water-spouts is very irregular—sometimes going in one direction, sometimes in the opposite one, in the same hemisphere. So far as regards the onward progress of them, that is regulated by the same force which controls the cyclones. Both alike advance before the wind in whatever direction that may be blowing. But except that, in one sense, the origin of the two phenomena may be identified, seeing that both are due to a disturbance in the equilibrium of the air, through the hostile influences of warm and cold currents, cyclones and water-spouts have nothing in common.

Don Ferdinand Colon says that the water-spout he encountered was dispersed by their repeating the gospel of St John; and we are prone, perhaps, to smile at him therefor. But while we know more than he knew about the nature of these things, and are, through experience and much inquiry, enabled to avoid them, if we cannot disperse them, we should remember that he had warrant for his method in the stilling of the storm on the sea of Galilee; and that with all our knowledge—such as it is—we are as much dependent for our safety, in the presence of these and all other perils of the sea, as he was for his, on the merciful and faith-loving Lord, who commanded even the winds and sea, and they obeyed Him.

MIRK ABBEY.

CHAPTER XXVIII.—THE PARTIE QUARRÉ.

As Walter had predicted, my Lady did not return to Mirk by the evening train, and scarcely under any circumstances could her absence have been more keenly felt. The four young folks at home were by no means so socially comfortable as a *partie quarré* is proverbially said to be. They felt themselves embarrassed even when all together; but when the couples were left alone, the gentlemen over the dessert, and the ladies in the drawing-room, their position was tenfold more awkward. If they had not been so nearly connected, the one might have taken refuge in conversation about the weather or politics, and the other in books or bonnet-shapes; but one of the many disadvantages of near relationship is, that you are cut off from all havens of that sort. The device is too transparent to be adopted or acquiesced in—each was conscious that the other was thinking of all sorts of unpleasant things, and wishing his companion at Jericho—or York at least. The temperature was so mild that there was not even a fire to poke.

'You remember this claret, Walter, I dare say. 'Yes; did not our father reckon it the next best in his cellar to that of the Comet year?' &c. &c.

But it struck them both that an absence of a few days from the Abbey was not likely to produce forgetfulness upon this particular point more than upon any other. Sir Richard did not venture to propose a cigar in the smoking-room; they sat on either side of the empty grate making a pretence of enjoying their wine (which might have been ginger-beer, for any gratification it afforded them) and racking their brains for something to say. At last Walter blurted out with a great show of frankness: 'Richard, you were quite right about that fellow Derrick; I wish I had taken your view of the man; he has let me in for a good deal of money this Derby.'

'I am sorry for that,' returned the other, with genuine pleasure. 'Yes, I knew he was a bad lot. I hope, however, he has now left Mirk for good and all.'

'No; he'll come back after Mary Forest, I have no doubt; and I am afraid I was partly to blame in helping him in that quarter. But he knows what I think of him now.'

'I am glad of it,' said the baronet dryly.

'Nice, conciliating, agreeable companion this is, soliloquised Walter: 'I think I see myself making any second admission of having been wrong when he was right.' His self-humiliation, however, had not been altogether without an object.

'Yes; I lost a considerable sum—that is, considerable for me—through this gentleman from Cariboo,' continued the captain. 'It is all in train for being settled—I am not going to ask you, Richard, for another shilling. I am sure you have been already extremely generous—very much so. But the money can't be paid for a few months, and there is one rascal—an infernal Jew fellow—who, instead of replying to my letter, offering him very handsome terms, I am sure, has had the impertinence, I see, to write to mamma.'

'A Jew fellow write to my mother!' exclaimed Sir Richard, with an indignant emphasis upon the personal pronoun.

'I am afraid so. I am almost sure I recognise his horrid handwriting upon this envelope.'

He took down one of several letters upon the mantel-piece that had arrived that morning from the mistress of the house, and were awaiting his return.

'You see he knows I'm under age, and he thinks to frighten one's people into immediate payment by threatening all sorts of things which he cannot really put into effect, but which will alarm mamma very much indeed. It's a common trick.'

'Oh, indeed; I am not acquainted with the ways of such people myself. And what is it you propose to do, Walter?'

'Well, I don't think my mother should see the letter at all. He is not a sort of person—the beggar, you see, spells "Abbey" without an *e*—for a lady to have anything to do with.'

'Nor a gentleman either, as I should think observed the baronet severely. 'But I do not perceive how we can prevent this mischief. You cannot open the letter, nor destroy it, of course.'

'No, of course not,' assented Walter, though with the air of a person who had only been very recently convinced of the impossibility.

Sir Richard took the objectionable missive

between his finger and thumb. *To the Honorable Lady Lisgard, Mirk Abby, Dalwynch.*

What a deal of trouble this fellow Walter was causing! Of course, one did not wish one's brother any harm, but what a nice thing it would be if one could get him some appointment in the Colonies. New Zealand was said to be very salubrious, and had an excellently conducted church establishment: the last mail, too, had brought home (for the eleventh time) the joyful news that the Maories were finally subjugated.

'A perfect savage,' observed Walter, with reference to Mr Moss Welcher Abrahams.

'And yet with some good points,' argued the baronet, his thoughts still lingering in the antipodes.

'I'm hanged if I ever heard of them, then,' replied his brother with irritation. 'He's a black-leg and a usurer. I'd never have bet with such an infernal scoundrel, only that he offered me half a point more than the odds.'

'Ah,' returned Sir Richard, with all the expressiveness that is attributed to the 'Ugh' of the North American Indian. 'Suppose we join the ladies.'

I do not pretend to narrate how Rose and Letty had passed their time since dinner. No grown-up male—with the exception, perhaps, of Mr Anthony Trollope, whom I have heard ladies say has actually described the thing—can picture the mysteries that take place in the drawing-room before the gentlemen come in. Do they tell stories, I wonder, like the folks in the dining-room? Now and then something incidentally crops up which induces me to think they do; but there is no absolute proof. When I was a very little boy, and there chanced to be a dinner-party at home, after having had my half-glass of wine—'up to the cut,' I remember, was the niggardly phrase—it was my invariable custom to leave the dining-room when the ladies did; and well I recollect how my elder brother used playfully to flick my unprotected legs with his dinner-napkin, as I closed the petticoated procession. But memory often retains what is least worth keeping, and loses that which is truly valuable. If I had only known that it would be my future mission to write stories, I should doubtless have not so neglected my opportunities in the drawing-room. But at that time I looked forward to be a merchant engaged in the diamond business, and realising thousands of purses of sequins by traffic with the natives of Bagdad and Basorah. Indeed, upon these very after-dinner occasions I used to be taken upon somebody's lap, and entertained with anecdotes of that charming profession, the members of which were exposed to no vulgar bankruptcies; but if they escaped from the mighty Roc (which was a bird) and from the loadstone island (which drew all the nails out of their armoyses), were certain to live happy ever afterwards with some beautiful princess, who did not scorn to ally herself with trade. Alas! the tongue is withered now that spoke such magic, and the kind hand that fondled my childish curls is dissolved in dust; and it is like enough that all the rest of the gay company is dead except that little boy. No; I remember nothing of it, except that the older ladies, and especially the married ones, used to herd together, and interchange what I took to be secret and important communications; and that the young ones seemed to get after a while a little tired of one another (notwithstanding that they

were particularly civil and affectionate), and turned expectant glances toward the door.

They could not, however, have been more pleased to see the gentlemen than Rose and Letty were upon that evening in Mirk drawing-room to welcome the two brothers. Much as women are praised for their superior tact, it is my humble opinion that they possess less of it than ourselves. Their gentleness, beauty, and general attractiveness enable them, it is true, to render certain rough places tolerably smooth—nay, some almost impregnable passes very practicable; but considering their great advantages, they often signally fail in a piece of social engineering, the difficulties of which almost any man would have managed to evade. They prefer cutting a tunnel through granite to deviating a hairbreadth from the line they have marked out for themselves. How often has one sat on tenter-hooks, listening to a woman who raises a domestic breeze to storm, when anybody but herself (who has yet been married to the man a score of years) can perceive both drum and cone mast-high in her husband's face and manner; nay, when you, the spectator, have marked half-a-dozen openings—only she will charge with her head down in that foolish manner—by which she could have approached her consort's heart in the course of discussion, and got all she wanted, and yet let him keep his temper. When a *Man* happens to have some feminine gifts, tenderness, grace, beauty—like Walter Lisgard, for instance—what power of pleasing, what avoidance of all subjects of displeasure, he almost always exhibits, notwithstanding his masculine selfishness. It is very possible, indeed, that this young dragon may not have captivated my readers; but that is because it is not possible to convey, by any description, the attributes which make such a man so popular. Men talk of the nameless charm that hangs about some fair one, her unspeakably winning manners, and the grace 'beyond expression' that pervades her being; but the influence of such a charmer is almost entirely confined to the other sex. She cannot compel adoration from her young-lady friends: not solely because she is their successful rival, but partly because she does not possess the art of winning them. She has not the tact to conceal her superiority, to conciliate their prejudices, to win their friendship. Now, Walter Lisgard, who was of course adored by women, was almost as popular with men. There were half-a-dozen or so of people—among whom were Ralph Derrick and Arthur Haldane—who had seen him under circumstances of extreme annoyance, and had been disenchanted of the smiling kindly boy. There was Sir Richard too—but there were reasons enough why Walter should not possess his brother's good-will, and having failed to win it, it was the nature of such a man to be embarrassed in his presence. Dislike, nay even want of appreciation, will often paralyse the most agreeable of our fellow-creatures, and make them duller than those who are at all times equally tedious. But if Walter had been in Rose's place, I think he would have managed to get on better than she did in that *tête-à-tête* with her peccant sister-in-law. No woman can conceal her annoyance from its object, if that be a person of her own sex; she can only be desperately civil.

At all events, husband and brother were received by these two young ladies as though they had been their lovers; and then the tea came up, itself a diversion, which they prolonged to an

inordinate limit. Who is so fortunate that he has never been compelled to Tea against Time! The dinner-hour at the Abbey, however, in consonance with ancient county habits, was a somewhat early one—six o'clock—and there was a considerable amount of evening to be got through. Sir Richard, in these terrible straits, proposed a game at whist; and the four accordingly sat down at the velvet card-table—scarcely ever used at Mirk—the gentlemen to contend for shilling points, and the ladies for postage-stamps. Mr Charles Lamb has informed us that he is inclined to think that there may be such a thing as *sick whist*; and if that admirable humorist had witnessed this particular rubber, he would have had his suspicions confirmed. Poor Walter thought grimly of his last experience in that way with the *Landraile*, and could not help making an estimate of how many cycles of years it would take him, with average luck, to win back the money lost upon that occasion at the present stakes. Immersed in this calculation, he made a series of infamous blunders, for which Letty, who was, of course, his partner, reproved him with that unsparing severity which this delightful science induces even in an angelic partner: it is at the whist-table that the trodden worm will turn with the most energetic writhings. Sir Richard, on the other hand (who scarcely ever ventured upon any finesse except that of Ace, Queen), was put in the highest spirits, and became as offensively triumphant as his chivalric nature would permit. Rose, poor girl, sincerely bewailed her husband's vanishing shillings, of which she knew he had no superfluity, and would have trumped her partner's best card half-a-dozen times over, had she but dared. Altogether, it was the dreariest of domestic evenings.

The morning that followed was not much better; and never did mother receive a sincerer welcome from her offspring than did Lady Lisgard upon her return. The love-light danced in her eyes for a little at their genuine enthusiasm, but it soon died out, and they all observed how tired and worn she looked, how much more white and wan than when she had started from home. If Sir Richard had had the opportunity, I almost think he would have now acted upon his brother's suggestion, and spared his mother the sight of Mr Moss Abrahams' letter. But it was too late. Letty had herself taken possession of it; and when the first greetings were over, and all had had their say about the visitor of the day before, she put it into her mother's hand along with the other missives.

'I don't know who your correspondents may be, dear mamma, but I should recommend one of them to apply to that gentleman who promises in the *Times* newspaper to teach everybody a legible hand for four-and-sixpence; and when he has done that, he might learn a little spelling, such as A, b, ab; b, c, y, by—Abbey.'

'I daresay it will wait till I go up stairs,' said my Lady with a faint smile; and she did not even look at it. Nay, when she had reached her room, and was alone with her maid, although she turned the letter round and round with hurried, anxious fingers, she did not open it even then, but gave it to Mistress Forest, saying piteously: 'I am not sure about the handwriting. Is it his, or no, Mary!'

'It is not his, madam.'

'Thank Heaven for that!' cried my Lady, break-

ing the vulgar, sprawling seal, and rapidly possessing herself of the contents. 'More trouble sighed she. 'And yet, why should I sigh: this is only another reason to add to the budget in your desk for what I am about to do.'

'That is well, dear madam, and bravely said,' answered the waiting-maid. 'It is no use to covet. Sooner or later, the blow must fall: not to-day, then to-morrow. If he does not write to me, my Lady, that he will come himself; must make up our minds for that. He cannot to Coveton, and see my father—which is what he intends to do—without discovering all, and since that must be, the sooner he does so the better. We are now prepared for the worst—everything, in short, except suspense.'

'That is true,' returned my Lady wearily. 'Heaven help us!'

'Amen!' exclaimed Mistress Forest encouragingly; 'and I both hope and believe it will.'

CHAPTER XXIX.—A JOURNEY ON FOOT.

Some men, when crossed or 'put out,' take, like Sir Richard Lisgard, to whistling melodies—surely a very mild and harmless form of irritation. Others rap out a thunder-clap of an oath or two which leaves their firmament as serene as ever. Nothing, again, can calm the wrath of some folk but pedestrian exercise; ghost-wise, they take 'walking,' and gradually their angry passions exude. This last was the case with Mr Ralph Derrick, Mariner and Gold-digger. When deeply annoyed, and some exceptional barrier existed to his throwing the weightiest substance that happened to be at hand at the head of his enemy, or burying some lethal weapon in his vitals, Ralph took to walking like the Wanderer Jew. With the first stage or two, his thoughts were busy with the insult, real or imaginary, which had been put upon him; his teeth were set, his fingers clenched, his brows were corrugated; then he began to swing his loaded stick, not viciously but after the manner of an Irishman at a fair, and eventually that calisthenic exercise, combined with the healthy influence of fresh air, restored him to that normal state of devil-may-care, where persons of charity go so far as to term, in folks like the description, good-humour. Of course, one cannot help pitying this poor fellow, for he is one of those persons who always look much better on paper than in real life, just the reverse of which is the case with the Walter Lisgards; but as a matter of fact, he is not only a 'rough customer' but a very dangerous and reckless man. Because we have seen him behave towards that graceful captain of dragoons in a very generous and high-flown manner, it is not to be supposed that he was always capable of magnanimous actions. This young gentleman had been his pet, and it had suited his mood to spoil him. A man may not only be agreeable to an individual or two, but an excellent father, or a pattern husband, and yet a most offensive fellow-creature to you and to me. But it was certainly hard upon Ralph that the only man for whom he entertained a genuine affection, should have turned out such an ungrateful scamp. The treatment he had lately received at that young man's hands, the knavery of Mr James Withers, and the more than suspected collusion of his late comrade, Mr Blanquette, united to put him out of humour with the world. His previous

opinions, as imported from Cariboo, before he met with Walter, that everybody was more or less of a scoundrel, had met with the amplest confirmation. He was more determined to take his own way than ever, and let them look to it that crossed him.

Bitter, indeed, had been his thoughts as he had been borne along with that rabble rout on foot from Epsom Downs. Deceived by those whom he had trusted, insulted by him whom he had loved, and robbed of three-fourths of that wealth, to which he now ascribed a greater importance than ever, as the *summum bonum*, and indeed the *only* good thing that was worth gaining, he had but stopped in London a sufficient time to pack up his scanty wardrobe, then started off again on foot once more, as we have seen. Disgusted with the Turf, as with all else he had recently had to do with, he was now more than ever bent upon leading a new life—not, indeed, in a penitential sense (although some are so audacious as to aver that it is a kind of mortification), but, in other words, to marry. Mistress Forest was as fond of him, he thought, and with some justice, as any woman was ever likely to be; and he was resolved not to be balked of her by the machinations of Sir Richard Lisgard, or the cajolments of his mother. After the payment of all his bets, he would yet have left a sum that to one in Mary's position would seem considerable; for he could sell *Many Laws*, after his recent performance, for a great deal of money, to the half of which he rather suspected Mr Blanquette would never venture to lay claim. Yes; he would go down to the place where she had told him her father still dwelt, and would dazzle him with such offers as could scarcely fail to induce him to add the weight of his authority to his own proposals; and there being no particular hurry about the matter, and, as I have said, walking being consonant to his feelings when in wrath, Ralph Derrick had taken the road to Coveton on foot.

It was a long distance, and would have involved several days of such travel, under any circumstances, and he did not hurry himself at all. At many a wayside inn, where he stopped to drink, and found the landlord given that way, and to be good company, he stayed for the day and night, and even longer. And often he left the high-road, and took those short-cuts across country which, like 'raw haste,' are generally 'half-sisters to delay.' This was especially the case when he began to draw near the sea. Those who have passed much of their time upon that element (voluntarily), the roar of ocean attracts as the trumpet-blast the *quondam* charger, and mile after mile did Derrick stride along the cliff-top wherever it was practicable, and by the shore, notwithstanding that his indulgence in that fancy doubled his journey. When we are out of humour with our fellow-creatures, the external aspects of nature, even though we be no Poets, have often a special attraction for us; the winds of Spring—since as much has been said of those of Winter—are certainly not so unkind as man's ingratitude, and we bid them blow with a sort of soothing scorn; nor does the blue spring sky bite half so nigh as benefits forgot. It pleased Ralph Derrick to let it do its worst, and, rain or shine, he never sought shelter save when he needed drink or rest; and during this last part of his travel, he obtained them as often at some humble farmhouse as at an inn. The simple folks,

who stared at his great beard, and wondered why he did not shew them what goods he had in his knapsack, like any other pedler, pleased him hugely; and when some newly-soaped and carefully-brushed bashful child would steal into his humble dining-chamber—which was the guidwife's invariable plan of getting her dues settled, since we cannot charge for things, you know (and especially brandy), without a licence—he would take the little creature upon his knee, and give him, or her, his newest shilling, in addition to what was always a liberal settlement of the account. Perhaps he was practising that rôle of Paterfamilias which he hoped to be soon called upon to play. At all events, Ralph was by this time in high spirits; and when he was told that Coveton lay not above a dozen miles ahead of him even by the coast-line, he threw his cudgel into the air, and shouted a wild fragment of a diggers' song, to the consternation of his rustic informant.

His way lay now over a great waste of moorland, elastic to the tread, and over which the wind swept almost as unresisted as on the ocean from whence it came. Here and there, it whistled through a bare thorn, but what few trees there were had hidden themselves in sunken hollows, and stood therein huddled together, with only their shivering tops above the surface. Nothing was to be seen inland save 'a level waste of rounded gray,' broken now and again by a church spire or a scattered hamlet; but the seaward view was very fine. From that moorland height, you looked upon two fair islands, spread like a raised map, beneath, with every hut and quarry distinctly plain, and the small white light-house standing out on its little hill like a child's toy upon its pedestal. How picturesque and sequestered they looked: how like two miniature but independent worlds, to either of which a man who had had enough and to spare of the turmoil of life might retire with some fitting mate, and peacefully end his days. Surely, thought Ralph, he had somewhere seen those two same islands before! As he stood at gaze, his thoughts went wandering over archipelagoes of garden-ground in tropic seas; over rocky islets sawn from iron-bound coasts by the jagged waves; and over mounds of sand, which the ocean had thrust back into the jaws of rivers, and suffered man to call them Land, and dwell there. But these were none of those. As he went on more slowly, searching through the long gallery of his mind for the picture which he knew was there, and half bewildered by the shifting scenes, he was startled by a noise like distant thunder. The sky was almost without a cloud, and the sea, although running high, and dashing with pettish screech against the cliffs, was not so rough but that the fishing-smacks, of which there was quite a fleet in motion, carried all sail; moreover, the thunderous sound was not upon the seaward side, but inland. A few score rapid strides in that direction made its source apparent. An enormous hole, like half-a-dozen gravel-pits in one, but deep as a mine, was gaping there; and at the bottom, whither it had tunneled through years of patient unremitting toil, lay the churning sea. It was a gruesome sight to mark the solid earth—just where a peaceful cornfield met the moorland—thus invaded by its insidious foe, whose horrid pæan seemed to have something of malicious greed as well as exultation in it, as though it lusted to eat the heart of the round world itself away, after the same manner. 'The Devil's Cauldron!' exclaimed

Ralph excitedly, and then looked round him with a half-shudder, as though he had repeated the statement out of deference to a Great Local Authority, rather than initiated it of his own free-will. Yes, such was the name by which the place was known; he felt certain of that fact; but unless in sober seriousness H. S. M. himself had whispered the information, how did he ever come to be aware of it? He had certainly never been there before, in all his life; it was impossible, having once seen it, to have forgotten so abnormal as well as tremendous a scene. True, there are pits and holes in many cliffs a few yards from their edge which reach like shafts in a tunnel down to the sea; but the distance of this place from the shore might be measured by furlongs, and the pit was so large that it almost resembled a land-locked bay. A Cauldron it might well be called, where the black waters were seething and boiling even now, while in storm-time there would be such wild work as no mere witches could raise, but only the Fiend himself, their master.

Did the mad waves, finding themselves thus imprisoned, ever leap up? Yes: now he remembered all. Thirty years ago, last autumn, he had seen those islands once before from shipboard, and had had them in view for a whole day. The wind, which was dead against the vessel, had kept her off and on that dangerous coast, and eventually risen to storm, and sunk her with all on board save him alone. The last time he had seen that little light-house, it had flashed in vain its fiery warning through sheets of blinding foam. The captain had told him, hours before, what sort of shore awaited them, if ever the *North Star* should be driven upon those pitiless cliffs, on which Derrick himself was now standing; and, in particular, he had mentioned the Devil's Cauldron, which was spouting foam yonder, he said, like Leviathan, a quarter of a mile inland over the standing corn. Ralph lay down at full length upon the thymy moor, and peered over the brink of the abyss with earnest gaze, as though he could fathom its dark depths, and mark what lay beneath them. Then rising, with a sigh, he wandered on, no longer with springy tread, until presently the cliff-top became dotted with white verandah houses, looking down upon a little bay, that ran up into the land between steep banks, well clothed with trees and shrubs; whereby he knew that he had come to his journey's end, and that this must needs be Cove-ton.

A WORD FOR SPIDERS.

THERE are few creatures that are looked upon with greater horror, by some people, than spiders. Even a dreadful wasp, or a creature as terrific as an earwig, fails in producing the amount of horror that the proximity of a spider will do. Let the careful housemaid but catch a glimpse of a spider in a room under her charge, and straightway the broom is effectually wielded, and the animal smashed or driven away; its web of course being broken to bits, and itself banished into outer darkness. Such wholesale, and without-trial punishment is usual, and therefore, it seems, must and ought to be inflicted. 'Spiders are cruel insects,' says the public, 'and catch and eat poor flies.'

Now, in the first place, the spider is not, strictly speaking, an insect; he grows from a little spider to a large one, and insects never grow; he should rather, therefore, be termed an animal. The

spiders to which we purpose calling particular attention are the Common Garden Spider (*Epeir diadema*), and the Hunting or Zebra Spider (*Salicisc scenicus*).

About the middle of July, or perhaps earlier, the various shrubs, vine, ivy, &c., will be found covered with a number of small circular webs; in the centre of each, or in some secure retreat among the leaves sits the proprietor of the web. He is at this time very small, his body not being much larger than mustard-seed; yet in spite of his tender years an apparent inexperience, he is an accomplished workman, and skilled in all the art of web-making. Let us now watch him as he makes his web.

Crawling slowly among the leaves, he at length stops for a few seconds, wriggles his body slightly, touches a leaf with his tail, and then spreading out his legs, drops slowly downwards, suspended by a single line of web. He then descends until he finds a suitable footing, when, having examined his new position, and found it agreeable, he gum down the end of the single line of web, and ascends by this hand-over-hand. This first line, the young spider intends to be one of the main guys of his future web; it ought, therefore, to be very strong. The spider, therefore, upon ascending, 'pays out' from his web-bag a second line, which he attaches to the first, and thus strengthens it. Having made fast this second guy, he proceeds crossway travelling sometimes a long distance, and dragging after him his line, until he finds a suitable place to which to attach his second out-line. According to the position that he has selected, so will the spider arrange several or only two or three of these preliminary lines.

Having a foundation upon which to work, the spider next places a series of diagonals, arranged with the accuracy and very much in the position of the spokes of a wheel. These vary in number according to the spider's fancy, but usually consist of from about twenty to thirty, the latter being the commonest average. These 'spokes' of the web are usually gone over two or three times, in order to give them strength, and are bound together at the centre by a complicated network. The spokes are usually about six or eight inches long, thus making the diameter of the web about one foot.

The next proceeding is to complete the network that is, to join these spokes by cross-bars. To do this, the spider commences at the outer diameter, starts from one of the spokes, to which he attaches a web, by means of the last right hind-leg, turning his body slightly, to allow of the line passing freely out of the web-sack. He then proceeds to the next spoke, attaches his web there; and so methodically proceeds onwards, until he narrows his circles, and finishes in the centre. The number of circles traced by the spider's web vary according to the length of the spokes; some webs being formed with only a dozen or so, others possessing thirty or forty. Several webs at present in our garden have over thirty-five circular portions, the exterior being traced round the circumference of a circle, the diameter of which is one foot two inches. Taking the guys into account, as well as the spokes and circular portions, there will be in one web no less than twenty-five yards spread out. When, then, we remember that many of these lines are passed over twice, and during fine weather, that a spider makes a separate web each night, or during early morning Sundays included, we find that nearly two hundred

yards of web are required by the spider per week, in order to supply itself with food.

A spider never repairs its web; it dislikes patch-work, and makes a new web when the old one has done its duty, for there are two reasons for the wear and tear of a web. First, the insects of large size that are caught in the web destroy it by breaking certain portions, and thus making great holes therein. Secondly, a web to be efficient is covered with a gummy substance by the spider, and this serves to hold the insects that fly against the web, their wings being kept firmly fixed thereby. This gum evaporating to a great extent, an old web is not so secure as is one freshly constructed.

Having completed its web to its satisfaction, the spider usually takes up its position in the centre thereof, but not before it has arranged a ladder of web, by which it can conveniently retire from the centre of the web amongst some leaves or into a quiet nook at a short distance. The spider is now on watch; his eight legs are stretched out, and the claws hold each a spoke: should the slightest vibration take place in any part of his web, he gives a smart jerk to the spokes leading to that part, in order to inquire whether anybody is within, for if an insect of any kind has been caught, this jerk will cause it to buzz or struggle, and the spider at once proceeds to grasp it. When a fly or other creature is made prisoner by the web, the spider runs rapidly towards it, and if it be large, such as a daddy-long-legs, a blow-fly, or a creature of equal size, the spider seizes it with his legs, and inserts his powerful nippers in the body, holding the creature in so iron a grasp that all its struggles are useless. It seems as though the spider produced also some peculiar fluid which tends to quiet or destroy the insects it seizes, for a large fly quickly ceases to struggle after being bitten by the spider, whereas the same insect would move about quite cheerfully long after it had received a pin through its body. The fly having almost ceased to struggle, the spider considers that the next step may be taken. Without entirely quitting its prey, it yet cautiously makes use of its nippers, and separates the portions of the web which adhere to the fly, until its victim is held by only two threads. The spider then slowly twists the fly round and round, as it does so, covering it with a broad network of web, until the fly is wrapped up like a mummy. At this part of the proceeding, the spider usually rests a little while, and employs itself in 'picking its teeth,' using its legs and claws for this purpose. It shortly, however, returns to business, separates first one guy, then the other, in the interim attaching the fly to himself by means of a stout line of web. He then runs to the centre of his web, dragging the fly after him, and either commences his meal there, or retreats to a snug corner among the leaves.

The demand made upon the constitution of the spider is, as may be imagined, very great. Twenty-five yards of web is no trifle for a little creature whose body is about one-fifth of an inch in length. Taking the relative sizes of a man and a spider, and from thence obtaining the proportions, we find that for a spider to make twenty-five yards of web from its body, is equivalent to a man having to make nearly five miles of stout thread from his body by means of secretions. We may, therefore, naturally expect that the appetite of a spider and his eating powers are enormous, to enable him to supply the drain thus made upon him.

In order to test what a spider could do in the

way of eating, we arose about daybreak one morning to supply his fine web with a fly. At first, however, the spider did not come from his retreat, so we peeped among the leaves, and there discovered that an earwig had been caught, and was now being feasted on. The spider left the earwig, rolled up the fly, and at once returned to his 'first course.' This was at 5.30 A.M. in September. At 7 A.M., the earwig had been demolished; and the spider, after resting a little while, and probably enjoying a nap, came down for the fly, which he had finished by 9 A.M. A little after 9, we supplied him with a daddy-long-legs, which was eaten by noon. At one o'clock, a blow-fly was greedily seized, and with an appetite apparently no worse for his previous indulgence, he commenced on the blow-fly. During the day and towards the evening, a great many small green flies, or what are popularly termed midges, had been caught in the web. Of these, we counted one hundred and twenty, all dead, and fast prisoners in the spider's net. Soon after dark, provided with a lantern, we went to examine whether the spider was suffering at all from indigestion, or in any other way from his previous meals; instead, however, of being thus affected, he was employed in rolling up together the various little green midges, which he then took to his retreat, and ate; this process he repeated, carrying up the lots in detachments, until the whole web was eaten, for the web and its contents were bundled up together. A slight rest of about an hour, was followed by a most industrious web-making process, and before daybreak, another web was ready to be used in the same way.

Taking the relative size of the spider and of the creatures it ate, and applying this to a man, it would be somewhat as follows: At daybreak, a small alligator was eaten; at 7 A.M., a lamb; at 9 A.M., a young camelopard; at one o'clock, a sheep; and during the night, one hundred and twenty larks.

This, we believe, would be a very fair allowance for one man during twenty-four hours; and could we find one gifted with such an appetite and such digestion, we can readily comprehend how he might spin five miles of web without killing himself, provided he possessed the necessary machinery.

From what we have remarked with reference to the spider's appetite, the fact of his being a very useful creature in our gardens will be evident; the flies, earwigs, gnats, and small insects that he destroys, being almost beyond computation. During one of the close hot days of September 1865, when the insects were very annoying, and were flying about in great numbers, we observed many of the webs quite crowded with them; so just before sunset we counted one of the webs, and found two hundred and ten insects therein. In several others there were above one hundred. In the garden (which was forty yards long by about eight broad), there were about forty-five webs; so that during the day somewhere between five and six thousand small insects were destroyed by the spiders alone.

When the weather is cold or wet, the spiders do not obtain their food so easily, for the insects then remain in secure retreats, and thus avoid the spiders' webs. At such times, spiders become very watchful and hungry, and are wonderfully on the alert, coming down from their corners like tigers, seizing their prey, and giving it no chance of escape. It is very amusing to see the means

adopted by a spider to escape, when he is taken hold of or threatened. When he concludes that danger is near, he drops suddenly from his web or from the hand, holding on by means of a single line of web; if the danger seems to have passed, he then ascends 'hand-over-hand' and with great rapidity, in order to regain his former position; but as he must, by adopting this plan, return to the same spot from which he dropped, he has another card to play on an emergency. First, he drops to a distance of about one or two feet; he then 'pays out' a thick portion of web in a horizontal direction, which floats away, and is sure to adhere to some branch, twig, leaf, or bit of grass; he then runs along this bit of web, and thus effects his escape. This, however, is not the remedy in the most desperate cases; it is only a temporary case that requires such proceedings. When matters are really urgent, a spider breaks the line by which he is held to his web, and drops direct down to the ground, shutting up his legs, and making himself as much as possible like a ball; he then lies on the ground like a stone, and will not be induced to move under any conditions. This plan of not moving seems to be a popular piece of diplomacy in the spider and spidering-world. A very crafty daddy-long-legs, if thrown into a web, seems immediately to comprehend its danger, and will not move a muscle, for if it did, the owner of the web would instantly attack him, and wind him up like a mummy. A blow-fly, too, is occasionally equally as cautious, and thus prolongs his life a few minutes. This very cunning proceeding is, however, often the cause of a spider himself being sacrificed; for if in his 'drop' to escape danger he happen to alight in another web, he may try the lying quiet plan, when, if the owner of the web in which he has dropped is on the alert, he is at once wound up in those inexorable folds, from which there seems no escape.

A spider, when disturbed and alarmed, gives out a peculiar smell, very powerful, and much like the scent of the bean-flower. It is possible that this odour may have an effect upon the creatures it seizes, probably producing sleep, for many of the voracious insects seem similarly provided—the ant, for instance, having a strong pungent smell about him, which increases in power when danger threatens. Among the larger animals, there seems to be no creature so formidable for its size as is a spider. Provided with eight legs, at the extremity of each of which are pincers of great power, compared to which a lion or tiger's claws are mere trifles; with legs, too, of an enormous length, so that it can encircle its prey in its grasp, and thus hold it securely, whilst the long nippers are buried in its body—the spider must seem to the insect-world a demon indeed. Fancy a tiger with eight legs, each twenty feet long, with teeth a foot in length, and capable of binding its struggling victim in a net, and we should indeed find tigers a fearful pest, and tiger-hunting even more dangerous than at present.

During the hot close nights of the summer, spiders may really be made useful assistants in a bedroom. To sleep with the window open, is almost a necessity at such times, but the open window admits numbers of gnats and small insects, which, by their buzzing or bites, disturb the sleeper. If, however, a spider or two have chosen to construct webs before the window, the insects that would otherwise have annoyed us serve for the

spiders' supper. The common garden-spider is not a wanderer either, so he may be trusted in a room for when he has once selected a corner, and built a web, he invariably keeps to the same locality, as do gnats and flies by the score, so that there is no chance of our suffering annoyance from him crawling over us at uncertain hours of the night.

There seems to be a rule throughout all nature that the creatures which eat the most rapidly and consume the greatest quantity, can remain without food for the longest time. A spider that we obliged to emigrate from a rose-bush to a pane of glass in a north window of our room, refused to build a web for four days; he then built a very small one, but caught nothing during three days more; he seemed, however, none the worse for his week's fasting. We then transferred him to a tin box, in which there were holes for ventilation, and covered the top of this with a piece of glass, in order to observe his proceedings. The spider first could not ascend the slippery sides of the box, so it shortly set to work to gum on little bits of web, so that in two days it could lodge comfortably during the whole night on the side of the box. A fly which was placed inside was soon caught, but did not seem to be eaten with the same relish when the spider resided in its web, though a week's fasting was certainly long enough to have given it an appetite.

It is very rarely that two spiders really have a fair stand-up fight. If by chance two are placed in one web, the weaker or more cowardly instantly retreats, or is captured, and wound up by the stronger. Spiders are decidedly cannibals; they will breakfast off their brothers and dine off their sisters without any compunctions; and as regards what they eat, they seem to have no particular preference either for flies, gnats, moths, earwigs, daddy-long-legs, bees, wasps, or other small-fry—all being eaten with the same eagerness.

When a spider has devoured all that is good belonging to a fly, he gets rid of the remainder by flinging it out of his web; this he accomplishes by the aid of his legs and claws, and he is very careful that it is not deposited in his web. It is very amusing to find a spider meeting and overcoming the difficulties of dragging a large fly among leaves and twigs up to its quiet retreat, the web by which he holds its prey often hitching in the jagged edge of a leaf, or over the extremity of a bud. The patience of the spider under these circumstances is extreme; he will again and again return to the entangled web, nip it in halves, or raise it carefully over its impediments, and at length succeed in dragging the fly into the selected position.

Spiders, when carefully watched, are admirable barometers, indicating when fine weather is coming or when wet or cold is likely to occur. If a spider commences early in the night to make a fresh web, we may safely count on a fine night and a clear bright morning; when, however, we find several old webs remaining in the morning, and the spider disinclined to make fresh nets for their prey, rain or damp may be expected.

It is curious to find, even among creatures apparently so similar as spiders, a marked individuality of character. One spider upon finding a fly caught into his web, will rush upon it at once, seize it, and after rolling it up, will carry it to the centre of the web, and feast on it. Another spider, apparently identical in every way with the former, upon being given a fly under the same conditions, takes alarm

and retreats rapidly along the guys of his web, as though anxious only to escape some great danger. There is a fly very common in most gardens, called the hover-fly. This creature looks rather like a bee at first sight, but has no sting; some spiders, however, always treat it with suspicion, and approach it with the greatest caution, whilst others treat it with no apparent respect, but roll it up with web as though it were merely a common fly.

If a bee or a wasp is caught in a spider's web, a very cautious proceeding is adopted on the part of the spider, which dodges and practises as many arts as a prize-fighter in order to escape the formidable poisoned lance of his adversary.

Next to the garden-spider, the hunting or zebra spider is the most common. This little creature is small, but very powerful, is striped black and white like a zebra, makes no web, but hunts for its prey on sunny walls and palings, stalking and springing on it like a tiger, and carrying off a fly much bigger than itself with apparent ease. These spiders move along a wall in a jerky manner, rushing on two or three inches, then stopping to look round them, again moving forward, and so on. When a fly or other insect is observed—and this spider is wonderfully quick-sighted—the spider approaches with the greatest caution, creeping up to its prey as a cat crawls towards a bird; should the fly move, the spider remains still, and bides its time for a more favourable opportunity to advance. When the spider has reached to within about eight or ten times its own length of the fly, it gums down on to the wall a thread of web, works its legs as does a cat before it springs, and then dashes on to the back of its prey with a bound so rapid as scarcely to be visible. The fly finding itself thus attacked, takes wing at once, but the spider retards its movements, and is held in check by its thread of web, so that the fly falls against the wall, and its capturer instantly grasps this foundation, and there holds on, in spite of the struggles of its prisoner. Even before its victim is dead, the spider drags it off into a secure retreat, and immediately commences its feast.

In consequence of the greater amount of activity required, and also from having no web to make, the hunting-spider is not such a great eater as is the garden-spider, and is not therefore so useful as a guardian to our open windows; he is, however, a most interesting creature to observe, for to watch him capture his prey is very much like having a bird's-eye view of a fight between a tiger and a buffalo.

Another description of spider quite different in its habits and appearance may be observed in most places where a right angle is formed by a wall or fence, or near the hinges of doors, or under ivy, anywhere, in fact, where a dark corner can be found. This creature lives in a den, spreads out its net nearly horizontally, and waits for some careless insect to drop into its web: with a rush, the spider bolts out, grasps its prey, and rushes with it in the most demon-like manner again into its den; so rapid is this rush, that unless we keep our eyes on the web, the fly often disappears, we know not whither. The spider itself is black, and seems to dislike light of any kind. These spiders will always be found in cellars, dark rooms, summer-houses, &c., and are certainly very ill-looking fellows.

Taking spiders in a mass, and looking at the services they perform, we certainly ought to treat

them with greater respect than we do. They destroy the fly that five separate times settled on our nose as we tried to obtain a second nap at five A.M. They roll up and devour those two wretched gnats that kept us awake last night with their dreary pinging buzz, and, after all, closed one of our eyes with their blood-thirsty bites. They gobble up the earwigs that crawl out of the ripe pear just as we are about to take a bite; and they carry off in triumph the daddy-long-legs before he can shake off his wings and grub our lawns. Thus he or she who kills a spider commits an act similar to that of destroying a cat when a house or ship is overrun with rats and mice.

ROUNDS WITH A 'VET.'

I LIVE in one of the Midland counties, where the cattle-plague is raging—has raged, I should rather say, as it seems now to be dying out, from the simple reason, that there are but few beasts left to be attacked by it: and going one day last week to my business, which, I may mention, is quite unconnected with agriculture, I met a gentleman skimming along the frozen road in a very light dog-cart, drawn by a beautiful bay. The driver was Mr L—, a veterinary surgeon, heretofore better known by a familiar contraction of his professional title, but now an eminent local authority, referred to deferentially as the 'Government Inspector.' He pulled up at once, the mare amusing herself with cutting a slide on a convenient strip of ice, and then executing a *pas seul* as her master accosted me. A merry-looking man, as busy men often are, who has the supervision of a very large district infected with rinderpest, and is constantly to be seen flying about in all directions.

'Where are you going to-day?' I inquired.

'Rounds, at F—,' he replied; 'an eight-mile drive; it's a lovely morning—will you go with me?'

I declined the offer, but he detected indecision in the tone of my refusal, and unbuttoned the driving-apron, turning it back from the vacant seat. The temptation was great, and I jumped into the dancing vehicle without tearing much of my trousers on the step, or sharpening both legs on the wheel.

'Emmie!' whispered my companion affectionately over the splash-board, and at the sound of her name the pretty mare bounded away. I suffered a slight inconvenience at first from being partially bonneted by the descent at regular intervals of my driver's whip on the top of my hat. I discovered that this was caused by his constantly raising his elbow in salutation as he was recognised and greeted by the people we passed. Sometimes we had to stop at the signal of an upheld finger, to relieve some friend's mind, anxious to know 'how things were going on;' and I thought the inspector's memory was heavily taxed when he was called upon to recollect in a moment how many cows had been lost or saved on all the farms he attended.

We arrived at length in the neighbourhood my companion meant to inspect. It was his first visit, it having been previously under the *care* (?) of another inspector, who had signally failed in his treatment of the plague; for he had commenced by adopting a ridiculous theory, and ended by becoming hopelessly intoxicated. Thus the district had been intrusted to L—, who, as he had besides

to look after a large one of his own, found himself almost overwhelmed with engagements. He told me, for instance, that on the previous day he arrived at home, after a long day's drive, at 8 o'clock in the evening, and then, changing his horse, had to start upon a round of twenty-five miles, in another direction. On arriving at F—, a little town in a picturesque part of the county, surrounded by dairy-farms, we sought some conductor, who could introduce the inspector to his new sphere of usefulness, and found an excellent one in an obliging policeman, who seemed to be on intimate terms with every one in the neighbourhood. A rural constable does not at all resemble the reserved functionary who guards the London streets, but is a sociable sort of official, who adequately supplies in country places the want of a daily paper; leisurely strolling over an extended beat, he sees and chats with a number of people in the course of the day, and is consequently always 'posted up' in the latest local intelligence. Under his guidance, we drove to a farm which lay a short distance beyond the town. My companion, while skilfully guiding his mare over the difficult road which led to the homestead, learned from the officer the name and circumstances of the farmer to whom we were going, and whom we found standing despondently at his door. I must here remark, that most of the farms in this part of the county are held by men in a humble position of life, and consist almost entirely of pasture-land, on which great numbers of cows are fed and kept for the purposes of the dairy.

'Good-morning, Mr —,' said L— cordially to the farmer: 'sorry to hear you've been so unfortunate. I've just come to look over your little stock—if you'll allow me.'

'Certainly, sir,' he replied; 'but I haven't much left to shew you.'

We went to the cow-houses; the yard, littered and disused, looked inexpressibly dreary and forsaken; while the numerous empty stalls, where five-and-twenty healthy cows had stood but a short time ago, told their own sad tale. Of all his beasts, the farmer had only three remaining—two he shewed us, with a gleam of satisfaction in his worn-looking face, chasing each other in a field some distance away; these had quite recovered: the third was evidently in an advanced stage of the disease; and, at a glance, the inspector saw that its case was a hopeless one: a poor lean animal, it stood with drooping head and quivering limbs—a touching picture of misery.

'You must kill her, Mr —,' said L—.

'Noa, sir; *don't* say that,' appealed the poor farmer earnestly. 'I've lost 'em all, and I don't know what's to become of us.'

'Now, look here,' argued the inspector persuasively: 'that cow *must* die. If you kill her, you will receive half her value, under the new regulations; if you do *not*, why, you know, as she is in such a state, I must, and then you'll get nothing.'

This was to the point; and the farmer gave way, ordered a grave to be dug, and said he would destroy the cow in an hour from that time. It was arranged that the policeman should return to witness the death; and the owner of the animal, having stated its value at L.16, L— made a memorandum, assured him that compensation would be paid, and with a few kindly words of condolence, took his leave. Taking up the constable into our vehicle, we drove away to another larger farm, where no less than forty-five cows had died.

The tenant had never sold one from the time the first appearance of the disease. He was an man (he had been seriously ill, our conductor told us, from the shock he had experienced), and savings of a lifetime were gone.

'I've lost my little all,' he said to us, broken.

I could not help fancying that his voice recalled that of poor Robson, when he used to play pathetic dramas; but there was *real* trouble in the man's quivering tone, and a *real* ruined home at the back of the scene. With a trembling hand, he pointed silently to a field about a quarter of a mile distant, where a huge letter T was described by arrangement of forty great mounds. In the ground under those mounds lay forty animals, and buried with them the thrift and industry of forty years of the farmer's life. Newspapers give 'grape accounts,' no doubt, but I had never realised a cattle-plague until then. I looked out over the fields—perhaps somewhat longer than necessary in order to give the farmer an opportunity of stealing his voice; and glancing at the Government Inspector, I detected him tilting his hat a little more out of the perpendicular than usual in uneasy fidgety way. One cow was dying in isolated shed in the yard. We went to look at it (passing more of the empty stalls that gave so clear an aspect to the place); the poor beast lay prostrate, her flanks heaving, her protuberant bones scarcely covered with skin, and her ribs raised with horrible distinctness above her fallen and almost fleshless sides. She was in a pitiable state, and had lain thus for many days, until she became covered with sores. The former inspector, carrying out so absurd notions of his own, had said that she need not be destroyed; and so the wretched animal had been inhumanly left to a terrible lingering death. Some young farm-labourers standing round were trying to induce her to eat, anxiously watching her though hope was gone, for she had been the pride of the dairy. My companion, after examining the cow with an expression of concern on his face, that a London physician might have coveted, turned to the farmer and said, as gently as he could: 'I'm afraid she must be killed; it is impossible for me to recover.'

The poor man sorrowfully nodded assent.

'Here,' said L—, 'which of you fellows will it?—Will you?' he inquired of one of the labourers near.

The lad shook his head.

'Noo,' replied he, 'oi conna do *that*,' with a tone meant to convey that he usually was ready for a large amount of slaughter, but on this occasion he would not 't' the vein.

'Here, will you?' said the inspector, turning to another of them; but he only received the same answer. 'Damn it then,' said the inspector, 'fellow, an axe.' I confess I have never looked upon that expletive 'Damn it' with the proper amount of right-minded horror, and have always, I am ashamed to say, secretly admired the many delicate shades of inflection the pronunciation of it is capable of receiving. On this occasion there was such a world of kindly sympathy expressed in the tone in which it was uttered, that the recording angel might have mistaken the vague curse for a blessing, and never have even entered it in his volume. They brought a clumsy, heavy hatchet and gave it to my friend. He sprang over the rail that fenced in the shed, asking a

to draw the dying cow's head forward to receive the blow. I did so (not feeling at all like a butcher), and in another moment the young doctor had eased his patient's sufferings for ever. We fetched a cart-horse, and placed a chain round the dead animal's neck, in order that it might be dragged away to add to the size of the monster T. *There was positively a bare path worn across the meadow, by the number of bodies drawn down it for burial.* The horse, mournfully fulfilling his novel duties, slowly moved off. '*The best milch-cow I ever had!*' the old man sadly said, as his favourite—dead, and oh! so wretched-looking, with strained neck, and glazed eye—passed at his feet. I remembered another funeral oration—one I had learned at school—of a far more grandiloquent character: comparison seemed grotesque, but the ruined farmer's parting eulogium touched me far more nearly than the elaborate speech of one Marcus Antonius had ever been able to do.

It was a very painful scene: the deserted yard, the vacant sheds, the silent dairy, and listless unoccupied herdsmen, composed a saddening picture, which might have been aptly entitled 'Trouble.' Expressing our sorrow for the misfortunes that had befallen him, and mentioning the compensation he would receive for the last animal he had lost (a sum which would scarcely pay the expense of digging that terrible T), we took leave of the poor farmer; but the hospitality of his class struggled through his grief, and he insisted on procuring for us a goblet of home-made wine before our departure. We then visited another farm, and another; all had been attacked by the plague, and all had suffered severely: at all we beheld the wretched desolation this awful murrain had caused. At one alone the tenant had been fortunate; he had died on the day the plague commenced. The farmers received us well, and were ready to listen to and accept any advice my friend offered them as to precautionary measures they should take whereby future infection might be prevented. But all their capital had been invested in cattle, all their cattle had been destroyed, and a very dark future opening before them, they all seemed overwhelmed and paralysed; though, as far as I could observe, they were patient and uncomplaining enough; and this not because they had no blame to lay on fellow-men, for grievous injuries have been in many instances inflicted on them. Tales of atrocity are already hinted at; and in years to come, when the story of the murrain is told in the chimney-corner of homesteads, they will be remembered and related.

It was late when we drove homewards. I was not so much inclined for conversation as when we set out, and my companion's flow of anecdote had somewhat abated. He had not previously seen the phase in the cattle-plague we had then witnessed. The infected farms he had visited in his own district were either held by wealthy amateurs, who, after trying expensive experiments, and losing all their stock, declared with disgust that they would 'give up farming;' or else by men who could turn for consolation to well-filled stackyards, and determine to buy no more cattle until the disease had subsided. But to these poor farmers the *cura botani* was no mere gentlemanly pastime, nor had they 'bursting barns' to comfort them.

Unlike the man who claimed to be an authority on the theory of projectiles, because his leg had been carried away by a cannon-ball, I do not

pretend to have gained any knowledge of the cattle-plague because I have seen its effects, but I have gained a knowledge of the ruin an epidemic may cause; and I would rather not hear any more bad conundrums on the *rinderpest*—please.

LAUNCHED IN LONDON.

(*'My son started yesterday to try his fortune in London. Pray for him—pray for him.'*—*MSS. Letter.*)

I.

WITH blessed vigil, cross, and sign,
And crimson splash of holy wine,
They used, in ages long gone by,
When faith was strong, and hope was high,
To let their vessels flowing go
Into the great sea's welcoming flow.
The ship, so newly clamped and framed,
Trimmed, fitted, masted, proved, and named,
Eager to brave the lurking storm,
The ravening sands, the cruel reef,
As if its veins, with lifeblood warm,
Felt impulses of high resolve,
And mocked at human woe and grief,
Daring with colours boldly flying,
Danger and woe and death defying;
No white sails set, but folded up,
Like leaves of a sleeping lily's cup,
With latent power to open forth,
Let tempest come from south or north,
And rushing gladly to the wave,
The sailor's home, the seaman's grave,
Reliant on its new-found power,
To brave it in the darkening hour.

II.

But how much more befits the sign,
The prayer, the cross, the sacred wine,
The youth who leaves us, scorning fate,
Hopeful, innocent, elate,
To face the giant city's throngs;
The selfish crowd's neglect and wrongs;
The cruel scorn, the taunt, the sneer;
The lingering hope from year to year;
The solitude amid the din,
Of sordid millions, want and sin;
The trampling, struggling for gold;
The aspirations manifold;
The agony, the pangs untold,
The life-long purgatory of pain;
The love that ne'er returns again
Unto its nest; the longing heart
By time and sorrow rent apart.
Yes! yes! the mystic cross and sign,
And baptism of holy wine,
Are needed now, and fervid prayers,
To fend our boy from sin and cares;
He goes to brave a turbid sea,
The round world's great epitome.

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MY WALK TO OFFICE.

How fulsomely is the Country praised at the expense of the Town! How the poets rave about it! How the moralists prose about it! How the students of natural history maunder about field-mice and tomtits, as though there were not whole rooms full of the most intelligent birds in our London bazaars, and the fattest rats in Christendom under our streets. *A Morning's Walk in the Country* forms the heading of a chapter in nine out of ten of those didactic Works for the Young which we procure for our children at those admirable shops that take twopence off the shilling.

Why should this ridiculous favouritism be permitted? Nature, forsooth? And is not *human* nature also worthy of description? *A Day's Ride, or Life's Romance*, is the title of a book by a capital author; and a *Day's Walk in London* is a *Life's Romance* for anybody who has eyes. I take one once a week to my office in the city; yes, my friends, I am making no mistake; once a week, and not all the year round; as surely as this is *Chambers's Journal*. The fact is, I have really work to do. I cannot leave home every morning directly after breakfast, and enjoy that charming ride on the top of an omnibus, or in the well-lighted Underground Railway, as most folks do who are what is called business-men. There is no snug room with the *Times* newspaper upon the table awaiting me, nor any telegraph machine at my elbow, by which I can summon my slaves from the ends of the earth as easily as I can call up a clerk by ringing my flat spring-bell. I know the sort of people who use these luxuries; I visit them at times when I am in need of lunch; and hey, presto! mutton-chops straightway appear under metal covers, with fragrant potatoes and Seltzer and sherry, with nobs of ice in it. I even know *some* good souls, who, having offered these hospitalities after an improving survey of their gigantic establishment, will add: 'And perhaps you will now not object to a cigar.' I like to desecrate these temples of Mammon by tobacco-smoke, and

am slow to take a hint that I am clogging the wheels of Commerce by my protracted stay. I know *that* to be all nonsense. Pray, understand me. I am not angry with these folks because they are so rich; far from it. I shall perhaps go into business myself when I retire from active life. But I am not to be told that they are the men who do the work of the world. No: the true bees make their honey at home, and are very rarely—say, once in seven days—to be found in the city. Also, they do not start—at least in my own case—until noon. Up, betimes, I have been able to do a good stroke of work before that hour. This arrangement, however, deprives me of any companion in my eastward walk. My friends the drones have long ago started off for the Law Courts, the Counting-houses, the Exchange; I have seen them pass the window as I sat over my late breakfast (earned by early toil), some with pipes in their mouths, and some with toothpicks, but every one with his umbrella. Baywater, except for me, has a female population only from nine to six; on Fridays, after twelve, there is no exception.

I take my way down the long terrace toward the Park, in order to see whether that street is still 'up,' as it has been for the last six weeks. Yes, it is. The gigantic chasm ever widens and deepens. I peep through the hoarding, and behold the men at work in 'the bowels of the land,' as Shakspeare has it; but he did not guess at such bowels as these. Enormous beams of wood, as though the solid earth were a trussed turkey, and thus skewered; and from the beams, suspended by iron chains, great pipes of iron, all scarred and rusted, full of—Ay, there's the rub! Something horrid. Water, one hopes; gas, one thinks; sewage, one fears. Suppose they were to burst at this identical moment, they must do it some day, and soon, one would imagine, by the look of them. Then, what would happen? Would all Westburnia be drowned, or go off with a bang—for there is a charcoal fire quite unprotected—or be asphyxiated? Why are these things permitted? An intelligent butcher-boy is peering through the same hole in the paling

'What is it all about?' I inquire (for perhaps the

fortieth time, for nobody knows). 'What are they doing?'

'Well, some says it's the Underground, sir; and some says it's the Rheumatics.'

'The *what*, boy?' returned I severely, for I thought he was so mistaken (boys often are) as to imagine me a person he could make fun of.

'The Rheumatics—the pipes as folks is blown through.'

'Oh, the Pneumatic Telegraph! Very likely; very likely, indeed; good boy.' But I know it is not that.

The next street is almost wholly devoted to cheap periodical shops. How do they manage to make a living except in the week before Valentine's Day? Then, I can imagine the youth of the neighbourhood, of both sexes, investing whole sixpences at a time; but in ordinary seasons, when the entire stock in trade of their establishments consists of penny-worths, how can they live on the profits? Some of them, it is true, eke out their slender stores with cheap cigars, such as may quite consistently lie on the same counter with their anti-tobacco tracts, but most of them stick to literature only. I hope it may serve them better than—ahem—it has served some folks.

I am now in what is called an 'inferior neighbourhood,' through the bustling traffic of the Edgeware Road and the genteel dreariness of Baker Street, but not without something to admire. I stand transfixed opposite a grocer's shop, which interrogates by placard, not whether I am in want of teas, but Am I aware where I am going to? Copious wood-cuts of a most uncheerful description accompany this inquiry, and suggest that I am going *wrong*. At first, I imagined that this respectable tradesman dealt in some Patent Fire Annihilator, and his pictures represented the results that would ensue if one didn't buy it. But no; this oilman seeks to awaken my spiritual energies at the same time that he ministers to my bodily needs; each heap of sugar is ticketed—exactly as gardeners erect their little banners over buried seeds—not only with its price per pound, but with a quotation from Holy Writ; his cocoa-nibs are furnished with a statement that they are 'down again,' and also by a verse from *Revelations*; and many a direful text around he strews to lure the pious Credulous to buy. 'In the name of the Prophet—Figs,' is a quotation that occurs to me as I pass by; and I cannot but wonder whether this gentleman, who is all for Faith himself, gives 'Trust' or no.

But I am now arrived in a district where there are no miserable sinners, and everybody has a thousand a year—everybody at least with one exception—a poor cobbler, who lives not in a house, but a stall, let into the wall of some rich man's dwelling, and reminding one with a flash of the *Arabian Nights*. He has no room for an apprentice in that indenture, and indeed scarce space for himself: winter and summer, there he sits, fireless, windowless, with his shutter thrown back, as though he were a gratuitous exhibition, and working (far harder, I suspect, than the grocer) for other people's soles.

The crowd thickens, for I am in a great thoroughfare, and I begin to meet familiar faces. Country folks always are apt to be astonished when they encounter the same person two or three times during their perambulation of London streets; whereas nothing is more certain than that I shall see at least a score of people in my walk to-day whom I have met a dozen times before. Here is a silver-haired gentle-

man, with his little girl hand-in-hand with him, that has aroused my pity for years of London life. He is not poor, he is not ill, and he evidently enjoys the love of his pretty child; but, alas! how straight he stares before him, so that you scarcely need to read the little silver plate upon his hat with 'Blind' upon it. How touching is that simple word! Talk of Romance—I doubt if anywhere, by mere or purling stream, or in the forest glades, a sight can meet the gaze so sad and sweet. She talks to papa in a low gentle tone, and looks up in his unconscious eyes when he replies, as though he could be gladdened by her beauty.

I shall meet another blind man presently, who is a very merry one, although he is a Beggar; he has no dog, but trusts to any Christian folk he happens to meet to see him safe over the crossings. It is very pleasant to see him thus convoyed, almost always by kind ladies (bless them!), who part from him with an encouraging nod (as though he could see it, poor fellow), not seldom dropping some small coin into his hand, and go on their way with hearts the lighter for it. As for him, he is one smile. Upon his breast he wears this printed statement: '*Blind from my birth, I have seen better days;*' so that, without hearing the roll of his rich brogue, you may know at once that he is an Irishman. In Langham Place there is also a poor blind lady, who is as sure to be there as the Extinguisher Church, knitting in the sunshine, no matter what the season, and with her little dog in her lap, to tell her when the rich folks are going to be charitable.

Of all the crossings at the West End, there used to be none so perilous, not only to the blind, but to the most wide-awake of the community, as those at Oxford Circus; but, happily, some havens of refuge, spaces protected by iron posts, have now been erected in the centre. Still, that is the place for a figure-painter like Mr Frith to take his stand, and draw society—out of its buckram. The fine lady loses all her airs when placed between an impetuous Hansom and a Citizen 'bus; nay, more, does not care a sou what becomes of her poodle. The stout gentleman of quick temper is seen, on the other hand, amid the tossing heads of the horses, gesticulating with his umbrella, and threatening, upon the very brink of eternity, to write a letter to the *Times*. Parties from the country (consisting, generally, of two maiden aunts and a little boy) wait for the vehicles to go by until what they consider a favourable opportunity occurs; they then take hands and run—the boy in the middle—but in the central spot of peril are delayed by the mild Hindu who sweeps the crossing demanding largesse. The maiden aunts demur, and the delay is fatal; they are 'headed back' by a wicked brougham going at a tremendous pace; then by a male phaeton, which ought to be ashamed of itself; then by more broughams: at the same time, they are cut off from retreat by an endless chain of coal-wagons; they crowd together like rats in the presence of a ferret, and implore the protection of the police. The moment is supreme. Then the mild Hindu (who himself bears a charmed life) conducts them to the midway posts, and begins to barter for their ransom. Without him, he assures them, they can never reach the pavement alive. Master Tommy, in contempt of this statement, dashes between two fiery Hansoms, emerges without his hat, but in personal safety, and executes a dance of triumph upon the opposite shore. But there is no dash

about his aunts; they succumb, they pay the money, and are led across, one at a time, more dead than alive. The Timid, the Irresolute—almost sure to be run over—the Foolhardy, the Prudent—all the varied characters of mankind—are 'on view' at this crossing, and afford the student of human nature most interesting materials.

Between the Oxford Circus and the Princess's Theatre I am almost certain to meet my Hebrew Pedestrians, a gentleman and lady, who, I am persuaded, are in training for some tremendous walking-match which shall one day cause the name of Barclay to fade. Their hair is black as the raven's wing; their faces are rosy red; and yet they remind me of a couple of swans, so bravely and with such energy do they breast the human tide, and part it, this way and that, as they press upon their way. Their eyes are beady bright, and their looks cheerful to a remarkable degree; they also illustrate the dictum of Mr Banting, that all the exercise in the world will not reduce the proportions of those who are inclined to corpulence. That they have money on the coming event, I have not the shadow of a doubt, nor that they have a happy confidence that they will win it.

Here is that lying Clock over the theatre! It has never been right since 1848, upon which year of revolutions its wicked works made their last circuit. Habitual Londoners are well acquainted with its falsehood, but why is it thus permitted to mislead the casual passenger? A public clock is a great good if, like Mr Bennett's, it can be relied on; if it 'goes,' let it stop where it is, by all means; but if it stops—do I make myself intelligible?—then let it be removed. This time-piece is ashamed of itself, according to the old riddle, since it still keeps its hands before its face, and *Never too Late to Mend* is advertised in enormous characters over the play-house beneath it: if the play is 'for all time,' as its admirers aver, then surely the proverb may have its effect upon the clock; but it certainly has not had any 'for an age.'

'Ha, ha!' I sniff the delightful smell of brewing, and here is the knot of people, crowded, as usual, about the brewery gates. One hears of London folks having so much to do, but there is no population whose steps are so easily delayed by the least excitement: a fallen cab-horse, an inebriated female, or a dog Toby sitting by the proscenium of Mr Punch's theatre, will always attract their hundreds by scores at a time; and at least a dozen people are staring all day long (weather permitting) at this brewery Raven. There's not a bird in all the country who sees so much of life as he, or is more thoroughly *blasé* with it. He regards that ever-renewing crescent of spectators with the greatest nonchalance, and in his easiest attitude—head aside, and standing upon one leg. Every now and then, he flirts his glossy wings, and almost tumbles off his beer-barrel with ecstatic laughter at their stupid curiosity; then remembers his dignity, and rolling the whites of his eyes, like a Jamaica negro upon his solemn oath before the Commission, demands the hour of the day.

Mudie's! Ah! an excellent institution, doubtless; but I wonder whether the time will ever come when circulating libraries will guarantee to give us the book we want over the counter, and not a book we don't want in its place; where the words 'Not in,' will be unheard, and the phrase, 'It shall be reserved for you,' will have no meaning.

How much ought our annual subscriptions to be raised in order to secure that desideratum? Double? Treble? Well, I would give treble cheerfully, if it would insure my page-boy's returning with the three-volume novel for which I sent, and not with the doubtless improving history of missionary enterprise, for which I did not send. I do not say that *Mudie's* is worse than other libraries; but it is by far the greatest library, and so becomes the greatest Sinner. Were little boys in service originally called pages?—no, that's nonsense, and beats the commentators upon Greek Tragedy—but what a lot of pages there are here all bound for books! What a diversity of tastes, extending from *Mill on Liberty* to *The Mill on the Floss* (nay, even to the *Millennium* itself), do they represent in their respective employers! What a crowd of carriages is here, each waiting for the iron-bound 'book-box!' And see, what volume in cerulean blue does this pampered menial bear forth to that angel sitting in her chariot? O Heavens, it is *mine*!

'Have you got those poems, John?' asks she with eager eyes.

'Yes, miss; we've got 'em at last. They says they're very sorry, but there has been such an uncommon run upon that gent's—'

'Home!' cries the impatient fair one, cutting short his too familiar speech—'Home, home, the nearest way!'

She has a happy afternoon before her, and she has made me happy too. How bright the sun shines; how everything speaks of Light, and Love, and Life—no, not everything.

'Patent Metallic Air-tight Coffin Company!'

To this complexion must even the cheek of genius—the overweening confidence of the poet—come at last! How curious are these crystal habitations of the Dead (albeit the little knot of spectators are clearly disappointed that they have no tenants), with their couches of quilted white satin, and the sliding roof to shut them off for ever from the world without. Is it intended, I wonder, that folks should be buried after being thus housed? And, if not, where are they to be put? I can fancy a confirmed widower—a man who is always marrying again—keeping in this way layers of departed wives in his Bluebeard's chamber, and solacing his troubled conscience with the reflection that those who live in such glass houses can never throw stones. Forgive the passing sneer; I gladly leave to the London, Chatham, and Dover Railway the unenviable task of exposing the secrets of domestic life. Behold, how on every hand (I have reached Holborn Hill) totter the bare walls of desolated homes, in order that the road of the Iron Horse may be made smooth before him! Whither have the Lares and Penates fled, that once inhabited these gaping shells? The dining-rooms where domestic feast-days were kept so jovially, and the nuptial chambers, and the nurseries once so musical with little feet, are emptied of all their charms.

The very drinking fountain, which in summer is the pleasantest feature of our city streets, has only been spared by a few short yards; the legend on its forehead I cannot quite decipher, but it reminds me of one in 'the gray Metropolis of the North'—a fountain that had a trough to it for cattle—which sets forth this fact: 'Water was not meant for man alone.' Surely a curious statement for philanthropists to make to a people who have already a reputation for mixing whisky with

the primitive element. I am aroused from philosophic reflection upon the inconsistency of human nature by something brushing my hair and three-fourths of my new greatcoat: this is the carcass of a woolless sheep borne upon a man's shoulder, and preceding about a score of its fellows, which follow their deceased comrade as undeviatingly as they did in life. Newgate Street is never free, except on Sundays, from this terrible Rinderpest. It prevents me now from moralising upon that frowning jail, wherein so many wretched fellow-creatures doomed to death have passed their last night, hopeless of mercy—perchance in either world. How many shuddering ears have heard from yonder clock that their last quarter of an hour of life has begun to pass away, and then their death-knell from that gray church tower! Alas, alas!

Opposite the butchers dwell the Blue-coat Boys, and a very touching sight it is to watch the folks who tarry to see them at their games; not that the poor lads have a very attractive playground, or with their tucked-up gowns present an appearance otherwise than ludicrous and awkward, but they are young and merry, and being so, afford a sort of poem to many a passer-by. The errand-boy but rarely lingers here, nor any of the ordinary elements of a street crowd; but old men stop and gaze through the iron bars, as though they were reading their own Past, and decent matrons, who perhaps have lost such sons, delay a moment, and pass on with softened looks.

But here is Ivy Lane, giving meet access to my muse's bower in Paternoster Row. There I sit and work—my Walk to Office ended—while on one side lie, within Newgate walls, the nameless and unconsecrated Dead, who have done their worst to shame us, and on the other, in the cathedral vault, the two great Captains of our land, with ever-burning lights about their tombs.

PERSONAL REMINISCENCES OF BEAU BRUMMEL.

IN TWO PARTS.—PART I.

As few of those who were either contemporaries of the Beau, or who knew him intimately, are now alive, while his name and peculiarities are still fresh in the mind of the public, a favourable reception may be expected for any well-authenticated anecdotes respecting him, coming from one who lived for several years on terms of intimacy with him, and who has hitherto not given them publicity.

My anecdotes assume no character of importance; they are merely characteristic of a very peculiar man, who was rather droll than witty, but always amusing, prompt, and happy in reply, and unsparing in severity when attacked. The Beau had a small gray scrutinising eye, which instantly surveyed and summed up all the peculiarities of features, dress, and manners of those who approached him, so that the weak point was instantly hit, of any who accidentally or incautiously transgressed, or who had the temerity to attack him. A trifling instance will illustrate this personal peculiarity. On one occasion, he was in conversation with one or two

persons on the Place de Calais, when a gentleman, on joining the group, unintentionally struck the Beau's favourite little white terrier with his foot. It so happened that the new-comer had very large feet and awkwardly made boots. Brummel, immediately stooping down, and scarcely noticing the offender, but looking most contemptuously at his boots, patted the little dog on the back, ejaculating at the same time: 'Poor little thing; you have not been used to be trod upon by such boots as these.' After having discharged this bolt, he turned round on his heel, and walked off, continuing his caressing language to the little animal, who was with him so great a favourite, that no greater affront could be offered the Beau than that which involved any slight, either accidental or otherwise, towards her. She was a handsome little terrier, milk-white, but rather fat from being overfed, so that even at the slow pace at which the Beau walked round the ramparts of Calais, for exercise, before his daily repast at seven, the poor little thing could with difficulty keep up with him.

But notwithstanding all the Beau's care of his little favourite, poor Vic finally encountered the fate of all pets of this class. Brummel, calling on a friend, earnestly solicited his company at dinner, at the *Hôtel Bourbon*, stating as his reason, that poor Vic was so alarmingly ill that he could not remain in the house, but that he had left her in the care of François (his valet) and Doctor Jonville, so that everything that could be done for her would be done. After taking his usual walk, he repaired to the *Bourbon*, and dined with his friend; the repast was scarcely over, when François entered with a very melancholy and funereal sort of visage, and pronounced in a slow and solemn tone: 'Monsieur, c'est font fini;' upon which Brummel rose from his chair, and repaired to the window, and wept for several minutes like a child.

This is the man who has been represented as being totally devoid of feeling, merely because on many occasions, on the great stage of life, when fortune smiled upon him, he acted his part conformably to the character which he had assumed, rather than agreeably to the one which nature had given him. He could neither have said nor have done the numerous 'good things' which are attributed to him, if he had been influenced by his feelings: his object was to produce effect; he had a particular character to support, and in this respect he eminently succeeded, for he attained a position in life, and kept it for a number of years, which is rarely reached by persons of his rank; it is certain that, in the zenith of his prosperity, noblemen of distinction not only sought his acquaintance, but were actually gratified by walking arm and arm with him up and down St James's Street. It is also well known that he was intimate with the Prince Regent, dined frequently with him both at Carlton House in London, and at the Pavilion at Brighton. The cause of the rupture with the Prince is generally supposed to have been his having taken the liberty to request his Royal Highness, after dinner at Carlton

House, to ring the bell for wine, when the Prince, complying with the first request, ordered his carriage, and never spoke to him afterwards. On this point, I questioned the Beau, and he assured me the statement was totally devoid of foundation in truth. 'From your knowledge of me,' said he, 'can you possibly suppose that I, who knew the Regent's susceptibility as well as, if not better, than any man breathing, could have been guilty of so gross a want of tact? No; it is not true. I knew the Regent too well to have been guilty of so gross a folly.'

I could never ascertain from him what was the real cause of the separation; there are, however, several reasons current; one which I heard from pretty good authority is, that the Beau wrote some verses about the Prince and Mrs Fitzherbert, in which he styled the Prince Big Ben, and the lady Benbina; these lines were, moreover, somewhat sarcastic, and being shewn to the Prince by some enemy of Brummel's, produced that feeling on the part of the Prince which led to the rupture.

There were many circumstances which arose during the several years in which a friendly intercourse existed between the Beau and myself, which led me to infer he was not so deficient in good feeling as is generally supposed to have been the case. I cite one instance among many, leaving the estimate of its worth to the decision of the impartial. Some few years after his arrival in Calais, Brummel contracted a *liaison* with a young French girl, who shortly became the victim of a pulmonary complaint, which ultimately destroyed her. She was long ill. During the whole period of her illness, the Beau not only supplied her with all the necessities of life, but used constantly to send the half of his dinner to her. If he had kept a regular *cuisine* in his establishment, and been in affluent circumstances, there would have been nothing worthy of remark in this act; but as the Beau's means were very limited at this time, and his daily dinner was sent to him from Dessein's at five francs per diem, just sufficient for one appetite, the abandonment of the half of it may, I suggest, be fairly considered one of those sacrifices, although trifling in appearance, which entitles the person who makes it to some credit for good and kindly feeling. During the first few years of the Beau's residence at Calais, he was comparatively well off, a noble duke having allowed him two hundred pounds a year as long as he lived; on one occasion he received one thousand pounds through the house of Messrs Moreon, from some unknown friend; and on another he gained a prize in the French lottery to the amount of about, as far as I can recollect, three thousand francs, which at the time was very acceptable, and caused him considerable satisfaction. He told me, on the occasion of this good-fortune, he had just finished his toilet preparatory to taking his daily walk, when François entered the room, announcing: 'Monsieur a gagné une terne;' which communication was agreeably confirmed by the almost immediate presence of one of the functionaries from the lottery-office with

a wheel-barrow containing several sacks of five-franc pieces. This, I believe, was the only success of this description the Beau ever had, although he was in the habit of risking weekly a five-franc piece in some one of the lotteries then in existence.

Previous to Brummel's leaving Calais for Caen, to take possession of his consulship, his circumstances were by no means flourishing; he had long lost the annuity of two hundred pounds, in consequence of the death of the noble donor of it, and I believe he had brought very little with him on leaving England in 1816. He told me he once won in one year the large sum of forty thousand pounds by play at Wattier's and at Newmarket; all of which disappeared as rapidly as it had been acquired; in fact, at the stakes he was in the habit of playing, an income of forty thousand pounds was required rather than that simple sum. To a sixpence with a hole in it, which he picked up one morning in 1813 in the streets on leaving Wattier's, he attributed the commencement and continuance of his good-fortune; and to the subsequent loss of this little coin, all his subsequent misfortunes. This coin he kept in his waistcoat pocket, and as long as he retained possession of it, fortune smiled; but on the very day this precious talisman was found wanting, his bad-luck set in, and with such continuous and unremitting rigour, that he soon found himself totally without funds. He told me he advertised in several papers with a view of recovering his talisman, and offered five pounds reward, but without success. Mr Raikes, in his *Diary*, states that the Beau merely picked up a plain sixpence, and bored a hole in it himself; but I always understood from the Beau that the coin he found *had* a hole in it already made; and in virtue of this circumstance, he considered it lucky. From this slight anecdote, it may be inferred that the Beau was superstitious, and from what I saw of him, I should say he was very much so.

He mentioned to me that the play at Wattier's in those days was so high that he once witnessed the Honourable Mr W—— go double or quits for thirty-two thousand pounds; which he lost. No pack of cards was ever played with twice, and when a hand was over, the cards were thrown on the floor; consequently, when play ceased in the morning, the players, to use the Beau's own expression, were nearly knee-deep in cards. Wattier's was in Piccadilly, at the corner of Bolton Street. The club took its name from Wattier, who was a *chef de cuisine* of the first order. Although the Beau played at whist, and played a good rubber, he did not generally play high at that game (although he is supposed to have once won a large stake at White's at one sitting), his gambling having been mostly at Wattier's at the game of macao, and at Newmarket. At Calais, he occasionally played at whist in private houses at moderate stakes, and seemed to enjoy the game. During the first few years of his residence in Calais, he associated with scarcely any of either the English or French families; but during several years prior to his departure to his consulate at Caen, he associated with one or two English residents, and joined in conversation generally with the groups of loungers on the Place, before repairing to the ramparts for his daily walk.

He was fond of good living, in every sense of

the word—in truth, I never met with a man who better appreciated, or did more justice to the good things of this life. Champagne and Bordeaux were his two favourite wines. When he dined alone, one bottle of good Bordeaux, not of the *premier crû*, was his allowance. When I dined with him *tête-à-tête*, which was often the case, we generally commenced with either a bottle of Sauterne, Château Grille, or Champagne at dinner, and concluded with one or two bottles of Monton, of which wine he possessed a quantity of excellent quality; some *café noir*, and a *petit verre* of O.D.V. finished the repast. When he dined out, he never objected to any amount of first-rate Bordeaux after dinner, although I never saw him more than in high spirits; and when under the inspiring influences of good cheer and first-rate liquid, he was always most agreeable and entertaining, relating numerous anecdotes of persons whom he had met in former days. I once asked him whether he ever drank port wine in his life: 'Not from choice,' was his reply; 'but sometimes, when I was staying at B—— Castle, or at some other great house in the country, when the cheese was introduced, some jolly red-nosed parson would say: "Would a glass of port be agreeable, Mr Brummel, after your cheese?" when, of course, to please the old boy, I was obliged to drink one.' I met him on the day after his having dined with a French friend at Calais, when he expressed his extreme disgust at a circumstance which had occurred during the repast in reference to a piece of boiled beef, which in all probability had been specially prepared *à l'Anglaise* by the French host, with a view of pleasing his English guest; of this the Beau partook twice, whereupon the host, thinking he had made a good hit, risked the question: 'Comment trouvez-vous ce bœuf, Monsieur Brummel?' 'Monsieur,' replied the Beau, 'c'est excellent.' When the host responded: 'Mais cependant c'était de la vache.' 'The disgusting brute!' ejaculated the Beau; 'just as if he could not have kept that to himself. The idea nearly made me sick.'

On another occasion, after having dined with some English friends at the *Hôtel Rigolle*, who were on their passage to Paris, he expressed great satisfaction at the excellence of the repast, the wines, &c., and seemed much gratified in the manner in which he had been entertained. But there was one circumstance which appeared to have interfered with his comfort, as, on concluding his account of the repast and of the company, he remarked that the young ladies who were present, although very good-looking and very charming persons, had shewn no consideration at all for poor little Vic, as they had actually eaten all the wings of the chickens, leaving nothing beyond the legs for poor little Vic's dinner, 'so that although I really fared well, little Vic was nearly famished.'

When in England, the Beau passed some of his time in Leicestershire during the hunting season, and occasionally went out with the fox-hounds, being mounted by a friend, of whom he was the guest. He told me that, on one occasion on which he was out, Colonel Joliffe (who, it is well known, used to wear a hat of peculiar shape, with a curved brim of very large dimensions) and Lord Alvanley were amongst the number of sportsmen, and on their arriving at a brook which none of the field seemed disposed to take, but rather to look out for some shallow part which they might ford, Lord Alvanley muttered: 'Perhaps Colonel Joliffe

will oblige us with the loan of his hat, and punt us all over.' At this time, the Beau and Lord Alvanley were both guests at Belvoir Castle. Lord Foley was also a guest, and it appeared that his legs were of such a slender description that they had become subject of notice, and it so happened on the occasion to which I refer that Lord Alvanley sat next to him at dinner. A fork accidentally fell from the table between them, upon which Lord Alvanley exclaimed: 'God bless me!' in a tone of great alarm; upon which all the guests, who were alarmed by his manner, thinking something serious really had occurred, instantly and anxiously inquired what had happened, when Lord Alvanley responded: 'Oh, I was really apprehensive some great misfortune might have occurred, as a fork just dropped from the table close to Lord Foley, and I feared it might have broken his leg.'

The Beau left Calais for his consulship at Caen in the year 1830, and I received my first letter from him in February 1831, and as this epistle is very characteristic of his peculiar manner of viewing and describing whatever he witnessed, and, moreover, gives a short account of the English and French residents at Caen, I submit it to the notice of my readers. It appears that he was extremely well received by both the English and French families; indeed, his society was much sought and courted, and it is extremely to be regretted that so favourable and auspicious a beginning should have been the forerunner of so melancholy and deplorable a close, in a great measure due to his own imprudence; as it is certain the consulship and its protection would not have been taken from him so long as he lived, had he not unwisely written to the Foreign Office stating that it was a nullity, as he really had no duties to perform. His idea was, that his disinterested conduct in supplying the government with this information would have been rewarded by a superior position. This is an additional instance to the many which experience supplies, that very clever men sometimes are guilty of great oversights, and outwit themselves. The unfortunate Beau lost his consulship, and received neither thanks nor consideration for his disinterested communication. Unfortunately, at the time of the Beau's letter to the Foreign Office, there was a clamour for retrenchment; the government therefore had no alternative but to abolish a consulship which had been represented to be entirely useless.

On the loss of the consulship at the end of the year, the Beau's Calais creditors availed themselves of their advantage; the consequence of which was arrest and imprisonment. But as this sad portion of the Beau's life has been fully and truthfully related by a writer of his life, I refrain from going further into the subject. The following letter from him is dated Caen, February 20, 1831; it was addressed to me at Montreuil, where I was then residing:

CAEN, February 20, 1831.

MY DEAR — Old J — (though I believe he is younger than myself) tells me, when he dined with you within your wretched antiquated ramparts in his progress to Paris, you were *blowing up* about my having neglected to 'vous faire savoir de mes nouvelles,' according to my promises. You must have known me sufficiently to be aware I am not the most regular person in the world in attending to promises, but *malgré* my inveterate disinclination to sit down, or rather turn round in my chair,

to scribble when I have nothing to say, I can assure you I have frequently threatened both you and myself with the mutual penalty of inditing you some half-a-dozen empty sentences merely to represent my existence in this life of troubles, as Mr Mawworm and his prototype, Mr Percival, would express themselves.

Here I am, leading as opposite a life as possible to that which I led during many peaceable sequestered years during my locality at Calais. You must know, in the first place, I am very popular here, and that I am much *recherché*, both with the Gothic Norman *noblesse* who are out, and daily invoke the heavens for the restoration of that little 'enfant trouvé, Dieu-donné Henri V.,' and with the modern functionaries of the place, with more liberal principles, but of more base pedigrees. At the hour of eight every evening, I have the *entrée* to about seven of the principal Dons (who have all really magnificent *hôtels*), of whichever it may be the night, and I sit down to franc long whist with all the old marquises, countesses, and baronesses, who smell more of caraway and diachylon than of Eau de Portugal, and I generally make a good or heavy evening to the amount of ten francs.

With the new people like the *préfet*, *maire*, &c., I eat well, and in spite of that, which of course you will think the preferable attraction, as it concerns the satisfactory lining of my inside, I find this society the most agreeable. At the Ridoute, a weekly *mélange* of all classes, there is always smart *écarté*; that is, for the provinces, to five hundred or six hundred francs a side. The women *en société* are rarely good-looking, but those one meets with by chance in the streets of the *grisette* class are beautiful; and if I did not suspect — would see my letter, I would tell you more about them. The town, taking it *ensemble*, is what a vulgar traveller would call superb; nothing can be superior to its public institutions, such as its colleges, hospital, *mairie*, courts of justice, &c.; and the public walks about it are better than any I have seen.

There are, among many very respectable English residents, two excellent amphitryons of the names of —, each of them with ample annual means, large houses with gardens, and what is better, admirable *artistes à la cuisine*. Gentlemen they are, in every common acceptation of the term, and so very amiable, that I cannot please them more than by sending in the morning to say I will dine with them; but then they have that nasty English propensity of drinking till late, so that I have already sacrificed a hat and a shoe on returning home from my visits to their houses.

My return to Calais is, from what I hear, *sur les cartes*—in an official capacity, I mean: name it not in Gath. They are endeavouring to remove M—C—. When you return there, and I understand you will again meet with the old lingering set, with that good-hearted fellow Longdon at the head, to whom I beg you will most kindly remember me, for he is the only one amongst them of any merit, pray write me word as to all that is going on there. Be civil to M—C—, and get all you can out of him respecting any meditated change in his consular situation. Be kind also to —, when opportunity may present itself. She is a very amiable person after all, and deserves better than to be placed by Providence under such a disgusting set of vulgar Hottentots.

Remember me to F—, and assure her that am always hers, as well as yours, very sincerely.

G. B.

P.S.—Now, don't play with those wretches at Calais. Think of the end of my dear old friend Horace Beckford!

MIRK ABBEY.

CHAPTER XXX.—COVETON.

COVETON—well known to ancient couples who took their first honeymoons half a century ago—is one of those old-fashioned sea-side place that resolutely refuse to be 'improved,' and the denizens of which affect to speak of Brighton a Brighthelmstone, and to treat it as a rival upon equal terms. It has two very pretty inns, but there is so little competition between them, that there is a shrewd suspicion that they are under the same management; a few more houses have been built, it is true, within the last half century but they are all constructed upon that same principle of fancy architecture, adopted at Coveton from the first, and which perhaps I may term the Lowther Arcadian. At least I am sure that the models of all its dwelling-houses are to be found in that respectable metropolitan emporium weather indicators, built for the accommodation of an unencumbered couple; churches for the dressing-table, in the front elevation of which you hang your watch before retiring to rest; villa residences down whose chimneys you drop halfpence (or half crowns, if you are so minded), for the encouragement of missionary enterprise; and gritty erections for all sorts of ingenious purposes, but which to the Uninstructed suggest only the means of lighting a cigar-match. You have no idea, unless you have been to Coveton, how odd is the effect of a real village to the construction of which these Lowther Arcadian principles have been applied where the doctors, father and son, live in a Weather Indicator (only, of course, about five hundred times as big), and the former keeps its doors when it is wet, and the son goes out in all weathers; where a genuine clergyman lives in a magnified money-box, and you look up involuntarily at the upper windows, in the expectation of seeing *Help the Heathen* running in a neat scroll between the first and second floors; and where the gritty church has a real clock in the very place where the hole was left in the model. The whole place looks, in short, as though some clever child had built it out of a box of fancy bricks, after the pattern of what he had seen on nursery mantelpieces, or suspended from Christmas-trees.

Not only is the place old-fashioned in itself and resolute to resist innovation, but the modern conveniences, which some enthusiasts have endeavoured to import thither, have suffered by the unnatural coalition. A branch railway, for instance, has been attached to this Sleepy Hollow from a great trunk-line; but the only result is that the railway has become demoralised, and ceased to perform its functions. It goes no faster than the four-horse coach, which still continues to run between Coveton and the nearest provincial town. It is very uncertain in its times of arrival and departure, and prone to delay, for with old-fashioned gallantry, its trains never fail to stop to pick up a lady, if she does but wave her parasol, no matter whether there is a station on the spot or not. A

to the supply of luxuries, or even necessities, the railway has been a total failure, and there is just the same difficulty in obtaining a sufficiency of food in Cove-ton as in the good old times—immortalised in a wood-cut at the top of the bills of the *Royal Marine Hotel*—when his Royal Highness the Duke of Kent arrived there in a carriage-and-four with outriders, and left a famine in the flattered hamlet behind him, after a residence of forty-eight hours. The most artful London bargainer who should take lodgings in Cove-ton, and attempt to do her own housekeeping, would infallibly fail to procure sustenance for herself and family. Nobody but a native can be certain, for instance, of securing a joint of meat. You have literally to 'get up early,' if your ambition extends to anything of that kind. By 9 o'clock A.M. the butcher's shop—the facsimile of those which are sold in the Lowther Arcade for children to play at 'going to market' with—has disposed of its single sheep, which lies dismembered and ticketed with the names of its several purchasers, thus: *Miss Robinson's leg; Mrs Captain Cooper's shoulder; the Rev. Jones' kidneys*; and so on. No sheep will be killed again till Saturday next. Beef is only to be looked for once a fortnight. Veal is an accident not to be counted upon at all. Game—you might just as well ask for Bird's-nest soup; and all the fish that is ever caught at Cove-ton goes as direct as the poor shambling dawdling railway can take it to the great metropolis.

If you stay at either of the hotels, you will not indeed be starved, because one half of the above-mentioned sheep is always divided between those two establishments; but you will not find any more variety. They are principally patronised by newly-married couples, who are too intoxicated with happiness to be very particular about their comfort. There are secluded harbours dotted about the pretty gardens expressly for the accommodation of this class of the community; and when a new arrival does not walk about the place with its arm round its waist (I am speaking of course of that mysterious duality which makes one out of two people), it walks about, hand in hand, like grown-up children. Nobody minds, in this little village, where honey-mooning is the normal state of visitors, and discreet behaviour the exception. Cove-ton itself, though on a small scale, is lovely, and naturally attracts these unsophisticated couples as to another Eden; there are a hundred winding walks—with rather abrupt turnings, however, which I have heard objected to as bringing folks face to face unexpectedly upon other folks who are already in that position—and seats provided at the local expense, commanding most exquisite views of the sea at all times, and of the moon when there happens to be one; and I do not doubt that as pleasant hours have been spent at Cove-ton as at any other place of its age and size within the four seas. I do not, however, recommend any middle-aged person, who has lost his taste for the mere vanities of life, and is particular about having cucumber with his salmon, to put up at either the *Royal Marine Hotel* at Cove-ton, or the other. They are both perfectly clean, it is true, but cleanliness is not everything, or else we should all go to prison, or endeavour to obtain situations from the Trinity House as supernumeraries in Light-houses. It is not pleasant to have one's bed and board in *one* (the mattresses of the *R. H. M.* indeed, I think, are of cast iron); and

when one does bring a bit of fish with one from town, one does not like it to be boiled in saltpetre, through a misunderstanding connected with cooling one's champagne with the best substitute for ice.

However, Mr Ralph Derrick, who patronised this particular establishment, found, for his part, nothing to complain of, except that its half-pints of brandy were exceptionally small; he therefore ordered a second after his dinner, and inquired of the waiter who brought it where Jacob Forest lived, and which was the nearest way of getting to his cottage.

'Jacob Forest, sir; yes, sir. You don't mean William Forest, perhaps, sir?' answered the waiter, gently whisking his napkin like a horse's tail, and with an air of patronage in his tone, as though he would say: 'I am very well aware you have made a mistake, so I do not hesitate to own it.'

'No, I don't mean William Forest, nor yet Nebuchadnezer Forest, nor Beelzebub Forest, if those names happen to run in the family,' rejoined Derrick impatiently. 'I mean simply Jacob Forest.'

'Beg pardon, sir, I'm sure, sir. But such an exceedingly old person, and so seldom inquired after; whereas, you see, William, he's a boat or two to let; and if you are anything in the shell or fossil line, he's quite an authority.—Mr Jacob's cottage, sir? Well, sir, the fact is, he has not lived in what you call a cottage for a long time. He has had a snug little house of his own, ever since my Lady Lisgard— But you know all about that story, I dare say, sir?'

'Yes, yes,' answered Derrick drily; for the very name of Lisgard had grown distasteful to him, and particularly in connection with his intended wife. 'I know that Jacob's daughter has a very kind mistress—very; in fact, that she will never part with such a treasure of a waiting-maid, if she can help it. But let us get on to the house, if you please, for I want to call there to-night, and it is even now growing rather dark.'

'Yes, sir; it is, sir. I am sorry that the dinner was so unavoidably delayed. The last train and the last coach having come in, we did not expect any more gentry this afternoon, or would have made preparation. But the fact is, sir, there is no hurry with respect to Mr Forest. You will find him abed now, and you will find him no more than that two hours hence, for poor old Jacob is bed-ridden. Very cheerful though, I hear, and would like a chat and a glass of grog with any gentleman like yourself, no matter what time it was; and if you will permit me to advise, you will wait till the moon is up; for the path across the Cove is not easy to find after dusk; and then there's the churchyard, which, somehow, one always dislikes—at least I know I do—to pass through latish, unless one can see one's way pretty well; and after that, there's a bit of a spinney before you get to the old man's house; so although you can see it at top of the hill yonder from this window—there it is, the white house with a thatched roof—you may judge that it is a good long step.'

'I see,' said Derrick nodding. 'Then I shall light my pipe, and stroll down to the sea-shore until the moon rises, if you're sure that the old man will see me at so late an hour.'

'I am quite sure, sir; it will please him above

all things, for he complains he gets no sleep of nights, to speak of. You will go down to the Cove, of course; that's what all our gentry does when there is a moon; and I shall sit up for you till you come back—although our hour for closing is eleven, sir, sharp.

'Thank you, my man,' said Derrick, 'do so;' and lighting his pipe, he strolled down thoughtfully towards the shore.

It was dark enough in the wooded Cove, although the trees were as yet but scantily clothed in their spring garments; but ever and anon, at a turn of the winding path, he came to some open spot artistically left there, where the darkling Sea lay stretched before him, waiting for her tiring-maid the Moon to clasp her jewels on. Even thus unadorned, she shewed divinely fair as her bosom rose and fell unstirred by passion, for the winds had lulled since sundown, and her gentle breath came up to him in even beats. How different must she have looked from hence, thought he, upon that night of storm which he had expected to be his last. The gale was taking them inshore, when the vessel sprung her leak; and doubtless many a fellow-passenger of his had reached this coast, perchance this very Cove, although not with life. O treacherous sea! you that can smile and smile, and break into ten thousand smiles, and make such dainty music on the pebbly shore, who can believe how cruel your wrath can be, that has not seen you tear man's floating home to fragments, and overwhelm him with his dear ones in your gaping depths? Ralph shuddered, and passed his hand across his brow, as though to erase some terrible thought within it. The silent sky, crossed by those swift and secret messengers the clouds, has doubtless a lesson for man's heart, which it would be well if he would more often study; but even Mr Ruskin, the great Self-elected Authority upon the subject, must acknowledge that there are physical difficulties at the outset of this particular system of spiritual education. Setting aside the fact, that it is only eagles which can gaze upon the sun with undazzled eyes, the human vertebra is not fitted for any prolonged investigation of the firmament; and if one lies on one's back—I don't know whether I am singular in this apprehension, but I am always afraid of some heavenly body slipping out of space, and dropping upon one while in that exposed position. But everybody can look upon the sea (from the vantage-ground at least of the solid earth), and that is the next best page of nature to the sky. There is something in its monotonous expanse which strikes most of us, especially when we watch it alone and at night, with mysterious, and perhaps religious awe. At all events, it reminds us, if there be any materials for reflection within us, of the brevity of our span of life, and of the littleness of its aims; a visible Eternity seeming to lie before us, in the presence of which we are humbled. Under ordinary circumstances, it was not likely that Derrick should experience these feelings, for sea-faring folks, in spite of what has been written of those who do their business in great waters, are least of all men subject to such influences: but not only, as we have heard him tell Lady Lisgard, did the sea at all times shew to him like one great grave, ever since it had engulfed his Lucy, but upon this occasion he was regarding it at the very spot, or near it, where the catastrophe had occurred. Thus, though the moon had risen by this time, and

bathed the deep, as all things else on which shone, in unutterable calm, Ralph's mental vision beheld waves mountains high, and one fair fragment, now lifted on their foaming tops, now buried in their raging depths, but always dead and drowned.

'Sorry to disturb you, sir, but will you favour me with half a pipeful of baccy?' inquired cheerfully voice at his elbow. 'Seeing you were alone, and without your young woman—which is rare in these parts,' continued the stranger, evidently one of the fishing community of the place, for notwithstanding the fineness of the night, he was attired in water-proof overalls—made bold, fellow-smokers being always ready to help one another in that way, if in no other. 'Thank you, sir. That will save me going to the inn to-night, a visit my missis don't approve of.'

'Is that the inn?' inquired Derrick, pointing to little low-roofed cottage just at the entrance to the Cove, and only raised a few feet above high-water mark.

'No, sir; that's my own little place, William Forest, at your service. If you happen to be in want of a boat, or one as can shew you where to find the fossils and such like, I can do that as well as any man in Cove-ton, let him be who he will.'

'Then you are old Jacob Forest's nephew, suppose, for he had no son, and only one daughter had he!'

'Just so, sir; my cousin Mary. A precious lucky woman she is. It was through her I came to have the cottage, for my uncle made it over to me when he moved to the grand house on the hill yonder, as my Lady Lisgard gave to him. God bless her Ladyship, and good Sir Robert to, though he's gone to heaven by this time, and don't want none of our wishes.'

'Yes, yes,' answered Derrick with irritation, 'you Cove-ton folks can talk of nothing but these Lisgards. Now, just dismiss them from your mind while you answer a question I am going to ask you. You are old enough to remember that terrible storm which took place here in the September of '32, are you not?'

'Yes, sir, yes. And none of us that saw it ever likely to forget it. That was the very time when old Sir Robert!'

'Damn Sir Robert!' interrupted Ralph with energy. 'If you would only be so kind as to forget that respectable baronet, and all belonging to him, while you answer me a simple question, shall be greatly obliged to you. Forgive me, mate—but my temper is not so good as my tobacco. Pray, take another pipeful. Now, after that storm in which the *North Star*—that was the name of the ship, was it not?—was lost yonder, were there many bodies washed ashore about here?'

'Dead uns, you mean, sir, of course?' answered the man hesitatingly. 'Well, yes, there was. Should think, taking them all together, for they came in, some of them, weeks afterwards, I should think there was a dozen or more; many of them lashed to spars, poor things. But it was no use.'

'And where were these unfortunate creatures put to?' inquired Derrick after a pause.

'They were all buried in the churchyard yonder, sir. Sir Robert Lisgard—but there, I forgot; you may read some of their names—those at least was identified—upon the tombstones. It was a sad sight them burials. Strangers, and very poor folk mostly, coming from miles and miles away to see

their dead, who had but left home a few days before for a New World, indeed, as they call it, but little thinking as it was for *that*. You should hear Uncle Jacob talk of it.'

'Ah, sad, indeed,' echoed Derrick, rising from his seat. 'I am glad to have met you, mate; good-night, and thank you.'

'Thank you, sir; I never tasted better baccy.'

Derrick waited until his companion had descended to the very bottom of the Cove; waited until he saw the cottage door open and shut—a mere streak of light and shadow—and then followed on his steps; but having reached the foot of the ravine, he took the winding path that led up its opposite side towards the church and Jacob Forest's high-built dwelling.

CHAPTER XXXI.—THE MEMORIAL WINDOW.

Notwithstanding that Cove-ton Church is 'gritty,' like all the rest of the architecture in that locality, and presents the appearance of an ecclesiastical edifice swathed in sand-paper, it is by no means unpicturesque; while the spot on which it stands can compare for beauty with any God's-acre in England. It is more than a hundred feet above the level of the village, and commands a glorious view, which would be a complete panorama, but for the steep wooded hill, which protects it from the bitter north, and assists the genial climate to make a flower-garden of the churchyard three parts of the year round. Even thus early in the summer, had Ralph's visit been paid in the daytime instead of the night, he would have seen it bright with bud and blossom, for almost every grave was itself a little parterre, tended by pious hands. Poor wasted human forms, but not seldom dearer to others than the handsomest and healthiest, often come to Cove-ton to prolong for a little their painful lives, until they flit away like shadows; indeed, if you read the grave-stones, you will find three out of four are records of departed Youth. The newly Married pass their honeymoons at the pleasant little village, and those who have been sentenced to death by the Doctors come also thither, and a strange and touching contrast they afford.

The low large moon was flooding the sacred place with its soft radiance, so that the inscriptions were as plain to be seen as in broad noonday. From knoll to knoll, each roofing sacred dust, Ralph wandered, not unmoved; for he too had lost a dear one by untimely death, and even now was looking for the place where haply she might lie. He would have felt it in some sort a comfort to know that her bones rested beneath the rounded turf, rather than in yonder shifting deep, although, beyond the wooded village with its scattered lights, it lay as motionless at present as a silver pall. No less than thrice, he came upon the tombs of those with whom he had been a fellow-passenger on board that doomed ship so many years ago. Time had done its work with these, and they were not easily deciphered; but he carefully spelled them out—*John Robins, mate of the North Star, which foundered at sea on the night of September 14, 1832.* Poor Robins! Ralph remembered him very well. They had been fellow-townsmen together at Bleamouth, a circumstance which had troubled him at first, sailing as he did under a feigned name; but they had met but once before, and the mate had, as it turned out, no remembrance of him. But Ralph well remembered what uneasiness the possibility of

recognition had given him at the time, for it might have been supposed that he had committed some disgraceful crime, which would cause him, and what was worse, his wife and the Meades, to be looked upon askance throughout the voyage. But what did it matter now? What had anything mattered to that great ship's company, so full of plans and projects for beginning life afresh under other skies! Death had made sudden and swift provision for them all.—*Sarah Sutton, aged 69, and Henry, her son. The bodies of his four children, and of Helen, his wife, who perished in the same storm, never came to shore.*—Ralph remembered the gaunt, strong old woman, who did not hesitate, within a year of man's allotted span, to cross the ocean; she and her son were as like as difference of age and sex could permit of likeness; but the children, like the wife, were delicate and sickly. It seemed somehow fitting enough that these two, though dead, should have come to land; while the others, poor things, should have succumbed to the stormy deep. The third inscription was even a more remarkable one. Upon a huge recumbent slab, which evidently roofed the remains of more than one person, were engraved these words: *Beneath this stone are laid the bones of those who were washed on shore from the wreck of the North Star, but whose remains, from lapse of time, or other causes, have not been identified. 'Requiescant in pace.'*

A nameless grave, indeed, with not even the number or the sex of its Unfortunate inmates specified! The slab bore the date of but a week or two subsequent to the catastrophe, yet spoke 'of lapse of time.' How impossible, therefore, to discover now whose bones had mouldered beneath it into dust. His Lucy might be there, or she might not. It was one of the few tombs that exhibited no trace of care; but a tuft of violets, the sweet breath of which betrayed them, chanced to be growing at the edge of it, and Derrick plucked them, and placed them in his bosom. He seemed to feel certain now that she had come ashore *somewhere*; and why not here? How solemn and still it was! The very air, though odorous and fresh, seemed full of the presence of the dead; and Ralph's thoughts were with them, so that he quite forgot the purpose with which he had visited the little village, light after light in which was being quenched beneath him, for it was growing late.

Was it likely that there would be any record of the perished crew in the church itself? They had almost all been in humble circumstances, being emigrants, and therefore it was not probable that any such costly memorial should have been erected; but still it was just possible. The oaken door, studded with iron nails, was locked, and also a small postern that led into a diminutive vestry, an offshoot of the main building. The windows, too, were fastened on the inside, or gave no promise of opening, either in hinge or handle; but he climbed up to the sill of one of them, for they were of no great height, and looked in. The church was small, but very neat and pretty, with carved oaken sittings, a handsome double pulpit, and a huge brass lectern, of the use of which the present spectator knew nothing. Ralph had not seen so much of the inside of a church for many a year, and he was fortunate in the specimen thus accidentally submitted to his notice. The wealthy visitors of the place had done their duty, and gratified their

tastes at the same time, by many a pious offering. A small but splendid organ, with gilded and star-bespangled pipes, adorned the gallery on his left; and immediately in front of him glowed a memorial window. There were other smaller ones, erected, doubtless, in tribute to some of those dear ones who had been laid so prematurely in the graveyard without; but this was a very large and elaborate specimen of modern art. The designer, in his admiration of the antique, had carefully reproduced every blemish peculiar to an age wherein anatomy was never studied save by doctors, and perspective was utterly unknown. The persons represented were the four evangelists, all in the most gorgeous dyes, and as large as life; but with their magnitude ceased almost all similarity to the human form divine. Their spines were dislocated, their bones were distorted; and where a limb was bent, it exhibited a sharp angle, like a broken branch. In the background rose the mountains of Judaea, of the same size and shape as Christmas plum-puddings, with the sun setting luridly in the midst of them, like snapdragon. Ralph, however, was quite of the opinion of the great authorities upon church decoration, and thought this very fine; he was also perfectly right in coming to the conclusion that such a work of art must have cost somebody a good bit of money. The moonlight streamed in behind him full upon it, and lit up all its splendid hues. Besides the scrolls, with texts upon them, proceeding out of the mouths of these individuals like ribbons from between the lips of a conjuror at a fair, there was a gilded inscription underneath the whole, in highly florid and decorated print. In the case of the texts, when you had managed to master the first letter, the deciphering of the rest was, to a person acquainted with the Scriptures, tolerably easy; though poor Ralph was by no means 'edified,' and could make nothing of them at all; but as for the inscription at the base, it looked to him at the first glance as meaningless as the hieroglyphics on a tea-chest.

'Why cannot these good people write what they have to say in plain English?' thought Derrick irreverently; 'folks as come to church must need to bring a copy-book of alphabets with them. Never in all my life, and I've been among strangely-speaking creatures in my time, did I come upon such queer-looking writing; and yet, one would think, being all in such resplendent hues, it ought to be something worth reading too.—Bless my soul and body, what's this?'

This last ejaculation was uttered with excessive vehemence, and the excitement of the speaker was such that he could scarce keep his balance on the narrow sill upon which he half knelt, half clung. His hot breath had dimmed the glass, and as he wiped the moisture from it with his handkerchief, his fingers trembled so with agitation that they tapped audibly upon the pane. He glued his face to the window for upwards of a minute, and when he took it away again, it was white as the marble font that gleamed within. Had Ralph Derrick seen a ghost, that he slipped down from that window-sill with such excessive precipitation, and stood beneath it with his hat off, wiping his cold brow? 'Am I awake or dreaming?' murmured he, striking himself a sounding blow upon the chest. 'Was the brandy at yonder inn so strong that it has drugged me? or has this moonlight, as some hold it does, been stealing away my wits? or has

the subject of my thoughts suggested names of which I had believed no record survived?' Once more Ralph took his station at the window, and this time did not leave it till he had not only made himself master, although with pain and difficulty, of that part of the inscription which had so arrested his attention, but had even transferred it, as well as his position permitted, to his pocket-book, word for word:

In memory of
FRANK MEADE, aged 66,
and

KATHERINE, his wife, aged 56,
drowned at sea, Sept. 14, A.D. 1832.

And also of
RALPH GAVESTONE, aged 22,
who perished in the same storm.

Some sacred words were added, but they told him nothing more concerning those three persons, namely, his lost wife's father and mother, and himself. Ralph Gavestone, *alias* Derrick, had been gazing upon his own memorial window, set up to commemorate his death more than thirty years' ago!

Who had done it? Who could have had the will to do it? And who the means? And how was it that he and the Meades were associated together upon yonder painted glass, and yet not she who was the only bond between them? Why was not the death of that sweet saint made mention of in a place so fitting for its record, and where his own unworthy name had found admittance; and his real name too—not the one which had stood upon the passenger-list of the *North Star*? Into his perplexed and wandering mind there came some half-forgotten tale, heard from he knew not whom, of some Scotch laird who, gifted with the second-sight, perceives a funeral pass by—the coffin borne by relatives of his, and followed by troops of mourning friends—and marvels that among the weoful crowd he does not recognise himself. Surely, thinks he, he should be there, to shew respect to the common friend departed, whom he must have known so well, although he misses no remembered face. Then on a sudden it strikes him that he himself must be in the coffin—that it is his own interment of which he is the witness—and his heart fails within him because he feels that he has had his warning, and stands indeed within the shadow of black death. Why Ralph should think of such a tale in such a place may perhaps have been easily accounted for, but once remembered, he applied it with lightning speed to the subject in his mind, only in an inverse sense. The reason why his Lucy's name was not upon that mystic monument, where those of her parents and her husband were glowing in purple and gold, must be that she herself was *alive*. Nay, who upon earth could have wished thus piously to perpetuate their memory except Lucy herself? How she could have had the power to do so, in so splendid and enduring a manner, would have been of itself sufficiently miraculous, but that that circumstance was swallowed up, like Pharaoh's serpents, by the still greater miracle—the fact that she was among the Living!

For a moment, a sort of ecstasy seemed to possess this world-weary Wanderer, and all the moonlit scene to assume an aspect altogether

strange, such as earth and sea, however beautiful, can only shew to the pure and hopeful; then a sharp thought pierced his brain. She might have been alive when she caused that window to be set up, and yet not now. He knew that those gorgeous dyes kept their bright colours for many a year undimmed: supposing that he allowed five years (in which, by the by, Ralph was very near the truth) as a reasonable time to have elapsed between the shipwreck and the time that this memorial was erected—and in less time, how was it possible she could have saved the money for such a purpose—that would still leave more than a quarter of a century between its erection and the present time. A quarter of a century! a generation of human life! Time enough to die, to marry—but no, his Lucy would never have done that. This window, shewing so tender a regard after such a lapse of years, was evidence in some sort to the contrary; and since he himself had never forgotten *her*, and only now, after a lonely lifetime, was meditating another marriage, he felt no apprehension upon that score. No; if his Lucy was alive, she was still his, and free to welcome him as of old to her loving arms. The only question with which he had now any real concern was, whether she still lived? Henceforward, it would be his sole business in the world to find this matter out. And first, she must certainly have been washed ashore alive; and somewhere in these parts. Who, then, so fit to give him information upon that point as old Jacob Forest, who had lived at Coveton all his life, and at that time, in the very cottage on the beach where his nephew now resided? So Ralph Derrick (for, like everybody else, we may still continue to call him so) took the path that he had originally intended to take after all, notwithstanding his marvellous discovery, and made straight for Jacob's dwelling on the hill; no longer with the intention of winning a bride, but of recovering a long-lost wife.

THE DWELLINGS OF OUR POOR.

GENERATIONS hence, it will be held a national disgrace, although an honour to human nature, that the poor of this country were indebted for their first great gift of Home to an American citizen. We have grown rich beyond the dreams of avarice; luxuries have been brought within the reach of persons of the most moderate means, which but a little while ago could not be obtained by monarchs. Domestic and social convenience has been consulted among the middle ranks of society, until there is scarcely a want unsatisfied. Even our horses and cattle are housed with a comfort that verges upon fastidiousness; the winds of heaven are not permitted to visit our sporting dogs too roughly. But the poor of England, those from whom all this wealth is originally wrung, whose labour makes the land to laugh with harvest, whose toil welds the fiery metal which becomes the steam-engine, and ministers to our most exacting needs—these are lodged no better than they were five centuries ago; nay, infinitely worse; for whatever may have been wanting in ancient days in the way of window and door, three necessities of life were always attainable, which are now denied to the poor.

'One naturally thinks that the three cheapest things in this beautiful world, the three things that every one might have as much of as he liked, would be *sunlight, pure air, and clean water*; yet they are fast becoming the scarcest luxuries a man can wish for. In the metropolis of the kingdom, and indeed in every large centre of population, thousands, nay, scores of thousands, of human beings are congregated together, who, instead of enjoying these natural luxuries, dwell in unhealthy, dirty, miserable hovels, crowded into small streets and courts, ofttimes hidden behind palatial structures; illustrating, by contrast, the wide extremes of modern civilisation, where "wealth accumulates, and men decay." There nearly half the children born never emerge from the stage of infancy, but die almost before childhood has begun; and if the dwellers in such districts do not die young, the probabilities are against their reaching even one-half of the average term of human existence.'

These words are taken from a work entitled *The Homes of the Working-classes*, by James Hole, published under the sanction of the Society of Arts, and dedicated to Edward Akroyd, who, with Titus Salt and John Crosley, must be held (next to Mr Peabody) to have contributed more largely, as well as more wisely, to the welfare of their fellow-creatures than any men now living. It is a book that will not be read by many, because it deals by necessity with statistics; but it is one that deserves to be read by all who have hearts to feel, and a spare shilling to invest in a manner which will certainly bear them interest one day.* There is material in it, indeed, for a Sensation Novel; but then, alas, it is all true; and 'one doesn't want to be made miserable by reading such things,' says Self-content with a little shudder; and 'there is always so much exaggeration,' says Plausible with an assuring smile. 'Moreover,' adds Conventional Propriety, taking his French novel from the shelf behind Doctor Kitto's Commentaries, 'there are so many disgusting details in those sanitary works, that it is quite disagreeable to peruse them.' This last accusation cannot, indeed, be laid to the charge of Mr Hole's volume, which has evidently been written for general perusal, and can lie upon the drawing-room table as fitly as in the study of the philanthropist or man of science: but he does not paint his subject in rose-colour. The poets may depict extraordinary heroes, in whom the soul has triumphed over all external disadvantages, but the stern fact is, that the average mind is incapable of long resisting the daily attrition of degrading associations. The virtues of chastity and purity are insisted upon from the pulpit on the seventh day in vain, to hearers who are doomed to lie three, nay, even *six* together in one bed, no matter what their sex or age, night after night: the eloquence of the most inspired apostle would

* Those who are not in a position to strengthen the hands of the projectors of good Building Societies, cannot do better than assist with their subscriptions the various 'Homes' for the ragged and outcast Poor.

be thrown away under such circumstances, and nobody is better aware of the fact than the hard-working and faithful minister of God. The sleek bishop or dainty dean may prate of 'the influence of the church,' but the working curate and the Scripture-reader are well persuaded that while men, and women, and children are huddled together like pigs, such words are worse than idle, for they encourage those who might really stretch out helping-hands to delude themselves with the idea that there is no need. 'Even those who see the connection between filth and fever,' says our author, 'are yet scarcely willing to admit the connection between filth and vice; though the one is *quite as certain as the other.*'

It is, however, thought reverential by some persons—not Mohammedans, who believe in 'kismet' (fate), but Christian men—to treat fever and pestilence as inscrutable visitations of the Divine Wisdom, instead of regarding them as the natural consequences of its violated laws: let such ill-judging persons read what follows: 'In one parish in Leicester, containing a population of twenty-two thousand, nearly all artisans employed in weaving stockings, the average age of those who died in one year was eighteen years. But when the death-rate was examined with reference to the drained and undrained portions of the parish, it was found that the average age at death in the drained streets was twenty-three and a half years; in the streets partially drained, seventeen and a half years; and in the streets entirely undrained, thirteen and a half years. In Salisbury, the annual mortality before drainage was about twenty-eight, and after drainage, about twenty-one in the thousand. In Ely, the reduction was from twenty-six to twenty-one in the thousand.' The above, remember, is only the result of improved *drainage*: it has nothing to do with the lodgment of these poor folks, which remains as it was.

Let us next consider the question of mere *ventilation*. You or I, good reader, sometimes complain that a room is 'stuffy,' and open a window; when immediately fresh air flows in. The poor cannot do this, for in the courts and alleys of great towns there is no such thing; and even in the country, where there are often abominations and impurities all around the cottage, *not the fault of the tenant*, it is very scarce. 'The allowance of space to the pauper, as fixed by the Poor-law Board, is, when in good health, three hundred cubic feet; when sick, five hundred. The allowance to the convicted criminal is one thousand cubic feet of air, regularly changed. These are the lowest amounts of space which, keeping in view all possible economy in the construction of work-houses and jails, are compatible with health.' Yet in our towns, and in our agricultural districts also, the allowance of space in thousands of dwellings is not one hundred cubic feet per inmate. The rooms of the poor are sickening to the medical man who has occasion to visit them. 'The exhalations in such places,' says Dr Southwood Smith, 'consist chiefly of animal matter, and contain a poison which produces continued fever of the

typhoid character.' He even adds: 'There are instances in which this poison is so intense and deadly, that a single inspiration of it is capable of producing instantaneous death.' That this is not an exaggerated statement, may be gathered from the following Official Report:

'In the course of four years, the Lying-in-hospital in Dublin, a badly-ventilated place, lost 2944 infants out of 7650. Means were taken to remedy the bad ventilation of the house, and after this was done, the deaths in the same period of time, out of the same number of children, were only 279.'

Mr Hole is by no means one of those advocates who can see no faults in their own clients. He does not deny that some of the excessive mortality among the poor is due to dissipated, improvident, and filthy habits; but these very habits are engendered by the houses in which they dwell. The gin-shop is a haven of refuge from pestilence and discomfort. The unmentionable horrors of a poor man's house, always ill provided—often *totally destitute* of those conveniences without which education itself is vain to lift Humanity above the Swine, are not to be imagined by us, who can send our servant for the plumber at any moment. 'Nothing short of a tornado could ventilate' such dwellings—and their name is Legion; 'while in still weather, the atmosphere in them is unchanged and unchangeable.' Then, again, with respect to personal cleanliness, the complete washing of the body in a working-man's cottage is a problem of practical difficulty. There is no space, no privacy, and very seldom a proper supply of water. In thousands of instances, neither man nor wife is completely washed for months together. In such confined dwellings, the washing of the clothes even—not a pleasant institution among ourselves, remember—is a domestic curse among the poor, costs twice as much as is necessary in labour, soap, and fuel, and drives Paterfamilias in despair to his Club—the Tap-room.

In these crowded cottages, it, of course, often happens that not only the sick and sound, but even the living and the dead, are lodged in the same room. The corpse lies with the sleepers until the burial-day arrives, generally *under* the bed, to give more room, but sometimes actually *upon* it! Think what this must be in the heats of summer, when the malady has been loathsome, and putrefaction is rapid, let alone the extinction of all reverence for the presence of Death! It is, in fact, the merest mockery to talk of Reverence under conditions where 'common decency between the sexes cannot be said to be destroyed only because it never has (nor could have) existed.' Without entering into this part of the subject further, we may observe, that the *most unfavourable phase* of the early development of the passions caused by overcrowding is 'a tendency to very early marriages, entered into with an utter absence of all provision for domestic comfort, and an entire recklessness about the future.' It is, indeed, almost a subject for congratulation that while not one-fifth of the children of the rich die before the fifth year, more than one-half of the children of the ill-housed poor are taken away from the miseries to come; if they attain maturity, their stunted and ill-developed forms have an average duration of life shortened by from twenty to forty years below its proper period. In Mr Edwin Chadwick's official Report for 1860, the average age at which

death occurs among different classes of the community in rural and manufacturing districts was, with respect to the places named, as follows :

Places.	Gentry.	Tradesmen.	Labourers.
Rutlandshire, . .	52	41	38
Truro,	40	33	28
Derby,	49	38	21
Manchester, . .	38	20	17
Bolton,	34	23	18
Bethnal Green, .	45	26	16
Leeds,	44	27	19
Liverpool, . . .	35	22	15

The average sickness in an ordinary labouring population is about twelve days *per annum*, a loss of wages of one-thirtieth of the poor man's average income, in addition to the cost of medicine and medical aid. By improved sanitary measures, it is *certain* that this sickness could be reduced one-half ; so that, assuming the wages of a labourer to be fifteen shillings a week, the saving in a population of ten thousand would be seven thousand five hundred pounds a year—a sum which alone would pay the interest on an expenditure of one hundred and fifty thousand pounds.

These being facts, all argument about the expense of sanitary provision falls to the ground entirely. No pressure that could be put upon rate-payers can equal the tax imposed upon them by the consequences of this neglect. While with respect to the moral evils, which such a state of things of necessity engenders, how strange is the obtuseness which continues to spend so much money and exertion in attempts to reform by punishing vice, while so little effort is made to prevent it. 'We spend a hundred pounds upon the cell of a thief; we may surely, therefore, spare a little for the home of an honest man.'

But though benevolence can do much, we cannot, unfortunately, trust to sentiment in this matter. Otherwise, honourable men, who are great landlords, would not see, unmoved, their peasantry dwelling in cottages unfit for human habitation, and infinitely less cared for than their horses and dogs. They would not have permitted, simply because of the Law of Settlement (happily now abolished)—their cottages to be kept down to a *minimum*, in order to prevent the land from becoming chargeable.* Let it be distinctly understood that (with, of course, many honourable exceptions) the great lords of acres in this country are just as selfish, just as grasping, just as indifferent to the swinish lives their poorer tenants are doomed to live—or, if not indifferent, wilfully ignorant, since they trust to the smooth reports of their paid agents—as any speculating builder in the manufacturing districts, who runs up his lath and plaster tenements back to back, and without the smallest provision for decency or health, in order to wring his weekly shillings from the mechanic. What is wanted, what is absolutely necessary, is the strong arm of the law. Within the last thirty years, writes Dr Hunter, the medical officer on Public Health, these evils have been in very rapid increase, and the household circumstances of the labourer are now in the highest degree deplorable. Eight hundred parishes, within his personal knowledge, have, in the last ten years,

received a population five and a third per cent. greater into *house-room* four and a half per cent. less.

'Except in so far as they whom his labour enriches see fit to treat him with a kind of pitiful indulgence, the labourer is quite peculiarly helpless in the matter. Whether he shall find house-room on the land which he contributes to till ; whether the house-room which he gets shall be human or swinish ; whether he shall have the little space of garden that so vastly lessens the pressure of his poverty—all this does not depend on his willingness and ability to pay reasonable rent for the decent accommodation he requires, but depends on the use which others may see fit to make of their right to do as they will with their own. However large may be a farm, there is no law that a certain proportion of labourers' dwellings (much less of decent dwellings) shall be upon it ; nor does any law reserve for the labourer ever so little right in that soil to which his industry is as needful as sun and rain.'

Dr John Simon, the medical officer to the Privy Council, suggests that 'all lands which require labour ought to be held liable to the obligation of containing a certain proportion of labourers' cottages.'

The rights of property are doubtless of importance, but not more so than the conditions of human health ; if vaccination can be legally enforced—the protection of the public against small-pox—why are we not also protected by the Law from typhoid fevers and cholera, which are always issuing from these wretched dens ? When landlords, sub-landlords, and sub-sub landlords conspire to produce manufactories of disease and pestilence in which every decency of life is outraged, and the obligations of morality are scouted, the wellbeing of society requires that such haunts should be brought under rigid inspection and control.

There are factory inspectors, mine inspectors, and school inspectors ; inspectors of emigrant ships, of prisons, and of lunatic asylums ; and the vast majority of the public, and even those most opposed to these inspectors in the first instance, have arrived at the conviction that their appointment has conferred vast benefits upon the people. But here is a grievance greater than all those which they are appointed to prevent. Why, then, should there not be health inspectors, who should regularly visit our towns and villages, and report how far the sanitary laws are observed, and who should have power to proceed against local authorities neglecting their functions, just as a factory inspector prosecutes an offending mill-owner ? Doubtless there are considerable financial difficulties. 'The wretched houses which too many of the labouring-classes now inhabit are in their present condition highly remunerative to the landlords ; consequently, such houses fetch a high price when brought into the market. They may be made to yield a good profit in the hands of those who care nothing for the moral and physical wellbeing of tenants ; but the expense of putting them into sanitary condition, and adapting them to the wants of respectable working-men, reduces the returns so much as to render the undertaking, in a commercial sense, unprofitable.'

But in these cases, the owners of such property should be compelled by the law either to put it in a healthy condition, to close it altogether, or to part with it at its fairly ascertained value to those

* In these cases, beside his hard work, the labourer had often an exhausting walk, in all weathers, of two, three, and even four miles, to and from his work ; thus bringing an *incapacity* for work so much the earlier.

who may be willing to undertake the necessary outlay. 'At present, the fact of such property being acquired for by philanthropic persons actually gives it a fictitious value.' Again, 'it sometimes happens that the difficulty of carrying out sanitary reforms is enhanced by the poverty of many of the house-owners. Often the property is mortgaged, and the amount left from the rent, after paying the interest of the mortgage, may be all that is left to support, it may be, a widow and her family. An expensive sanitary improvement absorbs the whole of that income for a year or two, and leaves them penniless. Such cases are entitled to the most lenient consideration, but cannot be allowed to stand in the way of the public health. An owner of property which he is unable to keep in proper condition is like the landlord of an Irish encumbered estate, and the sooner he disposes of it the better for himself and all concerned. But whether the obstacle to sanitary reform arises from want of means, as in the case just alluded to, or whether it arises from the cottage speculator, who runs up cottages by the score, devoid of every condition of health or decent convenience; or from some absentee house-owner, who, comfortably ensconced in his pleasant sea-side residence, draws from an agent the price of fever and crime, in willing ignorance, provided only the ten per cent. be regularly forthcoming; it is time their proceedings were checked by a higher authority than that which at present deals with them.' Of course there will be an immense deal of nonsense under the head of 'liberty of the subject,' urged against any plan which should be taken up by the government; and with respect to the future provision of houses for the working-classes, such objections have been already put forth; but as the Rev. Dr Begg, whose book upon this subject has lately received notice in these columns, has remarked: 'It never occurs to any one now that land cannot be had for making a railway, or any other public improvement, at a fair value. No one ever says in regard to such a case: "Let the railway wait until the land comes into the market, and obtain it by fair competition." An act of parliament is obtained at once, and the land is got at a fair value, as a matter of course. No good reason seems to exist why the sanitary, social, and moral interests of thousands of the people should not obtain from parliament a concession similar to what is thus readily obtained by a few railway speculators. The simple plan would be to mark out a radius around every increasing town, within which all the land might be taken for the erection of houses for the people at a fair valuation, and under proper regulations to be fixed by competent authority.'

Under the Local Government Act, indeed, something has already been done to remedy the hideous and wide-spread evils of which we speak, but its powers are felt to be insufficient by those corporations—such as Manchester and Bradford—which have shewn inclination to use them. Some central and strong control is urgently needed. It is not money that the poor are so much in need of as anything approaching to money's worth. The poor who lodge in the miserable dens of St Giles's pay rents averaging £6 per thousand cubic feet—as much as is paid for the most aristocratic mansions in Belgravia. If, to permit a larger population, we tolerate the growth of inferior conditions, we may be sure that there is no depth of

degradation to which human beings will not fall. But, it will be asked, if so much money is paid for these vile holes, why don't people build better ones, and outbid such mercenary landlords. Well, they do so to some extent. 'According to the Report of the Society of Arts, it appears that the Society for Improving the Dwellings of the Labouring Classes established two sets of model lodging-houses in London: one in 1847 in Charles Street, Drury Lane, containing eighty-two beds; and one in 1849 in Hatton Garden, containing fifty-four compartments. According to the return of 1863, the former paid a profit of 12½, the latter 8½ per cent. upon the outlay.' But it is useless to conceal the fact, that capitalists, who do not also happen to be philanthropists, avoid this species of investment; and, at all events, in the meantime, until they have generally proved profitable, it is idle to hope for any vast measure of improvement, such as is so urgently demanded, except through the agency of the government. Here is a summary of the conclusions to which those most conversant with this subject—the most important, in our opinion, of any that can occupy the attention of the legislature—have arrived. They demand, 'first, the supervision by a central authority of the local bodies who are intrusted with the management and control of sanitary regulations, so as to insure that the powers intrusted to the local authorities are fairly and honestly carried out.'

'2. The appointment of medical officers for each town, as is done at present in London and in some other places, with this difference: that the appointment and payment of such officers should rest with the central, and not the local authority. Health inspectors also should be appointed on the same plan as the present factory inspectors, who should report annually to parliament on the sanitary condition of their respective districts.'

'3. A general Building Act, regulating the minimum width of streets, prohibiting cellar-dwellings, back-to-back houses, and the construction of all houses—at all events, in towns—which did not comply with certain well-ascertained conditions of health; such as drainage, supply of water to each house, &c.'

'4. Such an alteration of the laws relating to common lodging-houses as shall reach all the houses needing the application of them.'

'5. Government loans by way of mortgage on the property, to be granted on liberal terms to local authorities, public bodies, and private individuals, for the erection of improved lodging-houses and cottage dwellings, whenever a clear and urgent case could be made out for such assistance, with adequate security for repayment of the advances.'

'6. Inducements to the working-classes to become the owners of their dwellings, by increased facilities in the purchase of land, by removal of legal impediments, by simplifying the process and cheapening the cost of conveyance; and giving also encouragement, by conferring the privilege of the borough franchise on every working-man who acquires such ownership.'

'7. Power to be given to owners of lands, tied up by any legal disability, to dispose of it whenever required by the local authorities; and power, too, to be given to the latter to compel the sale of land within a certain radius, whenever the supply was inadequate to the growth of population or its sanitary exigencies.'

What seems to us an excellent recommendation

for the future is, the erection of 'model' villages outside our large towns and on the main lines of railway, so that the workmen might be brought to and from their work each day at almost nominal cost. 'There the artisan might enjoy the blessed gifts of sunlight and pure air, open space for his children to play in, and a cottage-garden to find him pleasant and profitable employment for a spare hour.' Nor is this the mere dream of a visionary. Here and there, in England, a merchant-prince has built a whole town in the vicinity of his works for the accommodation of his own labourers; and in each case, the result of such noble acts has been most significant: never did George Godwin's saying, 'As are the Homes so are the People,' receive more ample confirmation.

We have no space for the present to speak of those towns of labour, Akroyd, Saltaire, and West Hill Park, the noblest monuments to philanthropy which have been ever set up in any country by employers of labour. If the beautiful lithographs in the present volume are at all like the originals, the inhabitants of these model colonies should consider themselves blessed indeed, even before they find themselves the *proprietors* (as it is intended they at last shall do) of the dwellings of which they are at first the mere tenants. With such a goal in view, no wonder that they are steady, prudent, and punctual in their payments. 'If the attempt bring no profit,' says Mr Akroyd, 'or even occasion pecuniary loss, in no other way can the same benefits be conferred upon working-men at so slight a loss—benefits which entail no degradation and wound no self-respect, but, on the contrary, confer independence, whilst the achievement of that independence constitutes a HABIT of saving, most useful in after-life. A rich reward will accrue to the promoters in the contemplation of the comfort, happiness, and social improvement which they will have helped to provide for the industrious and most deserving portion of the community.'

Such men as Mr Akroyd, however, will always, alas! be exceptional members of the community, and the advantages such men confer needs be partial. And though it has been well said, that 'the devout feeling which, in former days, raised august cathedrals, might find an employment to the full as religious now in building a row of humble cottages,' such good impulses are very far from common. What is demanded upon the highest public grounds is the *intervention of the Law*. Nay, even upon selfish ground, and for our sakes, it is demanded also; for not only are we sooner or later the victims of those physical diseases which are nurtured in the filthy dwellings of our poor, but the low moral condition to which they are of necessity reduced afflicts us nearly. We feel the results of their brutality in crimes of violence; and even 'the domestic, whose dirty or dishonest habits inflict such annoyance—the nurse-girl, whose passion or ignorance leaves its impress on the children confided to her care—repay to us the indifference manifested to their own fate.' Is it wonderful that good domestics have become so rare, considering the 'homes' from which they come? On the contrary, well may we wonder, taking into account their conditions of existence, that our struggling poor so often exhibit such noble traits of character—such fortitude, such kindness, and such sympathy; and especially such self-sacrifice in behalf of those who are suffering even more terrible privations than themselves.

CORN-FLOWERS.

From dawn till dusk, we followed up
The reapers through the wheat;
And tied the rustling corn, that lay
Like sunshine at our feet.

Kate laughed with Willie all day long,
And Kate sang merrily;
He said she sang like any bird,
And then she laughed to me.

For Kate he reaped the poppies red
That nodded in the corn;
For me he broke a pale sweet rose,
And pulled away the thorn.

He said the flowers were like her cheek.
My heart was sore all day;
And when he held the rose to me,
I turned my face away.

The blue shades fell; and by the stile
At dusk we sat to rest;
Through tears, I watched the angels' wings
That flickered in the west.

They gossiped; and I heard them say:
'Oh, she is never seen
When Kate is near! She's slight and pale;
And Kate is like a queen.'

And they went gaily by the fields:
And I, to hide my pain,
Slipped from them at the dusky stile,
And went home by the lane.

I heard his step—I would not stay—
And when he came so near,
I felt him breathe—I would not look,
And dried a silly tear.

Then bitterly he spoke. He held
The rose I would not wear;
And I said: 'Give it Kate; she twined
The poppies in her hair!'

'Oh, hear me now, below the moon
That watches from above!
I jest with merry Kate,' he said,
'But never speak of love.'

'And what is Kate between us two?
I love but you alone:
Oh! take the sign, and take my heart;
Since, Love, it is your own!'

I took the rose.—A little bird
Sang out a song for me;
And broadly smiled the harvest-moon,
Our happy looks to see.

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MANGLED NEWS.

IF I were American in my ideas, I might ask, which was the number of the *Beacon* whose leaders caused such intense political discussion throughout continental Europe? But I have not so powerful a sweep of imagination as Martin Chuzzlewit's friend, Colonel Diver; and therefore I will very modestly presume that it is not everybody who has had the good-fortune to read the well-condensed and carefully-epitomised home, foreign, and colonial news contained in that bright star of Australasia, the *Burrahurry Beacon*. The schoolmaster is said to be abroad, but it is doubtful whether in his foreign travels he has ever crossed that immense tract of pastoral land which lies between Adelaide and the town and district in question. To be truthful, the name did not exist in any other than rough Australian maps at the time I speak of; but the days are fast approaching when from the proud eminence where, looking across the mighty— But there; I won't stop upon this occasion to repeat the words of that powerful leader which told of the future greatness of the far-distant colony, and the day when *Burrahurry* must take a most important position in matters political; for my intention is to give a short and succinct account of the rise of that glorious institution, the—well, it was meant for it, though only a substitute—the Press, in the town in question.

Those people who visited the 'Glass Palace' of '51 probably saw some malachite specimens of doors, vases, and clocks, contributed by the emperor of Russia. These were for the most part Uralian, I believe, and will give some slight idea of the majestic ore which 'crops out,' to use the language of the *Mining Journal*, all through the *Burrahurry* district; and it is the placing of this valuable carbonate in the market that forms the principal occupation of the *Burrahurrians*, one of whom I happened to be at the time of which I write.

'Taint in, Dick,' said Fred. Arden, giving the Adelaide paper a scrunch up, and casting it into a corner of the room.

'Didn't expect that it would be,' said Dick, *alias*

Richard Roberts, Esq., who was smoking a very large, strong, and highly-dried cheroot, whose rank flavour soon threw into the shade the milder incense of our government Manillas. 'Didn't expect it would be; and here we are, a most important town, in a most important district, teeming with events, and not merely without a paper, but compelled to depend upon that wretched rag. Why, if you and Arden here made no profit out of the transaction, the influence and position a paper would give you would repay you for all the money you laid down.'

'But allowing that the whole account of the races was too long, they might have put in a short notice,' said Arden sulkily.

'Oh, it's just like them,' said Dick; 'they care for nothing but their own district, and wouldn't give a dump for outside news.'

That very night, the question was well ventilated; and the conversation ended with a determination that the standard of political freedom should be planted in *Burrahurry*, which was henceforth—that is, after a lapse of some six months—to have a paper. Dick Roberts knew all about papers, and took upon himself the ordering of everything from England. The working-part we were to do ourselves, with the assistance of boys; and, as a matter of course, the *Beacon* was only to be a small beacon at first, but one whose light should grow brighter and stronger as time went on.

In due time came advices that the type and materials had been despatched; but from pressure of business the press could not be sent off till the next vessel sailed.

Dick said something which is not often put into print; but that did no good; so we patiently waited the arrival of the vessel; had the packing-cases bullock-trucked up the country when the vessel did come, and was unladen; and at last, after no end of difficulties and breakings-down, began to unpack in the room we had set apart for an office. That was a treat, that was, the unpacking of the cases; and we two ignorant ones had to be enlightened as to the names and uses of everything that was brought to light.

I believe that Dick must have worked in an

office at some time or other, for he was pretty expert, and knew the purpose of everything; so that our little establishment was soon pretty well arranged, and, as we then considered, only needed the press to make it complete. Machines were scarce articles in those days, and not known in the colonies. So we took lessons; learned the case and to read the type, and worked hard as compositors, all the while patiently waiting for the coming of the press.

Talk of the troubles of Caxton, Gutenberg, Faust, and the rest of the early printers! they were nothing to ours. If they wanted anything, they made it themselves, and therefore knew the purpose for which it was intended; but directly Dick was away, we of the staff were as helpless as a pair of babies. Then, too, the early printers used type of a size that could be handled, not the wretchedly attenuated stuff that we had taken upon ourselves to set in order. Every piece seemed to be possessed by that gentleman who is said to have had so much to do with printing, and as fast as we stuck a letter up, down it went again, until, for my part, I have felt so enraged that I could have banged my case, type and all, about my companion's head. However, I did not; but still kept on most patiently, and still the press did not come.

'How they do keep asking when the first number will be ready!' said Dick, 'and I don't know what to tell them. You see it's no use to get any news up till we know when it's coming.'

'What sort of a thing is it?' said Fred. 'Can't we do without it?'

'Do without it!' said Dick. 'Can you chop wood without an axe?'

'Well, but I thought we might perhaps make one,' said Fred.

'Pooh!' said Dick.

But the press did not come, and we were nearly driven mad with the jokes cut at our expense. One day, however, Dick came rushing into the office with joy on every feature. 'Hooray, my lads!' he exclaimed; 'I've got it!'

'Bravo!' we chorused, almost expecting to see him bring it out of his pocket.

'Well, where is it?' said Fred.

'Where's what?' said Dick.

'Why, the press!' we both exclaimed.

'Ah! goodness knows!' said Dick.

'Why, what do you mean by humbugging us like that?' said I in a pet. 'I thought the press had come.'

'Ah, no,' said Dick; 'but I've hit the nail upon the head.'

'Why, what do you mean?' said Arden.

'A mangle, my boys!' said Dick excitedly.

'Well, what about it?'

'Why, for the paper,' said Dick.

'What! Do the sheets want mangling?' said I.

'To be sure,' said Dick seriously; 'and then we shall want blankets and stays, and we can easily make a bed.'

'Why, you're drunk,' said Fred.

'Or mad,' said I.

'Let's see,' said Dick, not taking the slightest notice of us: 'we must have a stone bed, and cover the rollers with the blankets. I've got it, my lads, to a T! We'll have the first number out by next Saturday, or my name's not Dick Roberts.'

'Well, but how if the press don't come?' said I.

'Why, don't I tell you? I've bought the mangle; gave ten pounds for it. It wouldn't be worth two at home, but it's worth twenty to us, my lads.'

'Well, but what have you bought the mangle for?' said Arden, by this time, like myself, quite out of patience.

'Why, to print with, of course! I've had my eye on it for a week and more. Now, lend a hand here, and clear away, for the fellows are bringing it on a bullock-truck, and they'll be here directly.'

A space was cleared in the centre of the office; and in an hour's time, the mangle was installed in its place, and a man busy at work removing the wood-work bottom to replace it with one of stone; while Dick was contriving a flannel covering for each of the three wooden rollers.

'There!' he said, that same night, 'we shall do it, my lads, yet. That thing will work first-rate, and keep us going in style till the press comes.'

For my part, I did not feel so sanguine, but played, or rather worked, at follow-my-leader most vigorously—wrote a powerful leader, and an article on town and local matters; while Dick reported an inquest at very great length, and also a fire that might have turned out very seriously, but which did not, being confined to the chimney, where it originated, in consequence of a sudden upset of fat. Then we had some home-news—that is to say, British home-news; a great deal of matter from the Sydney and Adelaide papers; and altogether, made a very respectable collection of stuff, which, under Dick's superintendence, was all got ready and corrected. I must not omit to state, too, that we had no less than ten advertisements, which Dick declared to be a most excellent start.

At last, after a tremendous amount of worry and night-work, the type of number one of the *Burra-hurry Beacon*, price sixpence, was ready. It was stated to be 'a Family Newspaper of Domestic, Foreign, and Colonial News; conducted by Richard Roberts, Esq., B.A.' The forms for the first side were ready for mangling, the stone bed was there, the blankets were round the rollers, and the sheets of paper lying upon one side in a heap, when, to our intense astonishment, Dick suddenly hid himself a tremendous crack on the side of the head with his open hand, and sat down upon a stool the very image of despair.

'What's the matter?' I exclaimed.

'Ah!' groaned Dick. 'There; it's no use, we're doomed! We shall never do it!'

'But why?' we chorused.

'No ink!' said Dick. 'I quite forgot to order any.'

'Well,' said Arden, 'there's plenty of that to be got in the town, surely.'

'Ah! the ignorance,' groaned Dick. 'What we want is printer's ink. That ink's no good.'

'Then what's printer's ink?' said I.

'Ah! thick stuff made of lampblack and varnish, and stuff,' groaned Dick.

'Well, then, let's make some,' said I.

'Eh?' said Dick.

'Let's make some,' I repeated.

'How?' said he despairingly.

'Why, if it's made of lampblack and varnish, surely we can mix them together,' said I.

Drowning men catch at straws; and in a very short time we were grinding away at the ill-savoured compound.

'What time will the paper be out, sir?' said a voice at the door.

'Hour's time,' shouted Dick—grinding away as if for his life.

'What a fib!' said Arden, lighting a Manilla, and looking on.—'But, I say, what's in that tub in the corner?'

'What tub?' said Dick, not looking up from his work.

'Why, the one under the packing-cases in the corner,' said Fred.

'Where?' said I, with a hope rising in my breast.

'Why, here!' said Fred, dragging forward the small keg from under the packing-cases, which stood piled up on one side.

'Hooray!' shouted Dick; 'saved we are; for I know that stuff would not have done. Give me the mallet and screw-driver.' And in a moment after, Dick was hammering away at the top hoops, which he soon had loosened, and the head out, disclosing a mass that looked like pitch. 'Now for the ink, stone, and roller!' shouted Dick.

These being brought forward, I was soon placed, roller in hand, ready to ink the type, now reposing on the bed of the mangle; Dick undertaking to lay on the sheets of paper; and Fred, having the truly onerous post of grinder—the man at the wheel.

'Now, then; not too much ink,' was Dick's order to me.—'Steady at the handle, there, Fred. Now, then; are you ready?'

'All right,' was the response. The ink was distributed according to directions; the sheet of white paper laid on; the handle began to turn, the mangle to groan; and number one of the *Burrahurry Beacon* was taken off at the other end—most thoroughly mangled.

'Never mind,' said Dick, taking up the tattered sheet. 'Better luck next time. The paper was too wet.'

So at it we went again; sometimes with what Dick had called 'better luck,' sometimes with worse; and allowing for forty per cent. of sheets of paper spoiled, we got on very well, and succeeded at last in very badly printing two hundred and fifty copies of the *Beacon* on both sides; but I'm afraid to say how long it took. I know very well, however, that our candles had burned down in the sockets several times over; and we went and partook of breakfast afterwards, at a very reasonable time—looking a set of the blackest objects imaginable. But then, there was number one of the paper out; published, so to speak, right away in the wilderness; and as Dick said—without giving us much praise, certainly—'without any staff.'

'What were we, then?' said Fred. and I, rather

reproachfully. 'Weren't we a staff? Didn't we support you?'

'Ah! yes, pretty well,' said the ungrateful wretch; 'but you were only a pair of crutches.'

There were faults enough in our paper, in all conscience, but that was not surprising; and the Burrahurrians did not notice them, but had an illumination in our honour in the place, which consumed an unheard-of quantity of candles. Besides, there was a dinner given in Dick's honour, to which we crutches, however, were invited, and had to respond to toasts of the most complimentary character.

For three more weeks we mangled our paper, after which time we were enabled to sing 'Hail, Columbia,' for our eagle-crowned Columbian press arrived off the wharf, was discharged, and brought up to the office in triumph, there being plenty of people ready and willing to furnish the requisite transit for the five days' journey; and then we turned off the sheets in triumph, and in a style that made us blush for the earlier copies.

Since those days, the *Beacon* has shone out brighter and brighter; and friend Dick sent me word at different times of the necessity for, and at last of the arrival of a machine to print I don't know how many copies per hour; while the last communication I had from him since my return to the home country, told me that the number which accompanied my letter had been printed by steam; and the word 'steam' was written in characters at least an inch high. In my response, the remark may have seemed slangey, but I could not refrain from asking him whether he had sold his mangle.

FOREST LAWS.

A TEMPERATE climate, at most seasons conducive to outdoor amusements, the natural features of the country, and the manliness of its inhabitants, have caused the pleasures of the chase ever to be regarded with favour in England. Even in the time of Cæsar, the aborigines, not content with hunting wild beasts for the sake of their skins and flesh, or because they were dangerous neighbours, reared hares, hens, and geese (whose flesh it was unlawful to eat) for the sport which pursuing them afforded. The insular position of England also tended to increase the appetite of its inhabitants for hunting, by enabling them, at an earlier period than in other countries, to rid the forests of those noxious animals whose presence was undesirable near human habitations. It also prevented them from taking such an interest, or active part, in the wars of their neighbours, as, if differently situated, they might have done; and thus, when there was peace throughout the length and breadth of the land, the chase was their principal opportunity of manly display.

It is probable that, so long as England was sparsely inhabited, and the amount of land under cultivation was proportionately small, hunting, as being almost the only means of obtaining food and raiment, was a right common to all. It was only when the reclamation of land, consequent upon an increasing population, while affording other sources from which the necessities of life could be supplied, threatened to lessen the enjoyments of those

who, by reason of their superior position, had much spare time on their hands, that laws were passed for the purpose of reserving to a favoured class an exclusive right to kill or pursue certain animals.

It is a common error to suppose that such laws first made their appearance in feudal codes. Their germ may be traced in the civil law, which, while it allowed any one to hunt on land belonging absolutely to himself, or claimed by nobody, prohibited the tenants of the imperial domains from hunting there certain animals, which were reserved for the emperor's exclusive sport. There were certainly Forest Laws in England before the Conquest. The earliest extant of these are contained in the Forest Code of Canute.

This Code directed the appointment of four Pægeneds, who were clothed with regal power. Each possessed the exclusive administration of Forest Law in his own province. Under each of these were four Lespegendes, or, as the Danes called them, Joongmen, who were to take care of the royal vert (whatever vegetable produce may serve as shelter to beasts of the chase) and venison (beasts of the chase). These were not to take any part in the administration of justice, and were to be regarded as in the same rank as ealdormen. And under each of these were two Tinemen (who, if previously slaves, by their appointment became free), to watch the forest at night, and perform other menial duties. The Code also provided for the yearly emoluments of these officers. The Pægened was to receive two hundred silver shillings, two horses, a saddle, a sword, five lances, a javelin, and a shield; the Lespegend, sixty silver shillings, a horse, a lance, and a shield; and the Tineman, fifteen silver shillings, a lance, and a cross-bow. These officers possessed great privileges. They paid no taxes, and could only be sued in the courts of the Forest; indeed, a man going to law with a Pægened forfeited to the king the amount at which his life was valued; and to the Pægened, forty shillings. The Code also protected their persons. Assaulting a Pægened by a freeman involved the loss of his freedom and all that he had; if by a villen, the cutting off of the right hand; and if by any one who had been previously convicted of the same offence, the loss of life. The Lespegend's person was almost as sacred. Breaking the peace in his presence was punished by a fine of ten shillings; and striking one in anger was as great an offence as killing a royal beast.

This naturally leads us to a consideration of the punishments inflicted by this Code for infringing the royal rights in matters of vert and venison. An offence in vert was but small, yet still, as being a breach of the king's chase, was punishable; though the punishment is not particularised, except for cutting down any tree whose fruit was eaten by the deer, when a fine of ten shillings was imposed. Pursuing a beast of the Forest so as to make him pant, whether done wilfully or accidentally, was punishable, in the case of a gentleman, by a fine of ten shillings; of a freeman, twenty shillings; but if it were a slave, then *carcat corio*—let him lose his skin. If the animal was killed, the fine was doubled; and to this was superadded the murder-value of the offender. Hunting a stag, subjected a gentleman to the loss of liberty for one year; a freeman, for two years; and put a slave outside the pale of the law. Killing a stag was punished with loss of liberty, if by a freeman; of life, if by a slave. Bishops, abbots, and barons might hunt all animals

but stags in any forest; and every freeholder might take his ventry in his own ground. The Code also contains provisions with regard to dogs. No humble individual was allowed to keep greyhounds. A gentleman might keep them if their knees had been cut in the presence of a Pægened, or if he lived ten miles from a Royal Forest. In the latter case, however, he could be fined twelve pence for every mile that they were seen nearer to the Forest, and ten shillings if they were found within it. Other dogs were allowed to be kept; but even they might get their owner into trouble. If they went mad, and, owing to his negligence, were found wandering about in the Forest, he was liable the value of a mean man, which was ten pounds; and if it bit a wild beast in the Forest, the penalty was the value of a gentleman, which was twelve times a hundred shillings. But if the bitten animal were a Royal Beast, the owner of the mad dog was *reus maximæ criminis*—guilty of a very great crime.

Such were the provisions of the Code of Canute, which prevailed in their entirety till the Norman Conquest.

The introduction of the feudal system into England, and the inordinate passion of the Norman monarchs for hunting, increased the severities of the Forest Laws. The fundamental maxim of the feudal system was, that 'the king was the universal lord and original proprietor of all the lands in his kingdom.' By virtue of this, he could claim the right of making a forest, or of hunting, wherever he pleased, and of prohibiting all but himself or his nominees from indulging in the pleasures of the chase. The great power possessed by William the Conqueror and his immediate successors enabled them to make the most of this maxim, which, so far as England was concerned, was a mere fiction of law. He who loved the tall deer as if he had been their father, not content with the fifty-nine forests, besides parks and chases, in the royal domains, afforested large tracts of his own arable land, and appropriated much of his subjects' for the same purpose. The system of afforestation and appropriation was carried on with such success by succeeding monarchs, that John, on ascending the throne, found himself possessed of an exclusive right of hunting in sixty-eight forests. The miseries caused by such proceedings, if we may judge from one instance, must have been very great. The enlargement of the ancient Forest of Ytene into the Gigenesweald, or New Forest, involved the depopulation of seventeen thousand acres, and the destruction of twenty-two churches and villages, besides chapels and manors, for thirty miles together between the palace of Winchester and the sea. The Saxon Chroniclers notice with a stern pleasure that it was while hunting in the New Forest that two of the Conqueror's sons, Richard and Rufus, and his nephew William, lost their lives, and that blindness or some other calamity would befall any one who hunted there on the anniversary of William's birthday. But there are others who regard the depopulation of Hampshire as a measure dictated rather by state policy than by his love of the chase, and allege that the king, fearing he might be driven off the throne, wished to have in that part of the island a place suitable, if necessary, for a reinvasion of England, where there should be no inhabitants to resist his landing. No recompense was given to owners for any losses sustained by the appropriation of their land.

And this was not the only grievance to which they, or those who had the misfortune to dwell near a Royal Forest, were subjected. Forest Laws, more severe than those contained in the Code of Canute, were introduced into the district, under cover of which most grievous penalties were exacted for very slight offences. The freeholder could no longer hunt on his own property unless he had obtained the king's licence, which was rarely granted. If a man did hunt without a licence, it depended upon his rank whether the punishment should be corporal, or the seizure and retention of all his property till he paid an amercement not fixed or proportionate to the offence, but estimated according to the will and pleasure of an arbitrary prince. Where the offender could not pay in purse, he had to pay in person.

Killing any beast of the forest (which term was now held to include boar, buck, doe, fox, hare, hart, hind, marten, roe, and wolf), rendered the delinquent liable to abacination—blinding by means of red-hot irons held before the eyes—and other mutilations, or even death. Enclosing, ploughing, or putting any beast to pasture on any part of the king's forests, was punished with the forfeiture of all the offender's property, or, if the king were inclined to be merciful, with a very heavy fine.

Under the Norman régime, the officers of the Forest were Verderors, Regarders, and Foresters (besides others), corresponding respectively to the Pageneds, Lespegheds, and Tinemen of Canute's Code. These, taking advantage of their position, were in the habit of demanding scotale, and of making other exactions. Scotale (free ale), or Fillenale (an ale-feast), was originally a forced contribution of meat and drink for themselves; but it was in time extended to a claim for victuals for themselves, their servants, horses, and dogs.

The courts of Justice-seat, Swainmote, Attachments, and Regard (of which more hereafter), were appointed for the administration of justice in the Forests. Besides these, extraordinary commissions were occasionally issued to men of high rank, when the king wished new regulations on this subject to be proclaimed. Thus, in the tenth year of Richard I., Hugh Neville, Hugh Waley, and Heru-isins Nevile, were commanded to call before them archbishops, bishops, earls, barons, knights, and freeholders, with the reeve and four of the substantial inhabitants of every town and village, to hear and take knowledge of certain royal commandments touching the ordinances of the Forests.

Various attempts were made, but without success, to procure from the Conqueror some modifications of the Forest Laws. For, as the Saxon Chronicle says, though his great men bewailed this law, and the poor men murmured thereat, William was so obdurate that he recked not of the hatred of them all; but they must wholly follow in his will, if they would live, or have land or property, or even his grace. The same success attended the attempts made in the reign of Rufus. Henry I. granted a charter in which he promised, amongst other things, to observe the Forest Laws of Edward the Confessor. This charter was more or less observed by Stephen and Henry II. The latter divided the Royal Forest into districts, and appointed for each four judges, two bishops, two knights, and two general warders to survey it, and see that nothing was done contrary to the law. In

the reign of Richard I., all the ancient rigours of the Forest Law were revived. At last, however, in John's reign, the barons banded themselves together, and at Runnymede (the field of counsel), wrung from that monarch his assent to the various provisions of Magna Charta. This Charter was renewed in the first year of Henry III., and on that occasion, the articles relating to the Forests were thrown into a separate act, called the Charter of the Forest.

This statute directed every district afforested by Henry II. or his successors to be viewed by good and lawful men, and all forests, except those which they declared to have been made on crown property, to be disafforested, and the owners to be reinstated in their ancient rights. No man was thenceforth to lose either life or member for hunting the king's deer. Taking venison illegally was to be punished with a heavy fine; or if it could not be paid, with imprisonment for a year and a day; after which the offender must abjure the realm, unless he could find pledges for his good-conduct. An offender might be attached by his goods, or by his person if he were taken in the act or mainour. There were four kinds of mainour: Stablestand, when the party was caught standing with a bow, gun, or leash of greyhounds, ready to kill or course; Dog-draw, coursing a stricken deer; Backbear, carrying away a deer he had killed; and Bloodyhand, when there were the marks of his offence on his person. The fine for keeping a dog from which the three claws of the fore-feet had not been cut off, was three shillings. The officers of the Forest, and their duties, under this Charter, were—the justice in eyre, to act as supreme judge; the chief warden, to bail and discharge offenders; the regarder, to view the Forest, and certify trespasses committed there; the ranger, to look after the venison; the verderor, to look after the vert; the forester, to look more immediately after both vert and venison, and to present the offences at the Forest courts; the agister, to look after cattle grazing there; and the beadle, to make proclamations and act as process-server. They were forbidden to take any thing for lawing dogs, to levy Scotale, or to make any gatherings but on the view and testimony of twelve rangers. No forester was to take chiminage (chemin) or toll for passing through the Forest, unless he was a forester in fee, paying a rent for his bailiwick. In that case, he might demand one penny for a cart, and a half-penny for a pack-horse, every half-year, from those who had a licence to buy and sell bushes, timber, bark, or coal. Those who carried these articles on their backs, were to pay no toll except within the king's domains.

This statute also makes some provisions regarding the Courts of the Forest. These, as before mentioned, were the Courts of Regards, Attachments, Swainmote, and Justice-seat. The Court of Regards was held once every three years, for the purpose of lawing or expeditating mastiffs, which, as being necessary for the defence of a man's house, were the only dogs allowed to be kept within the Forest. From an old black-letter treatise, we learn that the operation was thus performed: 'The mastiff being brought to set one of his fore-feet upon a piece of wood, eight inches thick, and a foot square, then one with a mallet, setting a chisel of two inches broad upon the three claws of his fore-foot, at one blow doth smite them clean off.' The Court of Attachments, or Woodnote, was held every forty days before the verderors. It inquired into

all attachments or presentments of vert and venison. Offenders taken in the mainour were brought before this court in person, or if not caught in the act, were attached by their goods. The verderors, after receiving and enrolling the attachments, certified them under their seal to the superior courts of Justice-seat or Swainmote, as the Woodmote could only inquire and not convict. Swainmotes were held three times a year, before the steward and verderors, the freeholders of the Forest acting as a jury. It could convict, but not give judgment, in all cases certified from the Woodmote, or where complaints were made of the conduct of the Forest officers. Justice-seat was the principal court. It was held every three years, and after forty days' notice, before the chief-justice in eyre ('who was commonly a man of greater dignity than knowledge in the law of the Forest'), and his deputy. It had cognizance of all pleas connected with the Forest, could try presentments made in the inferior courts, and give judgment on convictions of the Swainmote. The chief-justice, after a presentment was made, or an indictment found, might issue a warrant for the capture of offenders. As a court of record, it could fine and imprison, and, for the same reason, an appeal lay from its decisions to the Queen's Bench. Liberties, privileges, pardons, and other free customs were pleaded before it either in person or by attorney, to avoid seizure of the same into the hands of the king for a non-claim. All the inhabitants of the Forest who were more than twelve years old took the following oath in this court:

You shall true liegeman be unto the King's Majestie:
You shall no hurt do unto the Beasts of the Forest,
Nor unto any thing that doth belong thereto.
The offences of others you shall not conceal,
But to the uttermost of your power you shall them reveal

Unto the officers of the Forest,
Or to them that shall see the same redrest.
All these things you shall see done.
So help you God at's holy doom.

The Forest Charter was, along with Magna Charta, again confirmed when Henry III., being then seventeen, was declared of age by a papal bull. Notwithstanding this, as soon as he attained his majority, he annulled both, on the ground that he had granted them when under the control of others. But nine years after this, being in want of a supply, a subsidy of one-fifteenth on all movables, induced him to accede to the wishes of the nation, by confirming both the charters in Westminster Hall. The ceremony was of an impressive nature. The bishops, clad in their sacred robes, with tapers in their hands, excommunicated all who should make statutes contrary to the charters, or should observe such when made, or pass any judgment against them. Then throwing down the tapers, and while these were smoking, they concluded with the curse: 'So may all that incur this sentence be extinguished and stink in hell.' Then the king said: 'So help me God, I will keep all these things inviolate, as I am a man, as I am a Christian, as I am a king.' The excommunication did not, however, prevent future parliaments seizing every opportunity of royal weakness, or of a royal desire for popularity, to get renewed confirmations of the charters; so that there are in all no less than thirty-eight ratifications of them to be found in the statute book.

The rigour of the Forest Law was doubtless

much lessened by this charter, but there were still many grievances to complain of. The mere existence of a law which, in the opinion even of the subservient legal writers of that time, could not be called 'absolute justice or right, but only law according to the Laws of the Forest,' still afforded many opportunities for tyrannical conduct on the part of the king or his ministers. The fines were to a great extent uncertain, and estimated by the royal officers. In the Rolls of Parliament there are many petitions complaining that the officers of the Forest behave illegally, that the owners have been wrongfully deprived of their rights over purlieus (lands disafforested by virtue of the Forest Charter), or that perambulations are irregularly made. A common royal answer to the prayers of these petitions is: '*Le chre [chartre] et les autres restatutz de la Forest y soient tenuz et fermement gardez en touz jours pointz.*'

In the eighteenth year of *le plus sage roy que unques fust* (as Sir Matthew Hale styles Edward I.), John de Claret petitioned in vain for the remission of a fine of one hundred pounds for taking a stag and two others in a Royal Forest.

The statutes connected with Forest Law, passed in subsequent reigns, are either for the purpose of ameliorating the condition of those dwelling in or near a Royal Forest, or of the nature of modern game-laws. Thus it was declared that a chief warden was liable to imprisonment, a fine to the king, and treble damages to any party whom he unlawfully refused to bail, and that juries were to give their verdict where they received their charge, and according to their conscience. To the latter class belongs a statute passed in the reign of Richard II. Its preamble states, that it was the practice for 'divers artificers, labourers, servants, and grooms, to keep greyhounds and other dogs, and on the holidays when good Christian people be at church hearing divine service, they go hunting in parks, warrens, and connigries, of lords and others, to the very great destruction of the same; and sometimes under such colour, they make their assemblies and conferences, and conspiracies to rise and disobey their allegiance.' The punishment by this statute for such persons so doing was one year's imprisonment. This is the first of a long series of acts rendering unqualified persons liable to imprisonment or fines for keeping dogs, nets, guns, or a mark or marks of swans, or for hunting or killing game. There are also statutes making it unlawful for all persons whatsoever to kill hares when there is snow on the ground; or to have a gun with a stock longer or shorter than a yard, or a hagbut or demihake (pistol) shorter than nine inches; or for any under the degree of a lord to 'shoot in any hand-gun with hail shot or more pellets than one,' or for any to kill pheasants or partridges at night; or for a man to hawk or hunt in another's standing corn, unless he be a 'lowbeller or traveller, and shall presently let them go.'

The last king who seriously attempted to increase his revenue by imposing fines for breaches of the Forest Law, was Charles I. To provide money at a time when parliament refused to vote him supplies, he appointed the Earl of Holland chief justice in eyre, and courts of Justice-seat were held every year, at which alleged infringements of the royal rights were examined into. As no prescription could be pleaded against the king, and the juries were packed, many private individuals suffered severely. 'The Royal Forests in Essex,' to quote

from Hallam's *Constitutional History*, 'were so enlarged, that they were hyperbolically said to include the whole county. The Earl of Southampton was nearly ruined by a decision that stripped him of his estate near the New Forest. The boundaries of Rockingham Forest were increased from six miles to sixty, and enormous fines imposed on the trespassers; Lord Salisbury being amerced in £20,000, Lord Westmoreland in £18,000, Sir Christopher Hatton in £12,000. It is probable that much of these was remitted.' This raid resulted in the passing of a statute declaring that the bounds of every forest were to be as they were reputed in the twentieth year of the preceding reign; no courts were to be held where there had not been any for the last sixty years; the bounds of the Royal Forests were to be ascertained and fixed by commissioners; the grounds disafforested by patent or otherwise since the twentieth year of James, were to remain so; and the owners thereof were to retain all forestal rights which they had formerly enjoyed.

In the reign of Charles II., the last Court of Justice-seat was held before the Earl of Oxford, and principally to gratify that nobleman, as the crown was put to great expense in the payment of salaries and awards, and the profits redounded to the Justice in eyre. 'And it is not to be wondered at,' says a biographer of that date, 'that this economy of the Forests is laid aside, for the subject-matter is unpopular, and the officers are, on the one hand, corrupt, and yield to all abuses, and, on the other side, oppress and extract money of all they can; and, as if that were the end of their institution, mind little else.'

Soon after that, parliament abolished the offices of chief-justice in eyre and of wardens in the Royal Forests, and substituted the Commissioners of Woods and Forests. But though the Forest Laws and all their black-letter learning are now among the things that were, it is perhaps not inappropriate to close this article with advice offered when they were still in force: 'If any man chance to be bid to his friend's house to eat his part of fat venison, let him remember this old verse:

It is not to be inquired whence venison cometh,
For if by chance it stolen be,
A good belief sufficeth thee.'

PERSONAL REMINISCENCES OF BEAU BRUMMEL.

IN TWO PARTS.—PART II.

THE Beau's personal appearance, independently of his dress, which was the perfection of neatness, was considerably in his favour; he was about six feet in height, wide across the chest, and well proportioned; his complexion rather florid, and the small gray, restless, scrutinising eyes which illumined his countenance, gave evidence of that continuous mental activity which so much distinguished him. No peculiarity of dress, or manner of either male or female, who came immediately within his view, escaped him; and the vigour and piquancy of his remarks were considerably enhanced by the peculiar significance of the look which accompanied them. His nose had decidedly the appearance of a 'pug'; but when some allusion to this prominent feature was on one occasion hazarded

by a lady in my presence, he responded: 'I can assure you, madame, when I entered the Tenth Hussars, I had a most beautiful Roman nose; but unfortunately, when riding down the Steyn at Brighton, I was thrown from my horse; and the edge of my helmet or shako coming into direct collision with the bridge of that feature, partially broke it; hence the slight turn-up which you now perceive.' As Captain Gronow, in his *Reminiscences*, records this accident as having actually occurred, it is possible the Beau's statement may be true; but to all appearance, as far as I could judge from frequent close observation, the 'turn-up' of this prominent feature seemed rather natural than accidental.

His dress, which was invariably neat, was for years 'precisely of the same description—a long frock-coat, between a Wellington and an overcoat, colour brown, with velvet collar and silk lining; trousers dark-coloured, cut out in front to fit over the instep, and with straps under the boots, which were always well polished. He was very particular on this last point; indeed, it is recorded of him that, in the days of his great popularity, he was so tenacious as to the polish, that he always travelled with his own blacking, so that, on being solicited to prolong his visit in some great mansion in the country, he replied: 'I must first consult Bruno as to my stock of blacking, before I can give you an answer.' Peculiarities of this character were not only tolerated in the Beau, but received as excellent jokes—a circumstance which affords no inconsiderable argument in favour of that ability to conciliate, please, and amuse, which he so eminently possessed.

His neckcloth was of white cambric, of large dimensions, wound twice round his neck, brought down capaciously in front, and fastened by a small gold pin. This peculiar tie was designated in those days as the 'waterfall-tie.' The neckcloth itself was a large square piece of cambric, out of which twenty or more ties for the dandies of the present day might easily be made. I now arrive at the most important, and certainly the most conspicuous part of the Beau's dress, and one on the selection of which he bestowed much thought and consideration—his waistcoat. This was generally very striking, being of velvet, of some conspicuous colour, and covered with flowers, worked either in silk, silver, or gold; indeed, this was the only showy part of the Beau's attire. His hat was of the fashion of former days, large, wider at the top than at the bottom, with a large upturned rim; under it was a well-arranged wig, of a brown colour, slightly approaching to red, to keep his whiskers in countenance. His teeth were small, his chin rather prominent. When out walking, he always carried a very neat cane with a gold or silver head. His indoor dress in the morning was rather conspicuous, the dressing-gown being of thick silk covered with handsomely-worked flowers, with slippers to correspond; and as the wig was not on duty till he had completed his toilet for his daily walk, a handsome velvet cap, with a gold tassel at its top, occupied its place, so that the Beau, in his morning's costume, had somewhat the appearance of a magician or astrologer. His mornings were employed in reading newspapers and French novels, and in mixing his snuff, which he kept in jars in his cellar; his favourite mixture was Martinique and Bolingero. The operation of blending his snuffs I have often seen him perform on a

large piece of parchment with an ivory spoon. Although he had a great variety of handsome and valuable snuff-boxes, the one which he habitually carried was a large ordinary one of 'papier-mâché.'

The sitting-room in which he passed many years of his life at Leleux's, the librarian in the Rue Royale, Calais, was remarkably well arranged, the type of his former room in London, although on a smaller scale. Although there were no paintings of much value, there were several small handsome book and other cases of Japan and marqueterie, on the tops of which were placed various curious specimens of china and snuff-boxes, all of which eventually disappeared to meet some pressing emergency. I never could learn precisely what became of them, but I rather fancy they encountered the usual fate which objects of this character meet with when they fall within the remorseless grasp of some cormorant of a creditor, who depreciates before he seizes, so that that which was purchased at great cost, goes finally for the smallest trifle.

If the Beau's life offers no positive lessons of instruction, it exhibits many important negative ones; indeed, it may be sometimes quite as useful and instructive to ascertain why one man failed, as to discover why another has succeeded; to be made early acquainted with that which ought to be scrupulously avoided, because it is injurious, is salutary knowledge; and as it is much more easy to avoid what is bad, than to pursue and imitate that which is good and praiseworthy, a negative lesson of this character is not without value; it is readily learned and adopted, because it requires no exertion, and is compatible with the greatest indolence; whereas, to emulate the great and noble deeds of the exemplary and distinguished, requires the exercise of considerable energy, determination, and virtue.

From the Beau's life, much instruction of this valuable description may be derived, for the guidance of those who are on the eve of entering upon the great stage of social life; and although I admit there is comparatively little which suggests itself as worthy of imitation—little of a positive character—there is much which may be received in the shape of warning. The Beau, however, possessed many good qualities, but those, unfortunately, proved his bane, and were the precursors of his downfall. He excelled to an eminent degree in the art of making himself agreeable to others, so that his society was considered an acquisition, and he was tempted to leave his own sphere, and to embark in one which eventually proved his ruin. At the commencement of his career at Eton, where he was educated, he soon became a great favourite amongst his school-fellows, and formed those connections which were subsequently of so much apparent service to him at the commencement of his social career.

The advantages of public-school education, in consideration of the valuable connections there formed, experience teaches us have been somewhat exaggerated, for boys do not meet so frequently in after-life as is generally supposed, neither do those, as a rule, who were very great friends at school, continue to be friends in after-life, if their social positions are different. But that considerable social advantages are derivable from public-school education, cannot be denied. In Brummel's case, the connections which he formed at Eton were

kept up and continued for several special reasons, chiefly of a personal character, and not on general grounds. In the first place, in consequence of having entered a fashionable cavalry regiment, and being quartered at Brighton, and having, by some fortuitous circumstance, become acquainted with the Regent, the opportunity of meeting several of his former school-fellows, some of whom were men of rank, readily occurred; and as he still possessed the 'magic art' to please, his society was sought, so that in his case, as far as advantages of that character can be appreciated, his having been educated at Eton proved of value to him; but, *respicere finem*; in consequence of this association with men of rank, and of expensive and dissipated habits, he became immersed in those habits of vice and extravagance which soon swallowed up his small means, and led to certain acts which compelled him to leave his country. He inherited from his father upwards of thirty thousand pounds, so that had he fortunately conformed to circumstances, and kept within that sphere in which his birth and fortune ought to have induced him to confine himself, he might have passed a very agreeable and happy life without the sacrifice of independence, and have escaped all the pain and humiliation which he subsequently underwent before the great anticlimax of his imprisonment and death at Caen.

He was confined in a common jail; herding in a small comfortless room with other debtors, whereby he was subjected to an ordeal of suffering and privation most trying to any man, but especially so to one who had enjoyed all the luxuries of life, and who was, if possible, over-scrupulous on all matters connected with comfort and cleanliness. He was incarcerated in the month of May 1835, at the suit of M. Leveux, a banker at Calais, to whom he was indebted to the amount of several thousand francs. M. Leveux had formerly been a personal friend of the Beau's, but at last becoming tired of his repeated unfulfilled promises to pay, carried out this extreme measure. The Beau was arrested with all those external ceremonies which usually attend an operation of this character in France, so that the fact of his misfortune was immediately promulgated amongst his friends and other residents at Caen; and although there was a disposition to relieve him from his embarrassing position, the sum required for this purpose was far too large to be obtained from the voluntary contributions of his comparatively new friends and acquaintances. The Captive was taken completely by surprise, and complained bitterly of M. Leveux having given him no intimation of his intentions.

As may be readily imagined, the Beau felt this humiliation severely, especially as felons as well as debtors were confined in this prison. The hardships which he at first underwent were, however, to a great extent modified by the kind interposition of his friends, and he experienced no lack of the necessities of life. After nearly three months' incarceration, he was liberated by the generous interposition of his former friends in England, who contributed sufficient to pay off Monsieur Leveux; and I believe also a further sum was subscribed to secure to him a small annuity, so as to rescue him from absolute want; he, however, only survived the great misfortune of imprisonment five years. Previous to his incarceration, he had experienced one or two severe attacks of illness, approaching to paralysis. On leaving prison,

he returned to his former quarters, and as he dined at a table-d'hôte most days, was still an object of curiosity to tourists and others who chanced to pass a few days at Caen. But it was evident to all who had previously known the poor Beau, that he was much altered; indeed, symptoms of his intellect being impaired had already become visible; finally, so much so, that it was arranged by his friends that he should be transferred to a hospital, called *Le Bon Sauveur*, superintended by nuns and Sisters of Charity, where every attention was shewn him during the last few months which preceded his decease; his mind was so far gone that he was incapable of appreciating the various acts of kindness which were extended to him, although it was admitted, at the same time, by the Sisters that he was very docile and easy of management; he entered the *Bon Sauveur* in the year 1838, and died in 1840. Agreeably to my own feelings, I cannot conclude this slight sketch of some portions of the old Beau's life, without doing justice to the many good qualities which I know he possessed; I passed many agreeable days with him, the recollection of which resuscitates all the friendly feelings which I formerly entertained for him. I always found him truthful, generous, and sincere. His courage was unquestionable, and his spirit of that decided and marked character which induced him instantly to resent the slightest indignity which was intentionally offered to him. As a companion, his qualities were of the highest order; he was always cheerful, amusing, and full of anecdote, and there was a natural exuberance of joyousness and fun about him, which made his society at all times agreeable.

In conclusion, I introduce to the notice of my readers a letter which I received from the Beau from Caen, dated February 19, 1832, inasmuch as it is written in his usual gay and animated style.

CAEN, February 19, 1832.

MY DEAR —, Your letter has been long staring me in the face like an injured ghost, but till the present instant I have not mustered up sufficient resolution to answer it, and even now I should perhaps have neglected its pale reproaching looks, had not I met with an accident (young devil that I am) in jumping out of a *citadine* last night, by the which juvenile freak I have severely sprained my right knee, and if it may be any retributive satisfaction to you, it is so much swelled that it will confine me *chez moi* two or three days. This annoys me, and puts me out of temper, for it is the very meridian of our gay season here, and so you must not expect to be amused by anything I may write to you. I wish to heaven F—, with her constitutional propriety and invariable indulgent kindness to me, was at my elbow to rub the afflicted part with the camphorated stuff my *Sangrado* has ordered. I would have written to you before the expiration of last summer, but somehow or other I was continually gadding about to different places in the environs, and from time to time I protracted all epistolary debts and duties. Since the short days of autumn and winter have regenerated society here, and the truffles and the whist, I do not know how it has been, but from my idleness and dissipation I have unconsciously limited my writing to passports and to bills of three months. What a perfect reverse of the tranquil innocent life I led during so many years at Calais, is that by which I have been led away at this place!

Nothing but feasting, play, and dancing; to be sure I do not meddle but in a moderate way with the second amusement; and the 'dear creatures' most amiably dispense with my entering into the latter public attention. Two or three places to go to every evening, and all consisting of the very best society; it is indeed principally formed of the *ancienne Normandie noblesse* resident here in their old staring hôtels, all Carlists or Henry V. the backbone; but as I never interfere with political principles or absurdities, I manage to live on the same familiar terms of intimacy with the modern préfet and with the fallen peer.

I think L—n has done right in marrying Mademoiselle O—r; he could never expect anything better, and the quiet conjugal state may prolong his life a few years more, if she remains with him so long. I had a letter yesterday from B—e R—d, *remplie* with regrets and civil expressions at the altered condition of Calais—from which place he wrote—since my departure—nobody scarcely to speak to, nobody to *dine* with. He says, however, he stood godfather the day previous to a last-born of M—'s, eighteen at the subsequent repast—raw, sanguinary beef, and barbarous cabbage! He does not mention the *convives* so I presume he is ashamed of them; he adds that E—y, the second female offspring from this veritable *garenne de lapins*, is about to be married to a Mr P—l (who the devil is he!), who is allowed only L.100 a year by his father, and that if he marries without his consent, he will forfeit that. Nothing like settling in matrimonial life.

I see by the papers that M—k has been bitten in endeavouring to bite a German baron; damages against the said M—k, whom the *journal* styles a Mr M—k, L.200—a picture-dealing transaction of the lowest description.

Remember me affectionately to F—y; and if you go on maiming the poor snipes, and, as usual, tuck yourself up after dinner for the rest of the evening in your arm-chair, to redeem by snoring those physical forces exhausted by the day's exercise, enjoin her to write to me diffusively and explicitly, and parole I will answer her.—Very truly yours, G. B.

Have you read the *Cocon*? Charming! And *Le Duc*, and *Le Page*, and *La Princesse*, and *Le Sous-officier*. Walter Scott's *Bob of Paris* is wretched.—Cooper's *Bravo of Venice* worse.

MIRK ABBEY.

CHAPTER XXXII.—JACOB'S GUARD-SHIP.

'WHATEVER evils may happen unto me, may Heaven spare my reason,' was the heartfelt prayer of a wise and reverent man. He might have added—'for he was one of those who thought it no harm to ask of Him who watches the sparrow's fall, for particular blessings.'—And however I be racked with pain by day, by night may I still enjoy my sleep.' Next to madness, and like enough with some folks to end in that, is the want of rest during that period which should be the season of slumber, and which, if it be not so, is a dread and dreary time indeed. There is many an honest soul in the autumn of life who will protest in the morning, in the course of a very tolerable breakfast that she has not had a wink of sleep all night.

because she has heard a few consecutive hours recorded by the church clock ; but to lie awake indeed from eve to morn is not, thank God, a very common experience, and still less often are any of us compelled to endure it night after night for years. To live an existence the converse of the rest of their fellow-creatures is the lot of more than one trade—editors of daily newspapers, for instance, and burglars ; but to *work* by night is a very different affair from the lying awake unemployed, but thinking, thinking, while nothing breaks the silence of the muffled world save the howl of the watch-dog and the weird monotony of the wind. Yet there are some of us doomed to this sad fate, who scarcely know what it is to spend an easeful night, and who snatch their scanty dole of sleep by day.

Poor Jacob Forest was one of these. A long life of reckless exposure to the elements, not, perhaps, unassisted by hard drinking, had brought him to this sad pass. Thanks to his daughter, he wanted for nothing that money could give him ; but the once hale and venturesome mariner was now bedridden and racked at most times, but especially by night, with rheumatic twinges. Mary herself never failed to visit him every summer ; and three days out of four some ancient comrade would painfully climb the hill that led to his cosy little house, and hob and nob with him by his bedside. But he was still sadly in want of company during the night-watches ; true, a nurse was paid to minister to his comforts during that season, but she generally 'dropped off' into a doze, sooner or later ; and even if she was awake, her gossip was of the tea-and-muffin sort, rather than that description of talk which goes best with hot grog, and was more suitable to a seasoned vessel, though laid up in extra-ordinary, like old Jacob. Therefore it was, as the waiter at the *Royal Marine* had observed, that visitors calling at ultra-fashionably late hours at the Guard-ship, as it was the proprietor's fancy to term his place of residence, were especially welcome.

The home of this old veteran had been built, at his own request, of wood, notwithstanding the remonstrances of his medical attendant, who ascribed part of his patient's ailments to the fact, that his cottage on the shore had been constructed of that material. But Mr Forest had insisted upon having his way : next to one's own boat, he had argued, there was nothing like a wooden house to make one feel at home in ; nor could he be moved from that position by the caustic rejoinder, that in that case he might just as well get into his coffin at once. Nay, the Guard-ship had been made still less air-tight than it otherwise would have been by the ingenious introduction of a hinge running along one side of the old man's bedroom on the ground-floor, the very wall of which, in summer-time, could thereby be lowered flapwise, exposing the whole arrangement of his bower after the manner of the better class of dolls' houses. With the eccentricity of taste so often exhibited in the possessors of unexpected

wealth, Mr Forest had 'gone in,' as the phrase runs, in his prosperous old age, for curious poultry ; and up this slanting shutter (exactly as horses are introduced into a railway train) used to be driven from the yard for his immediate inspection, as he lay in bed, every sort of feathered fowl after their kind, as into a poultry ark. The earliness of the season, combined with the lateness of the hour, denied this exhibition (afforded to all visitors whenever practicable) to Ralph Derrick, but the ancient mariner gave him the heartiest of welcomes, as had been predicted. He had heard of Mr Derrick more than once from Mary, and was exceedingly pleased to do him honour ; at which hint the nurse at once set forth the 'materials' for a drinking-bout on a little table which stood at the invalid's elbow, and betook herself to an adjoining cabin, where she instantly went to bed with her clothes on. Next to the danger from draughts, to which the captain of the Guard-ship had already succumbed, he lay in nightly peril of perishing by fire, since he smoked in bed almost unceasingly ; and in case of a spark igniting where it should not, the whole two-decker would not have taken a quarter of an hour to become a heap of ashes ; but this apprehension, as the old woman was glad to think, was groundless upon this occasion, when her master had a gentleman to keep him company, and she left them with an easy conscience to their pipes and grog.

'So I hear you are rather sweet upon my good Mary,' observed the old sailor slyly, as soon as they were left alone. 'She writes to me more than most girls do to their fathers, you see, Mr Derrick, knowing I'm all alone here, and so pleased to hear any news.'

'Very right and very proper,' returned Ralph quietly, 'and a very good girl, as you say, she is—although she is not a very young one.'

'Young enough for some folks, at all events—eh, eh, sir ?' chuckled the old man. 'Come, come—I know all about you, and what you're come here about ; I'm wide awake enough, I can tell you, although I'm abed. You've run down to Cove-ton, sir, to "ask papa." There, haven't I hit it ?'

'Well, the fact is, Mr Forest, the love seems rather more on my side than hers. I don't deny that I had a great liking for your daughter, but when a man knows that his love is not returned'—

'Eh, eh,' interrupted the old Salt, pursing his lips and giving his tasselled night-cap a pull upon one side, which gave him an expression of much aimless intelligence ; 'but I don't understand this. You must have done something, sir, to forfeit the good opinion of my Mary ; for certainly, at one time— But there, perhaps I'm saying too much. If it ain't agreed between you and my Mary, then, may I ask, sir—not but that I'm uncommon glad to see you, or any other gentleman, from nightfall to any one of the small-hours, I'm sure—but may I ask what the dickens brings you here ?'

'Well, sir,' replied Ralph, forcing a smile, 'I happened to find myself in these parts, and did not

like to pass by without looking in upon the father of Mary Forest, even though all should be off between us; and, besides, I was told you are the likeliest man to be able to give me some information about the wreck of the *North Star*, which happened about thirty years ago, and the particulars of which, for a reason, I want to know.

'Fill your pipe, then, and mix yourself another glass,' cried the old man, delighted to be called upon for his favourite yarn, 'for it's a story as you can't tell in a five minutes, nor in ten neither. The ship you speak of, sir, was an emigrant vessel of more than a thousand tons, as sailed on September 10, 1832'—

'I know all about the ship,' interrupted Derrick impatiently, 'for I had a passage in her myself. I want to hear about the bodies that came on shore.'

'You were a passenger by the *North Star*?' ejaculated the old man with amazement. 'Why, it was said that every soul on board her perished in the storm in which she went to pieces. *Derrick, Derrick!* Well, now you mention it, I do remember the name, for I used to have that passenger-list by heart. I cut it out of one of the papers at the time, and having been so much concerned in the matter myself, though little knowing that I should owe this house to that same wreck—built out of its very timbers, as I might say—and almost all I have in this world. But you know how all that came about, and what Sir Robert did for me and mine, I dare say, mate?'

'Yes, yes—I have heard something of that. But can you tell me nothing of what came ashore? You have said not a soul was saved; I suppose, then, it was the surviving relatives who put up the grave-stones to the memory of the drowned, which I saw as I came through the churchyard?'

'That was just it. There were five men and three women—poor souls—laid under the big stone next the yew-tree; nobody knew who they were. Sir Robert paid for that too, if I remember right—let's see'—

'I hear of nothing but "Sir Robert" and "Sir Robert" in this village of yours,' interrupted Ralph impatiently. 'Nobody has a story to tell in Cove-ton but manages to bring that man's name in by head and shoulders. Why the deuce do they do it?'

'Because he's been the making of the place—that's why, and because there's a little gratitude left in our village still, I am glad to say, sir, although it may have died out in the world,' replied the old sailor firmly. 'Why, he not only built the roof that is now sheltering us, but the village school, and the little pier at the Cove foot that has sheltered many a fishing-smack since the time when my Lady'—

'Well, he didn't put up that great bit of painted glass in the church, I suppose, broke in Derrick testily, 'to the memory of Frank Meade and others, did he? for *that's* what I want to get at, and nothing else.'

'Did he not? Then who did it, I should like to know?' answered Mr Forest sarcastically. 'Who but himself and my Lady; and if it had been the old times as I've heard told of instead of now, there would have been priests paid to pray for their poor souls until this day; ay, that there would. He was never tired of shewing his thankfulness for the joy that came to himself, and his

pity for the woe that befell others upon awful night. It's an ill wind that blows nobody good, they say, and the storm that carried *North Star* to the bottom with all on board—one—or two, I should now say, since I have reason to doubt your word, Mr Derrick'—

'Ay, tell me about the storm,' said Ralph in altered voice, and with a face grown very warm and still. 'I will not interrupt you again, I not indeed. One poor creature came ashore as you said?'

'What! do you mean to say my Mary not told you? She must be a good un to keep a secret from her sweetheart; not that it's any secret here, however they may treat it at Mirk; and didn't tell you myself, you would hear it from the first man you met in Cove-ton, and asked how Robert Lisgard got his bride.'

'Just so,' said Derrick in a hoarse whisper, 'therefore please to tell me.'

'Then help yourself to grog, mate, for you're cold. Some landlubbers will have it that the room is cold, because of the hinge yonder; but a seafaring chap like you— There, that's warm you. Well, on the 10th of September I an emigrant ship of more than a thousand tons'—

'A thousand devils!' cried Derrick, starting his feet; 'do you wish to drive me mad? I you I was on board of her myself. Tell about the woman that came ashore lashed to the spar.'

'What! then, you do know about it after a grumbled the old man, removing his pipe from the corner of his mouth, an action which represented the greatest amount of astonishment of which was capable. 'Why the deuce did you bother to spin you the yarn, then? A man at my time life ain't got much breath to throw away, I can you.'

'How was she dressed? What had she on?' inquired Derrick, upon whose ears his short-winded host's remonstrance had fallen unheeded.

'Devilish little,' returned the old fellow gruffly, 'nothing but a petticoat, and what my Mary call body—but which I should call a bust—an sailor's pea-jacket, and that was not rightly on her, but tied between her and the spar, to save dainty limbs, poor girl; and it is my opinion that he was an honest-hearted chap as put it there, almost deserved to have her for himself. But that they were, brother and sister, so that couldn't. Moreover, she couldn't have got better off than did, that's certain. Lord, to think that there p' friendless, penniless, clotheless creature—as I thought to be almost lifeless too, when me and Robert dragged her in from the hungry waves should come to be Lady Lisgard of Mirk Abbey!— What's the matter with the man? nurse, hi! Confound the woman, how she sneers. Where the devil's my stick?'

Mr Jacob Forest's temper was hasty, but he no intention of inflicting corporal punishment the respectable female who was too deeply plunged in slumber to attend to his cries. He desired stick in order that he might smite the batt'ng that hung at his bedside, and upon which (besides using it as a gentle indication of presence being required) he was accustomed to execute an imitation of ship's 'bells' through the watchful night. Before, however, he could his crippled fingers upon the instrument required, Ralph Derrick, who had fallen from his chair u

the carpetless floor, began to recover his senses, and with them his speech.

'Don't be alarmed, sir—don't call your nurse,' said he, gathering himself up; 'it is only a sort of fainting-fit to which I am subject—indeed I was born with them.'

'And you'll die with them too, some day,' thought old Jacob to himself, as he stared with undisguised apprehension at his visitor's white face and shaking limbs. 'Don't you think you had better take a little more rum—or stay, perhaps it's that that's done the mischief?'

'No, it's not that,' answered Derrick bitterly, as he filled himself a wine-glass of the liquor neat. 'I'm better now, and I shan't give way again. But I remember the man that took such care of the woman you speak of, just before the vessel parted; and your mention of it gave me quite a turn. I didn't know he was her brother; but he was much more careful about her safety than his own—God knows.'

'Very like,' rejoined the old fellow, 'and what I should have expected, even if they had not been so near related. She was just the sort of woman that any man worth his salt would be willing to lay down his life for. His Christian name was Ralph, was it not, the same as yours?'

'Yes, it was,' answered the other gravely. 'Who was it that told you that? I forgot, though; it is painted in the church-window.'

'I found it out for myself,' continued the old fellow cunningly, 'long before that there memorial window was put up; for my Lady never talked about it even to Mary. But there was *Ralph Gaveston* written inside the collar of the pea-coat, and I kept it for many a year myself until the moth got in it, because I thought the sight of it might distress the poor lady.'

'Women soon get over that sort of thing,' said Ralph in a grating voice.

'Well, yes; sooner or later, I daresay they do. And a very fortunate thing it is, in my opinion, that such is the case. It would be very bad for us all, and particularly for seafaring folk, if we never smiled again because a party as we liked happened to be drowned, like some king of England as my Mary once read about to me when I was down with my first fit of the rheumatism. Why, I've lost a couple of brothers myself in that same way, and very good chaps they were; but why should I make myself wretched because they're gone to Heaven? Take another pipe, man. Why, you're not going to leave me surely?'

'Yes, I am, Jacob Forest,' answered Derrick gloomily. 'I have heard all that I want to know, and more—much more! If you have any message for your daughter, I'll take it to her. I am going off to Mirk at once.'

'You may tell her—but no; I'll tell her myself, and not trouble you,' answered the old fellow hastily, purple at least as much with rage as rum. 'I don't wish to be under the slightest obligation to a fellow as looks in upon a poor cripple under pretence of friendship, and then directly he's heard all he wants, and drank all he can, and had one of his fits as he was born with, all as snug as can be—Hi, nurse, hi! Damme, if the fellow hasn't actually left the front-door open! And the invalid applied himself to his gong with a fury that would have roused the Seven Sleepers, had they chanced to have been slumbering (let alone taking a nap with their clothes on) in the adjacent room.'

'Push my table nearer,' cried he to his terrified attendant, 'and give me paper and pens. Yes, my Mary particularly begged of me to tell her know at once in case he called, and I will do so; but I will also take leave to tell her what a selfish scoundrel, in my opinion, he is; and I'll mention his alarming fits. If she has found any reason to be dissatisfied with the beggar, I'll give her some more; and mind, Nurse, this is posted before seven o'clock. He shall find a cool reception at Mirk Abbey, or my name is not Jacob Forest!'

Epistolary composition was not an accomplishment in which the old sailor was an adept, and the mechanical part of the operation was a very slow one with him, by reason of his infirmities; but nevertheless he managed to indite a missive more or less to his mind, long before the early mail went out from Cove-ton, and his faithful attendant did his bidding by posting the same.

CHAPTER XXXIII.—THE TRIUMPHAL ARCH.

It is the morning that immediately precedes Sir Richard's fête-day, and all at the Abbey are as busy as a hive of bees. Mrs Welsh is engaged in incessant warfare with a 'professed cook' of the male sex, who has been imported from town with an army of myrmidons clad in white aprons and head-pieces; and Mr Roberts carries the key of the cellar about his person as religiously as though it were an amulet, exceedingly regretting that the person who has undertaken to purvey the cold collation to the tenantry does not also furnish the wine. For three shillings or three shillings and sixpence the bottle, he argues, as good a sherry as they have any right to taste might be set before Farmer Beeves and 'that sort;' and yet we are about to give them the old 'West India,' as stood old Sir Robert sixty shillings a dozen a quarter of a century ago; nay, even four dozen of cobweb-bed port, the age of which is absolutely unknown, have been set aside for the after-dinner tickling of those rough palates, which would as lief or liever (thinks Mr Roberts) have gin and whisky-punch. The gentle folks, to be sure, dine with them, but you never catch *them* (Mr R. has observed) doing much in the way of drink at a three o'clock dinner in a marquée. There is to be dancing in the said tent, which has been boarded for that purpose, later in the evening; and a ball will take place at the Abbey likewise, to which all the 'county' has been invited, and perhaps a little more.

It was a difficult matter even for Sir Richard, who had a specialty for such solemn follies, to decide exactly what were 'county families' and what were not, and where the imaginary line that divided the ball-room from the marquée was to be laid down. The social difference between the person of the least importance that had the *entrée* of the former, and the person of the greatest importance who was consigned to the latter was, of course, infinitesimally small, and the decision involved all the difficulties with which the theologians afflict themselves concerning the future position of the indifferently Good and the tolerably Bad. What had Mr Jones, M.R.C.S. of Dalwynch, done that he should be admitted into Paradise, while the crystal bar was obstinately interposed against the entrance of Mr Jones, M.R.C.S., from the capital of Wexshire? Nothing of himself, was the baronet's stern decree; but it could be

proved beyond cavil that the former was remotely related to the Davey Joneses of Locker Hall, a family of immense antiquity, and distinguished in our naval annals; whereas the latter had no higher connection to boast of than Thomas Jones, J.P. of Allworthy Court (himself only admitted to the higher sphere by reason of a fortunate marriage), and was therefore, as it were, predestined to sit below the salt.

There were, however, some exceptions even to this Draconian system. Dr Haldane, for instance, was importuned with an earnestness that Sir Richard would never have used to any peer of the realm, to honour this occasion with his presence, and break through his stubborn resolve not to set foot within Mirk Abbey; but the old man, although greatly moved, declined the invitation. Madame de Castellan, too, notwithstanding she was such a new-comer to the county, was called upon at Belcomb by Sir Richard in person, and though she was not well enough to see him, expressed herself by letter as hugely gratified by the object of his visit; albeit at the same time she gave him to understand that all festivities were just now distasteful to her, and indeed that she had not the strength for them. 'As for his coming of Age,' added the old Frenchwoman, 'she was not at all sure that such an event was a subject of congratulation, though, if it had been his marriage-day, then indeed she might have come, if it were only to make his young bride jealous.' Besides these two refusals, there were scarcely any. The popularity of the Lisgard family, and the gorgeous scale of the promised entertainment—the engagement of the Coldstream band was ascertained beyond a doubt, and there was a whisper afloat concerning fireworks, and even that the ornamental water was to be illuminated—combined to attract not only everybody who was anybody, but a still vaster throng of nobodies at all. Every inhabitant of Mirk, from the grand-parents to the babes in arms, for instance, were invited to take their fill of beef and beer, if their digestion permitted of it, and if not, there was plenty of rich plum-pudding; for besides the marquise, half the Park had been put under canvas, in order to make the festivities as much as possible independent of the weather, and presented the appearance of a miniature camp, which would be still more the case upon the morrow, when the scene was enlivened by the uniforms of the 'Lisgard's Own,' as some of the 'yellows' had wickedly christened the Mirk Volunteer Corps.

Altogether, there was every reason for Sir Richard's being in the best of spirits. Master Walter, too, secretly conscious of having been a much worse boy than he was known to be, and feeling that he had met better luck, if not than he deserved, certainly had he could reasonably have expected, was in high feather; he was deeply grateful to his mother that she had abstained from reproaching him with the contents of the letter written by Mr Abrahams, the settlement of whose claim she had taken upon herself; and he well knew that the most welcome way in which he could shew his gratitude would be taking part with a good grace in his brother's triumphal entrance upon his twenty-first birthday. Rose, who had obtained her ends, as well as full substantial forgiveness (which was all she cared for) for the means employed, and foresaw the prostration of half the young men of the county at her pretty

feet upon the morrow, was in excellent humour with herself, and therefore with the world. As for Letty, it is unnecessary to say more than that she felt a measureless content in the society of Mr Arthur Haldane, who passed all his days just now up at the Abbey, having placed his valuable services entirely at the disposal of Lady Lisgard, and generally found his duties led him into the vicinity of her Ladyship's daughter. His taste for table decoration and floral devices, though newly developed, was really, Letty affirmed, of a very high order, and as she was perpetually appealing to it, there can be no doubt that she believed what she said. All at Mirk Abbey, in short, were, or seemed to be, in a state of pleasurable excitement and joyous expectation, save its unhappy mistress. In vain, Sir Richard tried to persuade himself that she was only suffering from a feeling of responsibility—apprehensive lest anything should go wrong in the arrangements of the all-important morrow; in vain, Master Walter endeavoured to pacify his own mind with the thought, that although a part of his mother's anxieties might have been caused by his own misdoings, all trace of them would disappear so soon as she should discover that his intention of divorcing himself from the turf, as well as all other kinds of gambling, was as sincere as it really was. Letty did not attempt to gloss over the fact, that her mother looked both ill and wretched, but rather reproached herself that though this was the case she could not help feeling happy in the company of her lover. Perhaps it was the contrast to the festive air worn by all around her that made my Lady's face look so pinched and woeful; but certainly, as the fête-day approached, her cheeks grew more and more pallid, and her eyes sank in deepening hollows.

On the morning in question, the post-bag, through some delay on the railway, did not arrive until the family were at breakfast; my Lady, with her scarcely touched dry-toast before her, watched Sir Richard open it, and distribute the contents with an anxiety she could not conceal.

'There is nothing for you, dearest mother,' said he, in answer to her inquiring looks.

'Who, then, is that for?' returned she, pointing to an unappropriated letter he had placed at his left hand.

'Only a note for Forest, which I daresay will keep till we have left the table,' said he smiling; 'although, if you had your way, I know she would be attended to before everybody. It has the Coveton post-mark, and doubtless comes from old Jacob.'

'Who is ill,' said my Lady rising. 'I do not see why Mary's correspondence should be delayed more than that of any one else. I have finished my breakfast, and will take it to her at once.'

When she had left the room, Sir Richard remarked with asperity, that his mother's kindness really rendered her a slave to 'that woman Forest.'

'That is so,' assented Master Walter; 'and I have of late observed that her spirits are always at the lowest when she has been having a confab with Mary. Is it possible, I wonder, that being balked of that fellow Derrick, Mistress Forest can have taken up with any new-fangled religious notions—I have heard of old maids doing such things—which are making her miserable, and my mother too?'

'For shame, Walter!' cried Letty. 'Do you suppose manna is capable of any such folly?'

'I don't believe for a moment that she is a

victim to any delusion herself,' explained Walter; 'but she sympathises with everybody she has a liking for, and the society of any such morbid person would be very bad for her. Between ourselves, I don't think that Madame de Castellan coming here has done her any good. That's a precious queer old woman, you may depend upon it. Not only did she decline to permit old Rachel and her husband to continue to sleep at Belcomb, which, considering its loneliness, one would have thought she would have been glad to do, instead of their occupying the lodge a quarter of a mile away; but it is said that she absolutely dismissed her French maid the day after her arrival, and therefore lives entirely alone!'

'No wonder, then, she was so uncommonly anxious to get Mary,' observed the baronet; 'and I am sure I wish she may, for my mother's sake. I have no doubt they are now both closeted together over that old dotard's letter from Coveton. As if there was not enough for my poor dear mother to do and think of just now, without bothering herself with her waiting-maid's father's rheumatism.'

Sir Richard was right: my Lady and her confidential servant were at that very moment in the boudoir perusing with locked doors old Jacob's letter. From it Lady Lisgard gathered what had happened at Coveton as certainly as though the writer had been aware of it all, and written expressly to inform his daughter.

'He has found it out,' said she with a ghastly look. 'He had that fit, as your father calls it, at the moment when he learned for the first time that the girl who came ashore alive and myself are one and the same. Poor Ralph, poor Ralph!'

'Dearest mistress, I think it is Poor You who are most to be pitied. Great Heaven, he will be here to-night, or to-morrow at latest! To-morrow—in the midst of all the merry-making about Sir Richard.'

'Yes, Sir Richard!' exclaimed my Lady bitterly. 'The poor bastard that thinks he is a baronet! But let him come, let him come, I say.' My Lady rose from her seat with clenched fingers and flashing eyes. 'I will defend my children with my life—nay, more, with my honour. If I perjure myself to save them from shame and ruin, will not God pardon me? Who is there to witness against them save this man alone? And is not my word—my oath—as good as his?' She stepped to the little bookcase that ran round the room; and from the corner of it, half-hidden by the framework, took down a dusty volume—one of a long series, but the remainder of which were in the library. It was the annual register for the year 1832. Under the head of 'Shipping Intelligence,' where the tersest but most pregnant of all summaries is always to be found—the deaths of hundreds of poor souls, the misery of thousands of survivors, and the sudden extinction of a myriad human hopes, all recorded in a single sentence—was written: 'In the storm of the 14th September, the emigrant vessel, *North Star*, foundered off the South Headland with all hands on board—supposed to have sprung a leak.' Then a few weeks later, the following paragraph: 'From the *North Star*, emigrant ship, supposed to have been lost on the night of the 14th of last month, with all hands on board, there came on shore at Coveton, lashed to a spar, a solitary survivor, a young woman. Although much exhausted and bruised, she had received no vital injury, and her recovery is said

to be assured. Her case excites much interest in the locality in question.'

The 'solitary survivor!' continued my Lady thoughtfully. 'Who is there to gainsay it, save this man!'

'Your own heart, dearest mistress,' answered the waiting-maid solemnly. 'That would not permit you to deny him, even if your conscience would. Could you meet him to-morrow face to face?—'

'No, no,' exclaimed my Lady shuddering; 'I never could. I was mad to think of such a thing—so mad, that I trust the wickedness of the thought may be forgiven.—I am to drive into Dalwynch this afternoon about—what was it, Mary?'

'About your watch, which ought to have come home last evening, my Lady.'

'Yes, my watch. There is not any time to lose.'

'Indeed not, dear mistress: not an hour, I should say, if I were in your place. I tremble to look out of window, lest I should see him coming yonder over the Windmill Hill.'

'Yes, fixed as fate, and furious with her who has deceived him. Poor fellow, who can blame him? I can see him now.'

'Heaven forbid!' exclaimed the waiting-maid, fleeing to the window. 'Haste, haste away, or there will be murder done!'

'He is not there,' returned my Lady in a low, calm voice, 'but I see him all the same. Pallid with scorn, yet bent on avenging himself. Resolved to claim his wife at any hazard, even in spite of herself. It will be terrible that he should be here in any case; but if he found me here, as you say, there might be murder done. Not that I fear for myself, God knows: I am too wretched for that.'

'Oh, my Lady, had you not better start at once?'

'No, Mary; I must go first to Dr Haldane's, since the time has come. But if, in the meantime, this—this unhappy man should arrive, be sure you send the carriage for me at once to the doctor's house. I can escape him that way for certain. Perhaps, then, I may never cross this threshold any more—never clasp my dear ones in my arms and call them mine again—never say: "My own Walter—Richard—Letty." How can I bear to think upon it! Don't cry, Mary, for you see I do not. You know what to do in case he comes; the carriage to Dr Haldane's instantly: and afterwards—we have settled that long ago.'

'I shall forget nothing, dearest mistress. If I live, all will be done that you have resolved upon.'

'Dear Mary, trusty friend, may Heaven reward you.'

My Lady had her bonnet on by this time, but lifted up her veil to kiss her faithful servant. 'If by God's gracious will, somehow or other this misery should after all have no evil end, Mary, how happy we shall be! How we shall talk of this with our arms round one another's necks! There is a friend, says the Scripture, which sticketh closer than a brother; but I have found a servant better even than such a friend. Good-bye, dear; if it should chance to be "Good-bye." Don't weep, don't speak. See that my path is clear, that I meet no one—Great Heaven, what is that knocking? Can he be come already?'

'No, dearest, no,' sobbed the poor waiting-maid. 'They are putting up the triumphal archway, that is all.'

She left the room to see that there was nobody

in the passage, or on the back-stairs, by which her mistress was about to leave the house.

'The triumphal archway,' muttered my Lady with tearless aching eyes. 'I would to Heaven they were putting the nails into my coffin instead.'

THE MONTH:

SCIENCE AND ARTS.

SUNDRY mechanical contrivances and improvements in philosophical apparatus have been exhibited at the scientific gatherings of the present season in London, attracting more or less of attention, according to their merits and utility. Mr Preece's train-signalling apparatus for promoting the safety of railway-travelling, can hardly fail of being interesting to everybody. It is in use on the South-western Railway, and if properly used, accidents from collision ought never to happen; it has the advantage of being applicable to any number of stations, which is of importance, considering how stations are multiplying in and around the metropolis. Mr Preece has a very simple and complete method of communication between the signalman and switchman. The latter, on being informed that trains are waiting to come in, operates on the lever handles before him, there being as many handles as lines of converging railway; and these handles are so contrived, that on moving any one to admit a train, it locks the others; so that if the switchman should pull at any one of them by mistake, he cannot move it. He is thus prevented from admitting two trains at the same time upon one line of rails, and thus one of the most frequent occasions of railway accident is avoided. And besides this, safety is further promoted by a series of small signal discs, which start up before the switchman's eyes at the right moment, and give him demonstration that he has given the right pull at the right handle.

Mr John Browning has produced an aneroid barometer of extraordinary dimensions, as may be judged of from the fact, that the face or dial-plate is two feet in diameter. The hand, for the sake of lightness, is made of aluminium, and it ranges over eighteen inches of the dial for every inch that the mercury in an ordinary barometer rises or falls. This giant aneroid is, moreover, so highly sensitive, that in windy weather the hand is always oscillating in accordance with variations of the atmospheric pressure, and it will indicate differences of height of a few feet only. This instrument would be valuable in an observatory where a complete series of meteorological observations was in progress.

A Fire-damp Indicator, contrived by Mr Ansell, combines a novel application of the small aneroid, for one of these instruments is comprised in the apparatus, and is so arranged, that as soon as the fatal gas presses on the vacuum-box, the hand points out the presence of fire-damp. At the same time, a galvanic battery is set in action, and rings a bell, which gives warning to all within hearing. In some situations, this instrument may be of service, but in others there might be risk that its adoption would lead to carelessness; for, after all, the best security for a mine is an efficient and constantly-watched system of ventilation, combined with thorough inspection of every part of the workings.

Mr Hitchcock, an American, has invented a process for preparing wood-blocks for the printing of pictures, diagrams, and so forth, to which gives the name of *graphotype*. With this process the effects hitherto produced by wood engraving. The process briefly described is as follows: The block is prepared with a surface of compressed chalk; on this the artist draws his design, landscape, animal figure, or whatever else with a viscous kind of ink; a soft brush is then passed over it, and removes all the untouched chalk, leaving the drawing in slight relief on the block. A stereotype is then taken from this, and is printed from in the usual way. One advantage and an important one, of this graphotype is, that all the effects which the artist puts into his work are preserved in their integrity, as no tool or graver touches them after they are once drawn. With this new resource for typographical and illustrated books should become more numerous and better finished than ever.

Mechanical ingenuity, already so largely fostered by railways, still goes on with its developments as new wants arise, and among these is a method for the stopping of trains in the shortest possible time: a matter of vital importance on lines where stations are numerous. The method referred to has been for some time in use on the North London Railway. It comprises a strong chain stretching underneath all the carriages, which, when tightened, puts a brake on all the wheels. The tightening is done by the guard with a pair of wheels and lever; but unless the whole apparatus be carefully adjusted, it fails to act in the way required. In favourable circumstances, however, it is very effective, and will stop a long train almost instantaneously, as if it were but a single carriage. It is a question whether some still better method cannot be devised. As we mentioned some time ago, Mr P. W. Barlow, C.E., is of opinion that, on lines where stoppages are frequent, the most economical system would be to throw out the locomotive and pull the trains by an endless chain, as was formerly the case on the Blackwall Railway.

To obviate the danger where lines run one in another, or in technical phrase, at the switches, a new switch-box has been invented simpler and stronger than any yet constructed. If this were adopted at all the intersections, we should hear fewer accidents from trains running off the lines. Another improvement has been effected in fitting the axle-boxes of locomotives whereby the irregularity of their motion when passing round sharp curves is overcome. By making the axle-box radial, and leaving them free to move in circular grooves, the axles of the locomotive are directed towards the centre of curvature of the railway, and lateral friction is avoided.—In America, another improvement has been tried, which increases the bite or pulling power of locomotive engines: a thick coil of insulated copper-wire fitted in a frame is made to enclose the lower part of the driving wheel. Through this coil a stream of galvanic electricity can be passed at pleasure, and the wheel being thereby converted into an electro-magnet, takes a hold upon the rail, and with manifest advantage on first starting, or when the rails are slippery.

It has often been said that an important source of prosperity for Ireland could be found in the large bogs and peat-beds which form so considerable a part of the surface of that country. One

the most successful attempts to turn this source to profit is now in progress at Derrylea (Portarlinton), where machinery has been erected for compressing the peat, and ovens for drying it. The peat is sold in Dublin at ten shillings a ton; and Mr C. Hodgson, who has read a paper on the subject at the Institution of Mechanical Engineers, Birmingham, states that the Derrylea peat, being properly prepared, will perform nearly double the work of ordinary peat, and from 60 to 66 per cent. of the duty of good coal: that it is well adapted for the boilers of stationary engines and brewers' work, and has a ready sale for household purposes, in consequence of its cleanliness and freedom from smoke: that it requires the same stowage-room (weight for weight) as coal, and with one-third of cannel-coal yields a good gas: and, most important of all, that, as the peat possesses many of the qualities of good charcoal, it is eminently suitable for metallurgical processes. Iron-smelters who care to manufacture good iron will perhaps take a note of this.

Iron has been found so useful for building purposes, that a sanguine class of constructors have advocated the entire use of iron in all buildings, and they attempt to shew that it is suitable for all requirements of architecture, whether plain or ornamental. In a paper read before the Institute of British Architects, this opinion has been challenged, and shewn to be one-sided, inasmuch as iron, from its very nature, and its liability to oxidise, can neither be made to assume the proper architectural effect, nor to last a sufficient length of time. To quote the author's words: 'It has been admitted, that at present, iron is useless as compared with brick and mortar for walls of warehouses for the stowage of combustible material; and in regard to durability, it has got to stand the test of even a century. Moreover, it does not promise well for the prospects of iron that no effectual protection has been found for it of a permanent description, whether for its external surface, or for those portions of inner surface which are subject to the friction and wear of bolts and bands.' Then, as regards real artistic ornament, cast iron is not to be thought of: in that particular, wrought iron only can be depended on; iron fashioned with the hammer and untouched by the file. That great works can be produced under these conditions, was demonstrated by the smiths of the middle ages. How tame our modern iron-work appears in comparison. As wood-carving ought to shew the marks of the tool, so forged work ought, says the author, 'to shew the hammer-marks; and wherefore should the roughness of the fire-marks be filed, when by cold hammering the surface can be greatly hardened and its tone deepened, its play of light increased, and a polish of a totally different but far superior sort imparted—a polish not of mechanical labour, but of handiwork?'

To this we may add that, in looking at the question from the acoustic point of view, the best material for roofs where hearing has to be exercised, is wood. Neither iron nor any other substance has the resonance of wood. This is one of the questions which have been decided by the Institute above mentioned. Another subject to which we wish to call attention is Mr J. K. Colling's paper on *Art Foliage*: it should be read and studied by every one desirous of learning how to adapt the beautiful forms of Nature to the ornamental purposes of art. The paper being illustrated by

engravings, conveys the author's idea with clearness to the student.

Dr J. E. Morgan of Manchester has published a small book on a great subject, the deterioration of the English race by the ever-increasing poplousness of great cities. Even inexperienced observers cannot fail to be struck with the fact, that the majority of the inhabitants of London, and of our large towns, are undersized, lacking manly appearance as well as manly strength. Dr Morgan says, speaking of the poor of the town in which he resides, there is a singular want of stamina about them, characterising them as a class, and shewn in their gait, bearing, voice, or frame. A well-developed muscular person among them is exceedingly rare, while distortion and deformity are but too common. There is no vigour of circulation, and but little ability for continuous exertion. No wonder, therefore, that in the manufacturing districts four out of every five of the recruits sent up by the sergeants for medical inspection are rejected on the ground of physical disqualification.

This is not the first time that this question has been mooted; it is, however, one that will bear repeating again and again, for though the evils be great, they may admit of alleviation. Dr Morgan's little book (a reprint of his paper read before the Social Science Congress) should be read by all who take an interest in the subject.

UNFORGOTTEN.

SWEET Lady mine, the faded rose
Is often dearer than the flower
Fresh gathered; so each memory grows
More precious since the parting hour:
And all Love's artist-hand can give
Of glowing tint and tender shade,
Is with me, that your face may live
In colours that can never fade.

And still my fancy paints you near,
Though all the room is lone and bare;
And oft at eventide I hear
Your phantom footstep on the stair;
A presence in the gathering gloom
Thrills all my pulses with delight,
And seems to glorify the room
With loveliness denied my sight.

And little reck I that long miles
Of smiling lands and foamy sea
Divide us; love at distance smiles,
And holds the willing winds in fee;
And every wind that racks the clouds,
Or gently moulds them in the blue,
Bears love-thoughts in tumultuous crowds,
Or softly wafts a prayer for you.

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OUR FRIENDS' FRIENDS.

THAT 'our friends' friends are our friends,' I have heard repeated so frequently, that I begin to think some danger exists of the phrase taking root and rank as a proverb; and to any such result I entertain grave objections. Like those meat-lozenges which contain the sustenance of a whole family, and yet are so small and compact they can be stowed away conveniently in one's waistcoat-pocket, so proverbs are libraries of wise writings, vast treasures of experience condensed and compressed into brief lines, which can be carried easily in the memory. Still it behoves us to have our meat-lozenges and our proverbs alike made of proper materials, or much inconvenience may arise. In fact, just as we have, now and then, a committee testing the purity of our food, so we need that occasionally a sort of inquest should be held touching our proverbs; to pronounce upon their worth, and decide as to the presence of adulteration in their composition. It is desirable that at intervals a spurious proverb should be, as it were, nailed to the counter, and its falsity advertised. At present, there is no security about the matter; we are without guarantees of any kind. It is open to any man to utter a terse line, and proclaim it a proverb. There are always indiscriminating people about upon whom a bad half-crown can be palmed off; similarly, there are always crowds to be found willing to accept and reverence as a genuine article any utterance that has the outward semblance of a proverb.

For proverbs are unquestionably popular. They are very handy and convenient. A man may set up for being a sage on the strength of a stock of them, if he will only quote them with a decent regard for appositeness; and in the hands of an ordinary disputant, a wise saw is a favourite weapon of offence. 'You know the proverb,' he begins, and forthwith proceeds to knock down his interlocutor with a sage-sounding apophthegm—a string of words closely pressed together, like pig-tail tobacco, until it is hard in substance, and sharp at the corners, and capable of inflicting a

trenchant blow. Moreover, in general estimation a proverb is a final judgment; from it there is no appeal, and whoever presumes to run counter to it, or to express disbelief in it, or contempt for it, is regarded as a curiously abominable person, altogether out of the pale of social convention, standing apart from human sympathies, occupying an isolated situation; much as that German theologian in the story, who startled a party of grave divine discussing a doctrinal question, by stating 'that St Paul was no doubt a clever man, but that for his part he didn't agree with him.' If you don't believe in proverbs—the distilled essence of wisdom—what do you believe in? the world demands indignantly, and at once declines all further discussion with the unbeliever.

This being the state of the case, it becomes desirable that every man who encounters a spurious or delusive proverb stealing into life and credit, should do his best to knock it on the head, and put an end to it as speedily as may be. He should root out a weed, as he would a weed in his garden, any such erroneous maxim, for the longer it is permitted to remain choking and hindering the growth of genuine flowers of wisdom, so certainly will it become more mischievous, and the more difficult to destroy. In the present instance, I want to say a few words in opposition to the notion above mentioned as to our friends' friends being our friends.

Our friends' friends our friends? They are nothing of the kind. Let us state a case in point.

My name is Brown, we'll say. I have a friend named Jones. He has a friend named Robinson. I have a great regard for Jones. I have no regard at all for Robinson. Why should I have any regard for Robinson? That is the question. Robinson has no regard for me. We meet occasionally—not oftener than we can help, I daresay—and are tolerably civil to each other, out of respect for our common friend Jones; but I decline to consider Jones's friend as my friend. I don't like him; I see nothing in him; he appears to me a singularly uninteresting and disagreeable person. I'm at a loss to understand what peculiar charm Robinson possesses that draws Jones to him; and

the same time, I've no doubt whatever that Robinson doesn't like me (for it's an understood rule that the people we don't like don't like us). I daresay he sees nothing in me; thinks me dull and disagreeable; and is at a loss to understand what peculiar charm I possess that draws his friend Jones to me. Meanwhile, Jones—one of the kindest and most amiable of men—bless his heart! is striving, has been striving for long years to bring us together, to make us understand and like each other. Very soon after I had the pleasure of making his acquaintance—an acquaintance which, I am happy to say, has since ripened into a most cordial friendship—I remember good old Jones saying in his cheery hearty way: 'By the by, I must introduce you to my friend Robinson. I must make a point of it. Robinson is a very superior fellow; in fact, he's one of the best of fellows. You'll like Robinson so much; I'm sure you will. You're just suited to each other. You'll get on capitally together, not a doubt of it;' and so on.

Of course, after this, we were duly brought together, and introduced. Well, the result was a total failure—we didn't find that we were in the least suited to each other; we didn't get on at all capitally together. Some inexplicable hitch interfered with the success of Jones's plans. He was disappointed, it was evident; he had expected a different result. Still, he was not, he never has been, without hope that the same excellent understanding that exists between him and his friends may be eventually established between his friends themselves. I ventured to suggest that perhaps—in the exceeding kindness of his nature—he had somewhat overrated the good qualities, if such existed, of Robinson; I think I went a little further, and avowed that, to be plain with him (Jones), I did not entertain a very high opinion of Robinson, and failed to see any legitimate grounds for his (Jones's) extraordinary partiality for him. I have little doubt that much the same sort of discussion took place between Jones and Robinson in relation to myself. However, Jones met me at once (as he probably met Robinson) with a statement that it really was not right in such matters to be in too great a hurry; that Robinson's merits were not perhaps of a nature so superficial and transparent as to be discernible on the instant, but still, that they were existent, indisputable, all the same. Jones pledged his word as to such being the case; and that, in reference to such a superior man as Robinson, whom I should some day learn to love and value as I ought, it did not do at all to adopt hasty views, or to rush precipitately to unfavourable conclusions. Much matter of the same kind was urged by my friend Jones. But I am bound to say that notwithstanding my immense regard for Jones, his arguments have not greatly affected my opinions. I think just the same of Robinson as I did at the beginning; I didn't like him then, and I don't like him now; and if Jones still imagines—and he does so, unquestionably—that I shall ever be brought to regard his friend as I do himself; to make *his* friend *my* friend, in fact; well, then, Jones is very much mistaken, that's all I've got to say about the matter.

Now, how is this state of things to be accounted for? How is it that from the first Robinson and I have stood aloof from each other? We shake hands as warmly as possible with Jones; as coldly as may be with each other. We talk in the most intimate and friendly way with Jones; very dis-

tantly and monosyllabically with each other. If, in the presence of my friend and his friend, I venture upon a jocose observation, I can always rely upon Jones's hearty laughter and applause: even if the kindly fellow is not really amused by my small sally, he feigns so to be, so admirably, that it does just as well; whereas Robinson looks preternaturally grave, and evidently sees nothing in what I have said to justify mirth—but quite the contrary. If I tell a story, Robinson trumps it with a better one—or casts doubt or ridicule upon my narrative—or suggests that it is not true, or that it is by no means new: that he heard it first when he was a school-boy; and then he demands, with 'bitter irony,' as it is called in novels, whether I am prepared with any further quotations from Joe Miller's Jest-book? Of course, I feel bound, as a matter of self-respect, to pursue a somewhat analogous course of action in regard to Robinson. He doesn't presume to make jokes, or anything approaching them—probably for very sufficient reasons. But occasionally he attempts what he considers, doubtless, a sagacious and superior observation: some threadbare platitude spoken sententiously, with ridiculous solemnity of manner. Poor old Jones—bless him, I say again!—listens attentively, looks sympathetic, and tries to think that he has been enlightened by Robinson's dreariness. I make it an invariable rule to grin ostentatiously on those occasions, to treat Robinson's remark as though, instead of being full of meaning and purpose, it were intensely and wildly funny; I reward him with sarcastic applause, and recommend him by all means to become a contributor to the comic periodicals of the day. He doesn't look particularly pleasant after this conduct of mine; perhaps it would be a little surprising if he were to look so. Meanwhile, Jones—with perhaps a dash of suspicion that everything is not as it should be—pats us both on the back, laughs with one side of his mouth, in justice to my powers of humour, and draws down the other side of his mouth, out of compliment to Robinson's pompous seriousness, and looks forward hopefully to a time when we shall understand each other better, and be brought nearer together, and be, altogether, as thoroughly *en rapport* with each other as we are with him, which, I have no hesitation in saying, we never shall be, or anything like it.

Now, if I thought that this was an individual and peculiar case, having reference to myself alone, and attributable wholly to my own eccentric idiosyncrasy, I should hesitate very much about setting it forth in this full and frank way. I should conclude that my inability to tolerate Jones's friend, Robinson, was a sort of congenital and constitutional malady, regarding which physicians were in vain, and which it behoved me, therefore to endure and carry to my grave as composedly and decorously as I might. But I find that the difficulty I feel about accepting my friend's friend as my friend is reflected and repeated around me on all sides. It pervades society. I am convinced that every man has a friend against whose friends he finds it necessary to protest strongly. I know that my old friend, Green, we'll say, cannot, for the life of him, understand my attachment to Jones. He sees nothing in Jones; thinks him—he has avowed as much—obtuse and tiresome in the extreme. In Green's eyes, my friendship for Jones is as unacceptable as, in my eyes, is Jones's friendship for Robinson. I

doubt not, also, that Robinson has a friend, named Grey possibly, who is wholly at a loss to comprehend the tie which binds Robinson to Jones. Green and Grey view Jones as I view Robinson, and as Robinson views me. Each gives his friendship to his friend, but forbids its being passed on to his friend's friend. The thing is not transferable. You may keep it yourself, or may give it back to its donor; but you must not hand it over to your neighbour on the further side of you. Instances in point are constantly recurring. It seems to me I never hear of a young lady about to be married, but there strikes upon my ear a chorus of her friends, avowing that she is about to throw herself away upon a man who is wholly unworthy of her, and wondering what she can possibly see in him, to justify her in making such an enormous sacrifice. So, when a man marries, all his friends agree that they are terribly disappointed in his wife. They *did* think that poor dear old So-and-so would have made a better choice. But here has he gone and married a woman, who isn't good-looking, who hasn't any money, who doesn't understand him, who can't appreciate him, who, &c., &c.—altogether, a long bill of indictment against the lady, simply because she has become poor dear old So-and-so's wife, and a friend whom his other friends can't be friends with. And in these cases, it should be noted, the friends of the wife or husband are only of accord in their common antagonism to the object of the wife or husband's choice; and for the better expression of this, they sink temporarily the other differences existing among and dividing them: they are only harmonious singing this one chorus; that over, a hopeless discord prevails among them again.

Does a mother ever love her son's lady-love? Does she not always, announcing his engagement, speak of him with a sort of fond pity as 'Poor Charles' (or Thomas, or Henry, as the case may be); 'he's so impulsive, you know, and he became quite infatuated about the girl! What could we do but consent!' And then she proceeds to hope—with a sigh that demonstrates she hopes without confidence, almost against hope—that everything may prove to be ordered for the best, and that in the long-run he may be happy with his idol; whom it is clear she holds to be a young person of small account, successful, by play with her eyes and other female artifices, in entrapping the affections of a rather weak young man. Does a father ever love his daughter's lover? Does he not rather look upon him as his natural enemy: upsetting his household gods, breaking up his domestic circle, and stealing from him his child? Has not the indignant parent become, as a consequence, one of the most well-known and hackneyed of figures on the stage of life; and is not his indignation invariably kindled by the fact, that his daughter has chosen for herself a friend who cannot be *his* friend? When at last he consents to her union, is it not with loud lamentation over her folly and degeneracy, and with a severe distrust of the integrity of the man who is about to call her wife? Does he not wrangle with him over the settlement to be made upon the marriage: tying him up at last in the tightest suit of parchment fetters the law can furnish? Does he not consider him as a person capable, upon the shortest notice, of dying and leaving his widow totally unprovided for, or of becoming bankrupt and destitute, with

the most evil intentions of applying his wife's property to the relief of his own necessities, and of subjecting her, personally, to all sorts of gross ill-usage? Can anything be more forlorn and fearful than the position of a bridegroom at a wedding-breakfast? True, he has the support of his friend the groomsman on the occasion, who, however, does not look cordially on the bride, and maintains within himself that his friend has made a very decided mistake in leading her to the altar, and will bitterly rue his marriage-day before no very long time is over his head. But every one else is at war with the bridegroom. The father and mother are of course against him, and fail altogether to understand their daughter's conduct in accepting his suit. He's *her* friend, not theirs. The bridesmaids cry at him; is he not taking from them their dearest darling friend Mary Jane? Again, he's *her* friend, and not theirs. The bride's trustees eye him with suspicion, as a man who will, without doubt, try to upset the settlement, and give them no end of trouble, if he has the chance. Speeches are made to his disadvantage. So much anxiety is expressed as to the future happiness of the newly-wedded pair, that it is clear a good deal of doubt prevails about the business. In their friend the bride, the assembled guests have every confidence; she will, they are satisfied, do her duty punctiliously in her new state of life. It is in relation to *her* friend and husband that their misgivings arise—gathering above his head like a dark cloud. Should he conduct himself worthily, they frankly avow they shall be agreeably disappointed. But if otherwise, the sad satisfaction will remain to them, that they predicted as much from the very first moment they learned of their dear friend's intended marriage with a friend who was no friend of theirs.

Of course, I do not pretend to say that this difficulty of accounting our friends' friends as our friends is a matter of modern discovery—a sensation of quite modern growth. The thing has been noted and descanted upon long ago. I decline, therefore, to accept in regard to it that standing solution of all questions which certain sages are for ever proffering us, the moral obliquity and cynicism of the age. In such way the case is not met at all. Better explanations are to be obtained. Turning the other day to that inestimable book, Boswell's *Life of Johnson*, I lighted upon the biographer's recital of how he had desired to establish an acquaintance between his friend, Sir John Pringle, and his other, and of course more important friend, Dr Johnson. Boswell, living in intimacy with both of them, found yet a difficulty in bringing his friends together upon friendly terms. Thereupon, Sir John Pringle—who probably hung back from Johnson quite as earnestly as Johnson hung back from him—explained ingeniously: 'It is not in friendship as in mathematics, where two things equal to a third are equal between themselves. You agree with Johnson as a middle quality, and you agree with me as a middle quantity; but Johnson and I should not agree.' This seems to me a very concise and explicit statement of the case. I and my friend and his friend resemble in fact three pieces out of a child's puzzle. The projections and indentations of piece No. 1 fit on to the indentations and projections of piece No. 2. But between piece No. 1 and piece No. 3 there is no sort of accord; wide gaps appear between them; and unless piece No. 2 is inserted to link and unite them compactly, it is entirely without avail to

keep thrusting them together. They indeed are without any point of contact and agreement whatever, albeit they are adapted admirably to the differently shaped right and left of piece No. 2. And this leads us to the conclusion, that our friends have various sides to their characters. To one of these we are perfectly suited, and thence our friendship. But as to the other sides we are without information, until we find them suiting other friends, with whom we ourselves have, and can have, no correspondence—except in the most accidental way.

In relation to Boswell's story, I may mention that one misgiving occurs to me. He describes Sir John Pringle as 'his friend and his father's friend.' We are therefore invited to the consideration as to whether friendship can be hereditary. Is the friend of the father usually the friend of the son? For my own part, I'm inclined to think not. Indeed, I fancy we have all of us somewhat unfavourable memories in connection with the early friends of our family, who, in the pauses of their conversation with our seniors, affected to take an interest in us, the children of the house, and made irrelevant, if not disagreeable inquiries touching our names and ages, our progress at school, and the extent of our powers of construing, the while they prisoned us at their knees, and were careful to smooth our hair systematically and elaborately the wrong way, until the process made our scalps tingle, and involuntary tears start into our eyes. It is possible that these parental friends sometimes 'tipped' us on our quitting home to resume our studies; but I think they as often disappointed our reasonable hopes in that respect. In maturer life, these people now and then visit us—especially when they want something out of us—and accost us somewhat truculently: their palpable object being to disparage us, and lessen our self-importance as much as possible. If we demur to this fashion of treatment, our visitor generally waxes indignant. 'Why, I knew your father when he was only so high,' he exclaims, placing his open hand in quite ridiculous proximity to the floor. Now, it has never seemed to me that upon this fact of having known my father in his days of diminutiveness any fancy value ought to be set. The thing may be curious, but it cannot be of any real worth—and I particularly object to its being made a means of slighting me personally, and further, of dwarfing my balance at my banker's—which, I may mention confidentially, can seldom afford submission to any such operation. No, I am convinced that our fathers' friends are not necessarily our friends; nor are our friends' friends. We do not acquire friends by right of inheritance, nor can they be selected for us by others. We have to choose and make friendships for ourselves. These are the only genuine, and legitimate, and lasting—all others are spurious and delusive, and to be avoided. In the matter of friendship, it is exceedingly important to beware of counterfeits.

I had written thus far, intending to halt, when it occurred to me that it was only due to the reader, who had accompanied and borne with me in my treatment of the subject, that I should put him in possession of the facts out of which this dissertation has arisen. I am, I flatter myself, a candid person; and I extremely reprobate any line of conduct approximate to what the lawyers call 'snatching a judgment.' While I do not want to have the value of my opinions underrated, I also

object to any extrinsic stress being laid upon them, and I am punctilious, therefore, that the circumstances to which they are attributable should be plainly set forth. Moreover, I am confident that if I have not by my arguments won from my reader acquiescence in my views as a matter of general principle, I shall nevertheless win his entire sympathy and support under the special conditions I am about to state. This I will do as briefly as may be.

I have mentioned the names of my friend Jones and of his friend Robinson. (Those are not, of course, their real names, any more than my own patronymic is, what I stated it to be—Brown. But for the purposes of illustration, I will continue so to call them.) Well, I have felt myself much aggrieved by the conduct of my friend Jones arising out of his intimate connection with his friend Robinson. The thing has not happened merely once or twice—but thrice and more. To say that I have been writing under a feeling of exasperation would be, perhaps, to put the matter too strongly. But I cannot resist—I avow it openly—a sensation of annoyance due to certain slights which accidentally or otherwise have, as I conceive, been put upon me by my friend Jones. This sensation may possibly have affected my views upon friends and friendship.

The slights alluded to have come about in this wise. Not long ago I proposed to Jones a little walking-tour; he fell in with my project heartily. We purchased *Bradshaw* (it is always right to carry a *Bradshaw* on a walking-tour, for fear of accidents) and Ordnance maps, settled our plans, and packed our knapsacks. At the last moment, Jones says suddenly: 'I thought you wouldn't object. I've asked another man to join us. He's very fond of walking; he's my old friend Robinson.' And sure enough Robinson came with us; trust him for being anywhere where he could make himself disagreeable! Of course there was an end of pleasure then. The tour became a dreary pilgrimage. We—that is, I—had a wretched ten days of it. We all quarrelled; we could agree about nothing; and I believe all arrived home on different days by different routes. I would as soon take a long turn on the treadmill as another tour if Jones's friend Robinson is to make one of the party!

Again, I was ill, miserable, confined to the house with a wretched cold and generally disordered system. I write to Jones entreating him to come and see me—to spend an evening with a depressed invalid. He promises to come. The looked-for advent of Jones is a thing of vast importance in the limited area of my sick-room. I long for the sight of my friend's friendly face. I pile up the fire, and have the hearth swept; easy-chairs drawn towards it, and the cribbage-board looked out. I shall have an hour or two's pleasant gossip with my friend Jones, and then go to bed with a heart lighter by many pounds than it has been for long, long nights. What happens? I am listening for Jones's knock when there comes the postman's, and a letter. Jones is very sorry; when he promised to give me a look in, he had entirely forgotten that he was already engaged to play whist at Robinson's. He hopes I'm better; he'll come round some other evening; and he's mine, very truly, JOSHUA JONES. Some other evening! It was *that* evening I wanted him, more than any other evening in the year. Under such circumstances, if he had to choose between me and

Robinson, ought he not to have thrown over Robinson? I put it to you.

One more instance, and I conclude. It occurred only yesterday. I happened to have a pressing occasion for ten pounds, and I had not the money in my pocket; I am not above owning it. Even a Rothschild may have a pressing occasion for ten pounds, and find that he has not the money in his pocket, and I am not a Rothschild; far from it. I went to Jones. 'My dear Jones,' I said, 'lend me ten pounds.' His face changed; I knew what was coming. 'My dear Brown, I'm sorry; if you'd only come yesterday!' he said.

'What do you mean?'

'Well, the fact is, between ourselves, my friend Robinson called this morning—not half an hour ago—and borrowed a cool fifty of me. I should have so liked to assist you; but, my dear old boy, it can't be done, I'm drained dry! For a week or two, I hardly know where I shall turn for money.'

I will do Jones the justice to say that I believe he was quite as much annoyed as I was, and that's saying a good deal.

I made use of a strong expression in regard to Robinson.

'Don't say that,' said Jones appealingly. 'He's the best fellow in the world; you'll like him immensely some day, when you know him as well as I do!'

Now I ask you, can I, under all the circumstances, be expected to entertain favourable views of my friend's friend?

MIRK ABBEY.

CHAPTER XXXIV.—FLED.

MY Lady returned to the Abbey at the usual luncheon-hour, and partook of that meal (if sitting at the table can be called so doing) with the rest of the party; while Mary Forest kept watch at the boudoir window, with her mistress's opera-glasses in her hand, scanning the Windmill Hill.

There was no likelihood of Derrick's coming for hours yet, since he had not arrived already by the same train that had brought old Jacob's letter; but there was just a possibility of this. However, he did not come. The unfrequented road, which on the morrow would be thronged with the vehicles of Sir Richard's guests, had not a single passenger. It was one of the two ways we have spoken of leading to Dalwynch, and the shorter in point of distance, although not of time, because of the winding hill; but Derrick, coming from the direction of Coveton (not by the Dalwynch line, but another railway), could approach Mirk by no other route.

Immediately after luncheon, the carriage drew up at the door.

'I will not offer to go with you, dearest mother,' said Letty, 'because there is so much to do at home, and the more because you will be absent yourself. But you will come back as soon as you can—there's a darling!—won't you? Nothing goes on as it should at the Abbey without you.'

'Yes, dear Letty! I will come back as soon as I can.'

My Lady cast a wistful look at her three children. She would have given a thousand pounds to have thrown her arms around their necks, and wept her fill; but such an indulgence might have cost them and her far more than that, or anything which money could estimate. What if her strength should fail her—if she should 'break down,' as the saying is, at this supremest moment? She could only trust herself to nod and smile.

The whole party went out to the front door to see her off. The two young ladies standing on the hall steps with their arms round one another's waists (although I much doubt if they had grown to be the friends that they once were); Master Walter kissing his white hand to her with all the grace and fondness of a lover; Sir Richard handing her into the carriage with stately but affectionate courtesy. 'The lower road—to Lever's the watch-maker's in High Street,' said he to the coachman, 'and don't spare the horses.' Then, as the carriage drove away, he observed to the others: 'What a strange freak it is of mamma to be going to Dalwynch at such a time as this about her watch. However, she ought to be back by five o'clock at latest.'

The carriage did return even before that hour; but it did not contain my Lady. It only brought back a letter from her, which the footman was instructed to place at once in the hands of her elder son. The man, however, had some difficulty in finding Sir Richard, who was superintending some finishing-touches that were being given to the interior of the marquée—the arrangement of certain flags over the place he was to occupy on the morrow. Sir Richard tore open the note, fearing he knew not what; then uttered a tremendous oath. His people stared, for unlike some 'young masters,' the baronet scarcely ever misbehaved himself in that way. 'Where did you leave my Lady, sirrah?' inquired he roughly of the footman.

'At the railway station, Sir Richard. Her Ladyship took the train for town.'

'Where is Miss Letty? Walter—Walter,' cried the baronet, 'come here.'

'Hollo, what is it?' answered the captain, a little sulkily, for he was engaged in setting up an emblem composed of various weapons of war at the other end of the marquée; and pretty Polly, the gate-keeper's daughter, was handing him up certain highly-polished swords, and he was playfully accusing her of using them in transit as mirrors. 'You haven't found out a mistake in the almanac, and that you came of age the day before yesterday, have you?'

'Worse than that,' returned poor Sir Richard simply. 'Read that, man. What, in Heaven's name, are we to do now?'

'Let us go in and see Letty,' said Walter gravely, after he had read the note. 'Perhaps she knows something about it; and if not, you may take your oath that Mary Forest does.'

'Do you, Walter! Don't trifle with me,' said the baronet earnestly; 'if any business respecting

yourself has taken my mother away, I conjure you to tell me all.'

'No, Richard. I give you my word that I know of no reason for this extraordinary conduct. It is true that that letter from Moss Abrahams gave her some annoyance, but that matter was settled long ago. I am as surprised and dumb-founded as yourself.'

'*Dearest Richard!*'—here he again perused my Lady's note—'*urgent necessity compels me to leave home for a time. You will have the explanation on the 15th. That there may be many, many happy returns of to-morrow to you, dear boy, is the heartfelt prayer of your loving Mother.*'—'How extraordinarily strange! When is the 15th? Let's see.'

'The day after to-morrow,' rejoined Sir Richard gloomily. 'What will to-morrow be without our mother? Good Heaven, how dreadful is all this! Is it possible, think you, to put the people off?'

'Utterly out of the question, Richard; we should require five hundred messengers.'

They were walking on the lawn, and had now arrived at one of the open windows of the great ball-room, a splendid apartment, although the highly-decorated pink ceiling had been likened by a pert young architect (who wanted to persuade the baronet to let him pull down the Abbey, and build another one) to the ornaments on a twelfth-cake. Mrs Walter, Letty, and Arthur Haldane were all very busy here, but the last two not so entirely occupied with the work in hand as to be unaware of one another's presence. At another time, Sir Richard would have been annoyed at seeing them so close together, and obviously so well pleased with the propinquity, but now he was really glad to meet with the young barrister, for whose judgment he had a great respect.

'Letty—Arthur,' cried he, 'read this. Do either of you know, can either of you guess, what on earth it means?'

'Mamma not to be here to-morrow!' ejaculated the former, when she had read the note. 'I can scarcely believe my eyes.' But at the same time there came into her mind that vague but saddening talk which her mother had held with her but lately when my Lady had said her malady was not one the doctors could cure. Arthur read the note twice over, not so much to master its contents, perhaps, as to frame his own reply to what had been asked of him.

'I certainly do not know,' said he, 'what can have taken your dear mother at such a time as this. We may be sure, however, it is no mere freak of fancy, but that it is done for what she believes to be your good.'

'Our good!' broke forth Sir Richard impatiently. 'How can it be for good that I should be placed to-morrow in a position the most embarrassing that can be conceived? What am I to say when people ask me "Where is your mother?" Imagine what they will think of her absence on such an occasion, the most important!'

'Let us rather imagine, Richard,' interrupted Letty, laying her hand upon his arm, 'what our dear mother must be suffering at this moment. As Arthur says, it can be no trivial matter that takes her thus suddenly away from us; and although she may have over-estimated its urgency, we may be sure that it is her anxiety for others—that is, for us—which has caused her to do so. Mamma is incapable of a selfish action.'

'I am not speaking for myself alone, Letty,' returned the baronet hotly.

'I did not accuse you of doing so, Richard. What I mean is this, that however much you may feel this misfortune, mamma has to bear the burden of its cause—whatever that may be—alone. She is thinking at this moment of the alarm and sorrow she has excited here, and we may be sure is feeling for us at least as much as we feel for ourselves; and in addition to that, she has this trouble to bear, at even the nature of which we cannot guess.'

Sir Richard frowned, and did not reply; but Arthur unobserved stole Letty's hand, and pressed it, in token of his loving approval. 'And who is the person who is to give us the explanation on the 15th, think you?' said Walter. 'I'll wager—or at least I would do so, if I hadn't given up betting—that Mistress Forest can tell us if she would.'

'Then let us send for her at once,' cried Sir Richard hastily; 'anything is better than this suspense.'

When the servant called for this purpose had been despatched: 'I do not presume,' said Arthur gravely, 'to dictate what is your duty; but if the case were mine, Sir Richard, and my mother had expressly stated that her motives would be explained at a certain date, I should hardly like to extract them beforehand from her confidential servant. Forgive me, for I know I am addressing one who is himself a man of the most scrupulous honour.'

The baronet bit his lip. 'I don't know, I'm sure, Haldane. It is true, since my mother has gone to town, that nothing we can do can bring her back in time for— But at all events there can be no harm in asking how long she is likely to be away.—Ah, here is Mistress Forest. We want to hear about my Lady, Mary. She has gone to London, it seems, and we are not to know why until the day after to-morrow. Now, we are not going to ask you her reasons.'

'Thank you, Sir Richard,' said Mistress Forest, her puckered eyes looking really grateful.

'But what we do desire is, that you will tell us how long she will be away.'

'I am sure I can't tell, sir; Heaven knows I wish I could,' answered the waiting-maid fervently. 'She sent a big box over to Dalwynch by the carrier yesterday: that's all I know about it.'

'Then she herself is not going to give us the explanation in person, you think?' said the baronet gloomily.

'No, Sir Richard: not in person; at least, I believe not. Somebody else is going to do that for her.'

'And you know who that will be?' returned the young man sternly.

'I think—at least; yes, I know, sir; but it's not me,' added the waiting-maid hastily. 'I hope I know my place better than that. But my Lady bade me say nothing about it, and, with all respect, wild horses should not tear it from me.'

Here Mistress Forest, who had always entertained considerable terror of her austere young master, could not forbear casting a beseeching glance towards Arthur Haldane.

'We already know from Mr Haldane's own lips,' observed Sir Richard with emphasis, and looking in the same direction, 'that he is not in possession of the secret of my Lady's departure.'

'I certainly said as much,' returned Arthur

haughtily, and with that, either because he was really annoyed, or did not wish to be further questioned, he stepped out upon the lawn, and walked away.

'All this is very unsatisfactory, and strange, and bad,' said the baronet, after a considerable pause. 'But nothing is to be got, it seems, by asking questions. We must do then the best we can for to-morrow without my mother—you Letty, assisted by Mrs Walter here, must do the honours of the Abbey in her place—and I wish to Heaven,' added he, as he turned upon his heel, 'that the day was well over.'

'What a nice agreeable temper Richard has, when anything goes wrong,' observed Walter, twirling his moustaches. 'I'm hanged if I don't think it's that which has driven my mother away from home. She naturally enough concludes he will be unbearable when he becomes the master.'

'Fie, fie, Walter!' said Letty. 'I think it is much more that she can no longer bear to listen to the cruel things she hears her two sons say of one another. She has spoken to me of it more than once of late with tears in her eyes.'

'Well, Sir Richard has a bad temper, Letty, there's no doubt about that,' observed Mrs Walter, striking in in defence of her husband.

'Yes; yet there are many things worse than that, Rose, and mamma has been accustomed to Richard all his life; but she has had trouble upon trouble for the last six months, as I am sure you cannot deny, and it is likely in the state of health to which I know she is reduced, that she feels herself totally unequal to the part she would be expected to play to-morrow.'

'I think Mr Haldane knows more of the matter than he chooses to say,' observed Rose, at once carrying the war into the enemy's camp.

'I don't think you quite understand him,' returned Letty, executing the same strategic movement; 'anything like duplicity is altogether foreign to his character.'

'He looks simple enough certainly,' remarked Rose quietly. 'But I noticed that when Sir Richard asked him whether he knew, or could guess what had taken Lady Lisgard from home, he confined himself to replying that he did not know.'

Letty made no answer, but applied herself with heightened colour to the occupation in which her brothers had interrupted her. Walter smiled sardonically, thinking of certain female savages he had been reading of that morning in some paper in the *Field*, apropos of rifle-grooves, who were expert in propelling poisoned darts from blow-pipes; then catching sight of his handsome face in one of the mirrors with which the ball-room was wainscoted, he nodded, as though he recognised some friend he was constantly in the habit of meeting, yet was always glad to see, and sauntered out. At first, he made mechanically for the marquise, but stopping himself, not as it seemed without some contention in his own mind, he turned his steps to some other part of the Park. 'No,' said he to himself gaily, 'I will be a good boy. It is true, I have had devilish hard lines lately, but then it was partly deserved. Now, the poor mother has had just as hard, and has not deserved them a bit. I will do nothing that can cause her trouble now—not even run the risk of a bit of harmless flirtation, for there always is a risk about that, somehow. I wonder whether Letty was right about her going away; I'm sure I can't

help Richard quarrelling with me—he will do it. And then there was that matter of Moss Abrahams—upon my life it must have been very trying to the dear old lady. And then there was my affair with Rose—humph! Well, I'm very sorry, Heaven knows, if my conduct has in any way contributed to such a catastrophe; but it's something, my dear mother, let me tell you, when your troubles are of that sort that you can run away from them. What an infernal fool I have made of myself in every way!'

CHAPTER XXXV.—THE UNINVITED GUEST.

Old Jacob Forest had made a well-grounded complaint when he cried out with such vehemence that that fellow Derrick had actually left the front door open, and the Guard-ship and his rheumatism more exposed to the rigour of the elements even than usual; but to do his visitor justice, this rudeness was not committed with intention; Ralph knew not what he was doing; he was out of his mind with fury and despair.

'Damn her!' screamed he, plucking the little bunch of violets from where he had placed them so tenderly but an hour before; 'so she was false, too, like the rest of them. She had no more heart in her than a woman of stone; and I have been worshipping her all my life, just as a savage worships his idol. No wonder I took to that young son of hers—how like! how like!—and like, too, in his selfish soul! Why, I was calling yonder Sea a while ago a cruel smiling traitress—because in her wrath I thought that she had swallowed this woman up. But the sea is honest enough compared to her. She puts up painted panes to my memory, does she, with the money of the very man she has married! Hypocrite! Wanton! Liar! She has held converse with me, knowing who I was, across that man's very grave, and let me pour my heart out before her, drop by drop, when she might have stanced it with a word. How could she do it? How dared she do it!—she that is a God-fearing woman, forsooth! But I suppose that all is fair against a castaway. Let her look to it now, though. Ralph Gavestone is not a man, as I told her then, to be crossed with impunity—far less to be cajoled, betrayed, insulted, Wronged! Richard Lisgard, too!—Sir Richard, as the bastard calls himself!—your hour of bitterness is drawing nigh too, and I will not spare you. There is no memory now of the beloved Dead to stay my hand; there is the knowledge of the treacherous living to make the blow all the surer and the more fatal. Love—nay, even the impress of where I thought love had lain within me, but it was not so—is cancelled out, and Mercy with it. Friendship—bah, I have found out what that is worth! There is nothing left me, nothing in the world, now, except Revenge! Lord it, Sir Richard, for yet a few hours more, among your trucking neighbours, your fawning tenants, for your time is short indeed. They may be your humble and obedient servants still, but what will they think of you, what will they say of you, behind your back, when they come to learn who you are? If your mother has the right to rule at Mirk, then I will rule there too: and you shall serve; and if not—then she is my wife still, and leaves you for me. There will be a downfall for your pride! Lady Lisgard of Mirk Abbey to be claimed by a "drunken brawler"—do you suppose that I forget such words as those—

and forced to be once more plain Lucy Gavestone, for the wife of a vagabond like me has scarcely the right to be termed "madam." The law will give her to me: there is no doubt of that. The righteous Law, which is to be always upheld—remember that, my game-preserving friend—no matter what hardships it may entail upon individuals, or even what injustice it may commit in exceptional cases. How sweet it is to remember such words of wisdom, against which, in my ignorance, I was wont to fight tooth and nail. You will not forbid me the Abbey, I suppose, when I come thither to claim my wife. To-morrow, or next day at furthest, will introduce you to your stepfather; for I have made up my mind to acknowledge you, just as though you had been born in lawful wedlock.'

Breathing forth these cruel threats, and feeding upon their fulfilment in his mind, Ralph Derrick lay awake for hours in his chamber at the *Royal Marine*, and had hardly fallen asleep when the omnibus started for the morning train. The horn, and noise of the wheels aroused him, and he leaped up out of bed with an oath, because he knew that he had missed that, his earliest opportunity, of getting to Mirk. However, having rung his bell, he learned from the waiter that it would be quite possible yet, by taking a carriage and four horses, to reach the junction before the Coveton train, which, besides, had to wait there for the mid-day mail. 'Of course,' said the waiter, rubbing his hands, and speaking with a hesitation induced by the contemplation of Ralph's scanty kit, 'it will be a very considerable expense, and perhaps'—

'Curse the expense, and you too!' ejaculated the whilom gold-digger in his old flaming manner. 'Here's a ten-pound note; and let my bill be settled and the horses put to within five minutes.'

'But your breakfast, sir?'

'A glass of brandy and a piece of bread: that's all I want; quick, quick!'

The waiter departed at full speed—his anxiety to execute Derrick's orders being at least equalled by his desire to communicate them to his mistress and the chambermaids. They were only accustomed at the *Royal Marine* to the Newly Married, who were rarely in a hurry, and never broke their fast upon brandy and bread; and to these Ralph certainly afforded a lively contrast.

The four horses carried him along at a great rate, and the old-fashioned carriage swung from side to side down every hill, so that if motion could have soothed his perturbed spirit, on the principle of like to like, it should have grown calmer with every mile. But fast as he sped, his thoughts flew on before him—and in them he was already at Mirk Abbey, denouncing, exposing, Avenging, until physical inaction became intolerable, and thrusting his head and shoulders out at the window, he bade the astonished post-boys pull up, and let him out, for that he would have no more of such travel. Then once more he pursued his way on foot, and had walked two-score of miles before he put up for the night, at one of the same inns at which he had stopped upon his way down to Coveton. But exercise, even in this violent degree, could now no longer avail him. He was still consumed with bitterness and anger, and the desire of vengeance. He could not sleep; and he had lost all appetite for food. He drank, as he had never drunk since he was in Cariboo; glass after glass of raw spirits, to the wonder of his tolerably well-seasoned host,

who looked to have him for quite a permanent guest, overtaken, as it seemed must come to pass, by delirium tremens. Brandy, however, could now affect him nothing; except perhaps that it added fuel to his rage. On the third day, he grew impatient of his slow progress, and took the train upon a line of rails that brought him within a dozen miles of Mirk. As soon as he got out at the station, he inquired for a vehicle to take him to his journey's end.

'You wish to go to Mirk Abbey, do you not, sir?' said the porter respectfully (for Ralph always travelled first-class).

'That's my business, and not yours,' retorted Derrick angrily, but without surprise; for it seemed to him natural enough that the purpose which was consuming his whole being should be recognised in his external features.

'Nay, sir; I meant no harm. It is not business, but pleasure, that is taking all the world to Mirk to-day. Everything here that has four wheels, and even that has two, has been already engaged; but if you don't mind waiting an hour or so, there will be a return-fly'—

But, with a contemptuous oath, Ralph had already resumed his journey on foot, looking neither to left nor right, but keeping his eyes steadfastly fixed on the wind-mill, he could even now see afar off, and which he knew crowned Mirk-land Hill. The afternoon was already far spent, and by the time he reached the spot in question the dusk had already deepened into dark. On one side of the road lay the white gate and little hedge belonging to Belcomb; on the other, the great Wind-mill, with its dilapidated wall still unrepaired, and over which a young man was leaning and looking towards the valley with longing eyes. Ralph followed the direction of his gaze, and perceived the noble outlines of Mirk Abbey 'picked out' in lines of many-coloured flame—its every window aglow with light, and the shadowy Park itself islanded with two large shining spots, which old experience taught him at once were walls of canvas well lit up within.

'What is going on there?' asked he of the miller, for such the young man's dress proclaimed him to be.

'Why, victuals and drink, to be sure,' replied the lad, in a tone that bespeaks a grievance; 'and music and pretty girls to dance to it, and fireworks, and I don't know what all. And here am I, the only young man in the parish that is not to enjoy himself at it: just because Master Hathaway happens to have a pressing order in hand, I am to keep the mill going all to-night. I don't say I wishes it to rain—for that would spoil everybody's sport—but if the wind would be so good as to fall, and stop the mill, why, I wouldn't whistle to try and set it agoing again.'

'Yes, by the by,' said Ralph, 'I heard something at the station about some goings-on at Mirk, but I didn't take much heed. What is it, lad? And why are they all so gay down yonder at the Abbey?'

'Why, it's Sir Richard coming of age, to be sure,' answered the lad. 'You must hail from a darned long way off, not to know that; and yet I seem to know your face. Why, you're Mr Derrick, ain't you, as used to lodge at the *Lisgard Arms*? I thought so. Well, you'll find nobody there now, for Steve has been taken into favour again—thanks to my Lady, I believe—and is up at the Park with

the rest; and they won't let you into the grounds, you know; so you might just as well stop here, and have a chat with a poor fellow as'—

Striking his stick with violence against the ground, Ralph strode away down the hill. This, then, was the very time for him to come upon the inmates of Mirk Abbey, while they were holding their heads highest, and to cast them down to the very dust. If his determination had needed strength, if the sharpness of his revenge had wanted an edge, both had been supplied by the careless words of the miller's boy. Before the night was out, not only that lad, but all the parish, nay, all the County, should learn that he, Ralph Derrick, could not only be no longer forbidden to enter the Lisgards' doors, but would perhaps even rule within them as the husband of my Lady herself.

The village, as he had been forewarned, was as deserted as Auburn itself, and the inn fast closed. But the iron gates of the Abbey were flung back, as though to welcome all comers, and the rheumatic lodge-keeper and his wife had betaken themselves with their pretty daughter to the festive scene within. So Ralph strode, undenied, up the long dense avenue, made darker by the glancing lights at the far end, like some embodiment of Misfortune, about to paralyse Youth and Hope with a word. The fairy-like splendours of the scene before him seemed to him like a house of painted cards, which, at his finger-touch, should collapse in utter ruin; his frown should silence all those melodies that jarred so on his reluctant ears; that merriment should be turned into wailing, or still better, into scornful laughter. The scene of pride should be made a place of shame.

No one of all the crowd of holiday-makers seemed to take notice of his presence, though he carried with him, from spot to spot, the only scowling face that was to be seen among them. He stood at the opening of the great marquée, and watched the dancers; his evil eye scanned each gay couple as they whirled before him, but settled upon none whom it had come to wither. Sir Richard and his brother had inaugurated the proceedings there by taking part in a few dances, but had then withdrawn themselves to the ball-room within. In the second tent, reserved for the humblest class of guests, the mirth was already growing somewhat uproarious; but there was one among the company, who, though he took two glasses for other folk's one, looked as sober as an undertaker; and Derrick came behind this man and plucked his arm.

'Steve,' said he, 'I want a word with you. Come out with me, and leave these capering idiots.'

The landlord of the *Lisgard Arms* did not even make a pretence of being glad to recognise his late lodger: he had been received, as Hathaway's lad had stated, into favour at the Abbey once more, through the intercession of my Lady, but he was still upon his good-behaviour, and it excessively annoyed him to see the original cause of Sir Richard's displeasure with himself once more at Mirk, and intruding where he was least welcome. However, the two withdrew together apart from the crowd.

'What is it, Derrick? I think it is foolish of you venturing here. I am sorry to say that I have promised not to receive you again at my inn. I did not dream of your coming back, or else I would never have done so.'

'Don't trouble yourself about that, Steve. If I stay at Mirk at all, it will be here, at the Abbey.'

'At the Abbey! You have been drinking, Derrick. Now, take my advice, and be off; at all events, for the present. To-day, when everybody is being entertained by Sir Richard, folks would resent any insult put upon the family, I can promise you—it's the worst day you could possibly have selected to force your way in here.'

'No, Steve, the best day—the only day. I would have given ten thousand pounds, I tell you, rather than have missed it, or have arrived to-morrow instead.'

'I am glad you are so rich, man,' returned Steve drily, 'for it is the impression down here that you lost all your money upon that French horse at the Derby; poor Master Walter, too, you led him into a pretty mess, it seems.'

'Curse Master Walter!' ejaculated Derrick angrily. 'He's a mean skunk, if ever there was one.'

'People don't think so, hereabouts, Mr Derrick; and I should recommend you not to express your opinion quite so loudly. If any of these volunteers heard you speaking of their captain in that way, you would not escape with a whole skin.'

'That's my look-out,' answered Derrick roughly. 'I want you to tell me where I can find Sir Richard. I have particular business with him; something for his private ear.'

'It isn't about my Lady, is it?' inquired the other eagerly.

'Yes, it is. How came you to think of that? Eh?'

'How could I be off on it, man? Is she not the uppermost thought of everybody here? Do you really bring any news of her? And, look you, if it's bad news, don't tell it. I don't like that ugly look of yours, Mr Derrick. If you have done any harm to my Lady, I, for one, will help to wring your neck round.'

'Do you mean to say she is not here?' gasped Ralph, without heeding his last words.

'Of course not; didn't you know that? She's gone away, all of a sudden. Sir Richard quite broke down when he alluded to it in his speech. He said that urgent business had compelled her to be in London; but Roberts told me that the family themselves have no idea why she took herself off'—

'Ah, but they do though,' exclaimed Derrick scornfully. 'And I know, too, or I'm much mistaken. She's trying that dodge on, is she! Not at home, eh? And she supposes that I shall leave my card, and go away like any other well-conducted visitor. She'll find me an acquaintance whom it is not so easy to drop, I fancy. So my Lady has fled, has she?' continued he. 'Haden't the pluck to blazon it out, eh? She won't, however, have flown very far from her young chicks, I reckon. And, perhaps, it's just as well that I should cut the comb of this young bantam, Sir Richard, while his mother's out of the way; not that I feel an ounce of pity for her, either.'

'You'll feel a horsewhip about your shoulders, Ralph Derrick, before you're a quarter of an hour older, or else I'm much mistaken,' observed Steve ruefully. 'I'll have nothing more to say to you, and that's a fact. You are not only drunk, but stark mad. I never heard a fellow go on with such a farrago of rubbish. Look here, if you'll come home with me at once, you shall have as much brandy as you can drink; but you shan't kick up a row here. See, one of the ball-room windows is

wide open, and Sir Richard himself, for all you know, may— Confound the fellow, it will be only kindness to tell Styles, the policeman, to take him up.'

Derrick had burst away from Steve, and was running across the lawn to the very place where the Lisgard family had discussed their mother's departure upon the preceding evening.

KING GEORGE'S ISLAND.

ADDITIONS to the earth's surface are so rare, that it is not a matter of surprise that so much interest should be awakened by the apparition of an island from the depths of the sea. Rare, however, as such occurrences are, the recent appearance of an island in the Grecian Archipelago is not without precedent, even in the present century. These islands are not always enduring. There is on record an instance where one of these manifestations was taken possession of almost simultaneously by England and France. It was retained by the former, and in due course found its place on the map; but when it was looked for by subsequent navigators, it was not to be found, and its locality can only be ascertained now by a reference to the Admiralty chart, where it is replaced by the words, 'Lost Island.' Since 1800, at least four islands have made their appearance. In the month of June 1811, there was a smart shock of an earthquake in the Azores, which was followed soon afterwards by the appearance of an island in the neighbourhood of Mount St Michael. In shape, it resembled the Peak of Teneriffe, was about a mile round at the base, about three hundred feet in height, and with a crater in the centre, from which torrents of hot water were projected into the sea. This island was named the Sabrina; but within four months from its eruption, it began to shew indications that eventually the name would be all that remained of it. It began to sink, and continued to do so until February of the following year, when the sea again swept over the place where it had been; the only evidence of its continuance beneath the surface was the issue of a small quantity of vapour, which became fainter and fainter, and at last disappeared altogether. Previous eruptions of a similar kind are recorded as having taken place in the same locality. These were attended by the same manifestations—smoke issuing from the sea, then smoke mingled with flames, and at last an islet. All of these were either swallowed up or were washed away by the sea; the most enduring did not exist three years.

The volcanic region in which Iceland is situated has been distinguished by similar phenomena. About a month before the great eruption of Skapta in 1783, an island rose from the sea off the coast of Iceland, which had been preceded by an immense quantity of pumice-stones and ashes. This islet was taken possession of in due form by the king of Denmark, who christened it New Island, but, like some of the possessions of his successors, he was not able to retain it; its birth and death were included in the same year. On this same coast of

Iceland there appeared another island in 1830. It was in close proximity to Reikiavik. In the following year, an island made its appearance on the coast of Sicily, which, during its brief existence, bore the name of Julia or Ferdinanda indifferently. There is still some evidence of its having existed, for the sea is shallower there than in the immediate vicinity; indeed, it is said to be so short a distance below the surface, that Mr Figuier thinks a new eruption not improbable.

The new island which is now drawing a host of scientific and curious individuals from all European countries to observe its gradual elevation, is situated among the islands of the Grecian Archipelago. Similar eruptions, on a much smaller scale, have occurred in the same locality on several occasions and at no very distant dates; Santorin itself was doubtless of volcanic origin, as may be seen by the nature of the greater portion of its soil. An examination of a map of the Greek Archipelago will enable anybody to perceive the situation of three islands, named respectively the Great Kameni, Little Kameni, and Nea Kameni. All of these are of subterranean origin—the last having made its appearance in 1707. The elevation of the highest portion of these islands has been estimated at about seventeen hundred feet from the bed of the sea. Several accounts are in existence relative to the appearance of these islands.

Towards the close of the year 1650, a violent eruption took place a little outside the Gulf of Santorin. It lasted some months, and the quantity of ashes and cinders erupted was so great that they are said to have covered the sea as far as Constantinople and Smyrna. Though no island made its appearance on this occasion, it brought to light the ruins of two villages, which had probably been buried in a catastrophe similar to that which caused the destruction of Herculaneum and Pompeii. This eruption was not, however, unattended with serious disasters: more than fifty persons are said to have perished in Santorin from suffocation by the sulphurous vapours exhaled, and a very large number of animals. A huge wave, raised by the upheaval of the bed of the sea or other causes, swept over every island in the gulf, and washed down two churches on Santorin itself.

In the year 1707, Santorin again experienced sundry shocks of earthquake, and on the morning of the 23d May of that year, some sailors saw what they at first took to be the hull of a wrecked vessel lying between the Greater and Lesser Kameni, but which they perceived on rowing off to it was a small island composed of pumice-stone. It was white in colour, and received a name in conformity with its appearance. At that time, it was cool, and visitors could land upon it without inconvenience, and feed on the oysters with which it was covered. It continued to rise and develop a greater extent of surface for some time after this. One of those who visited it describes it as of very friable composition. Nearly a month after its first appearance, it lost its innocent character, and grew so exceedingly hot as to render landing on it impossible; the sea round it also approached very near boiling heat. During this volcanic disturbance, a large number of isolated black rocks emerged from the sea at different points between the last-born island and Little Kameni, which gave no sign of animation at first, but after remaining inert some hours, began to vomit smoke and flames; and a quantity of matter was upheaved from the depths

of the sea, which united a great many of them in a single mass. The sea, on this as on other occasions, was covered with innumerable dead fish. The volcanic action lasted for upwards of a year, and the matter forced up gradually united this mass to and spread over the little island which had heralded its appearance. The formation of this island, which received the name of Nea Kameni, was witnessed by many persons, who have left more or less complete accounts of its formation, and also of subsequent eruptions on its surface, which ended with the formation of a cone about a hundred feet in height.

From that time until the beginning of this year, there was no resumption of volcanic disturbances perceptible; but there appears to be good reason to believe that an upheaval of the bed of the sea, or, as it may be termed, the channel which divides Little Kameni from Santorin, has taken place. In 1825, the depth of the sea here was stated to be fifteen fathoms; but five years later, when soundings were taken, only four fathoms were found. A shoal was also discovered to exist in the gulf, which measured about eight hundred yards in one direction, and five hundred in another. Virlet, who wrote an account of the observations he made in this region, anticipated in that paper the formation of a new island, without any of the violent manifestations which marked the appearance of its predecessors, but by a slow and gradual upheaval. So far as the upheaval was concerned, he was probably right in his conjectures, for soundings taken subsequently gave only three fathoms of water above it; inasmuch, however, as this submarine plateau is formed by upheaval, and not by accretions to its surface, the inference was that volcanic action was going on beneath it, which would vent itself as soon as the superincumbent weight was raised to the level of the surrounding bed of the sea. As further evidence that this volcanic action has been going on for a long time, it may be mentioned that sulphurous gas has always been observed to issue from the sea along the coast of Nea Kameni. This escape of gas into the sea had a peculiar effect upon it, which has been taken advantage of for the purpose of cleansing the bottoms of vessels. The discovery that it was capable of accomplishing this was made in the following manner. During the war of Independence, several vessels lay here at anchor, and it was found that although this station, under ordinary circumstances, is favourable to the growth of sea-grass, and the adhesion of shell-fish to the hull, the gas not only prevented a further accumulation of this growth and adhesion, but actually cleansed the bottom of the ship—a fact which it may be of value to know, as of all the numerous compositions which have been hitherto used to prevent this fouling, not one has been found to answer the purpose effectively; copper-sheathing not being possible in the case of vessels built of iron, on account of the electrical action which is set up by the contact or contiguity of the two metals when immersed in salt water. That this cleansing power was really exercised by the sea in the Bay of Vulcano, was ascertained by Admiral Lalande in the first place, and subsequently by Admiral Roncière de Nourry, who sent a vessel there, the bottom of which was exceedingly foul, but was soon cleansed by the action of these waters. The fact, indeed, is now well known to seafaring men who frequent the Mediterranean.

From what has been stated, it will be seen that there is not much cause for surprise that a violent outburst has occurred in such a highly-volcanic district. On this occasion, there will be no lack of information of the circumstances attending the eruption, nor of pictorial representations of the island, as a number of photographers are busily engaged in taking photographs of every object of interest. The first shocks of earthquake were felt at Santorin on the 28th of January last, which did nothing more than awaken some alarm in the minds of the inhabitants of Santorin, which was not diminished when they were found to continue through succeeding days. More violent shocks were felt at Little Kameni; and on the evening of the 30th January, the sea round this islet assumed a white appearance, an indication that sulphurous gases were making their way through the floor of the sea. This appearance spread rapidly, and was especially marked in the channel which divides Nea Kameni from Palai Kameni, where the sea began to bubble violently, accompanied with a slightly intermittent roar, resembling a well-sustained cannonade, which lasted over several days, and was accompanied by the appearance of smoke and flame, which rose from the sea. The flames were of a reddish colour, the smoke at such times as flames were mingled with it, assuming a dark tint, whereas at other times it commonly had a white fleecy appearance, no doubt from its being largely mixed with steam. The height to which the flames rose above the sea is stated to have been from nine to twelve feet. The colour of the sea changed in a few hours from pale to a deep-red tint, supposed to have been caused by the presence of salts of iron. It was evident that at this time Nea Kameni was the chief centre of volcanic activity; it was constantly shaken by the shocks of earthquake, and on the morning of the 31st January, it split in two pieces, and a promontory, which formed the right side of the little port of Vulcano, fell away from the island. From the fissure thus occasioned, there was emitted such a quantity of sulphurous gas, that the sea-gulls which had flocked to the spot to feast on the dead fish with which the sea was covered, fled away, and did not again make their appearance. Towards evening, the island began to sink, and in two hours, it was estimated that it had sunk nearly two feet; it then diminished, and during the night its downward movement was estimated at three inches an hour. At the same time, the flames in the channel burst forth anew, but died away on the morning of the 1st February, and were succeeded by clouds of steam and smoke, emitting a sulphurous odour, but not so much impregnated with gas as to affect the respiration: the ebullition of the water was very violent.

During this day, the rate at which the island sank was estimated at somewhat under two inches an hour. In the meantime, five small lakes of fresh water had appeared in the south-west portion of the island, which were at first clear and transparent, but gradually assumed a red tint and bitter taste. The shocks of earthquake were frequent, the subterranean rumbling almost incessant, and the fissure already referred to widened perceptibly, while the rocks in close proximity to it felt hot to the touch.

On the night of the 1st February, the flames rose higher than ever, but died away towards morning, and gradually became extinct, followed

by a dense black smoke. The part of the channel where this was rising was visited by a party of Greek officers, who had arrived on board a vessel sent by the government, in case it might become necessary to remove the inhabitants. On arriving at the spot, and heaving the lead, they found that land was rising—was not, in fact, more at that time than a fathom below the surface; at four o'clock the same afternoon, the new-born island made its appearance in the world; and so rapid was its elevation, that by nightfall its summit stood about seventy feet above the level of the sea. Its appearance, it should be stated, was the signal for the cessation of the rumbling noise; and it was with the greatest quietness and tranquillity that it continued its upward movement.

King George's Island, as it was named, in honour of the king of Greece, continued day after day to attain a greater elevation, but its development was not due solely to the uplifting of a solid mass; stones were brought up by the boiling sea which adhered firmly to it. On the 9th February, it had attained a length of five hundred feet, a breadth of two hundred and forty feet, and an elevation of one hundred and sixty feet; and from its continued enlargement, it was anticipated by those who saw it that it would eventually extend to Nea Kameni. The sea surrounding it was boiling, and emitted the same kind of noise as may be heard when a copper is boiling. Not only did smoke and steam issue from the sea surrounding the island, but the island itself, which is cone-shaped, emitted at times smoke, steam, and flames; the vapour in very large quantities, and smelling of sulphur, but not containing so much gas as to make it difficult to breathe in its immediate vicinity, or even in it. Some who watched the island during the night say that at the time when flames were issuing from it, the fissures in it enabled them to get a glimpse of the incandescent matter in the interior. Soundings were again taken near the new island, and it was found that there was an upheaval of the floor of the sea all round it.

In the meantime, the cracks in Nea Kameni continued to increase in every direction. From these cracks, vapour issued in greater or less abundance, and the sea about the island assumed a milky appearance, and in some places was so hot that it was not possible to keep the hand in it.

The latest accounts that have reached this country upon the moment at which we are writing represent the volcanic action as increasing, and serious alarm is felt with respect to its effects on the island of Santorin itself. Shocks of earthquakes have been felt at Patras, and at other places equally distant, such as Tripolitza, where some buildings were shaken down. At Chios, they had more severe shocks than at some other places; the people living in that island saw a column of smoke rise from the sea between it and the opposite coast; and according to a report brought to Trieste by the captain of an Austrian steamer, a shoal has been formed between the island of Cerigo and Cape Maleus.

Two of our vessels were despatched from Malta by the governor to assist the inhabitants to escape, and a similar measure was adopted by the king of Greece, who likewise sent a scientific commission for the purpose of recording observations. From the reports transmitted by them, it seems that while the first island gradually grew until it united itself at both ends with Nea Kameni, thus

filling up the little port of Vulcano, a second rose to a considerable height, and then crumbled to pieces. The eruptions have become more violent, and the members of the commission themselves had a very narrow escape; the clothes of some of them were burned before they could run under a projection to screen themselves from the falling stones and cinders, and the deck of the vessel which brought them was scorched in several places, as were also the crew on board. The captain of another vessel was killed by a falling stone, and the red-hot cinders which accompanied it set the vessel on fire. The most striking phenomenon that has been witnessed during the eruption was the gradual rising into the air of an immense column supposed to have been formed of red-hot ashes and smoke. The estimated height to which it rose was over four thousand feet, and its diameter about one-seventh of its height.

POPULAR MATHEMATICS.

NEXT to Metaphysics, the subject of all others considered the impregnation of everything dry, and abstruse, and repulsive, is Mathematics. A few specially constituted minds excepted, mankind generally are debarred from the study of the most interesting parts of Nature, by the inscription placed at their entrance: 'Let none but mathematicians enter.' The dead languages were not a more complete wall of exclusion from knowledge in former days, than algebraical symbols and geometrical demonstrations are in our own day. This state of things is a most serious obstacle to the diffusion of the mechanical and physical sciences, more especially the subjects perhaps most fruitful in the valuable arts and ameliorations of human life. The man that can shift this barrier, so as to rescue even a small portion of the imprisoned knowledge, is not unworthy to be compared with him that can multiply blades of grass, or open up new fields of industry.

There are two ways of surmounting the difficulty. By improving the expository arts, a subject formerly mathematical and technical, can be rendered plain to the ordinary mind; or, again, by similar pains bestowed upon mathematics itself, a certain number of its truths may be made more intelligible, and thereby less obstructive of the road to knowledge.

We could not name any one who has laboured more assiduously for these ends than Dr Arnott. His work on Physics, first published thirty years ago, and now completed and brought down to the present day, was an attempt to avoid altogether the employment of algebra and geometry, and to shew that, by a careful choice of illustrations and examples, a very large portion of natural philosophy might be taught without mathematical aids. It was necessary that some of the highest difficulties should be omitted; but the number of valuable principles that could still be included, and proved to the satisfaction of a reasoning mind, took people by surprise. The work was extensively diffused, and was devoured with an avidity rarely manifested towards anything scientific.

It is interesting to consider the arts and methods brought into play in such a signal effort of expository skill. In the first place, there is a studied avoidance of new and technical terms; the greater number of such being rendered into plain language, while the few that must still be retained

are explained and dwelt upon till they become easy. In the next place, for the elucidation of the principles, facts are everywhere sought out from common and familiar experience. A third device is made use of with great effect. When the author has to explain a piece of mechanism, in any-wise complicated, as, for example, the steam-engine, he is particularly mindful to separate the essential, or distinguishing, part of the machine from the accessory parts, or such as do not enter into its main character. The essential of a steam-engine is a *pump*, with an inverted arrangement of the power; as if a well, instead of being pumped by working the pump-handle, gushed up of itself, and set the handle in motion to do some outside work. What is additional to this principal arrangement, is a system of cranks and wheels such as we may find in many other machines; but it is the business of a good instructor to keep all these out of the learner's view, until the essential part be fully understood.

It is not our intention to review Dr Arnott's volumes, nor even to allude to the novelties introduced into the body of the work, in the new and completed edition. What has more especially attracted our notice to it at present is a short Appendix, entitled 'The Art of Measuring,' by which is meant mathematics.

The intention in this Appendix is to deal with the difficulty above stated from its other side, and to provide, if not a royal, at least an easier road to geometry. The author shrewdly remarks, that as particular schools have been famous at certain times for turning out able scholars in mathematics, it is evident that a great deal must depend on the mode of teaching this, as well as every other subject. Accordingly, he makes an attempt in the same direction, and by the same methods as in dealing with natural philosophy; beginning by translating the technical names into plainer language. He then approaches the basis of all numerical computation, and, by the figure of a crossed square, shews to the eye the decimal method of common arithmetic up to tens of thousands, and also the calculation of linear, superficial, and solid bulk. Proceeding to geometry, he takes up all the scientific terms, and represents each under some familiar example, in the first instance. Thus, the *straight line* is 'seen in a thread, by which a weight is suspended, as in the string of a plummet, or in the edge of a flat solid ruler, called a straight-edge, which ruler is formed to coincide with such string. It is seen also, nearly perfect, in any stretched cord, as in the string of a musical instrument, or the line used by masons in building straight walls, and by gardeners in forming borders of flower-beds. Light moves in straight lines, and enables persons by the eye to place objects in straight rows.' The *circle* he elucidates by the study of its best known example, the face of a clock. For the *sphere*, he constructs a globe of wire, like a bird's cage, by which he explains great circles and small circles, latitude and longitude, &c. A *perpendicular* is a plummet; and so on. By a proper model, it is easy to shew the relations of squares and cubes to their sides; that a pipe of double diameter will run four times the quantity of water; and a ship tripled in all its three dimensions will have its bulk multiplied twenty-seven times.

The geometrical proof, that the sum of the three angles of a triangle is equal to two right angles, is

given with very little either of previous preparation or of cumbrous ceremonial. But better still is the leap taken to the 35th of the First Book of Euclid, namely, 'Parallelograms on the same base and between the same parallels are equal.' The proof given of this proposition might be adopted into geometry under the name of the Pack of Cards' demonstration. Suppose a pack of cards lying on the table with their edges perfectly upright. Take two flat pieces of wood, and apply one to each end of the pack, so as to stand upright and enclose the pack between them. In the supposed position of the pack, either side represents to the eye an upright parallelogram, or rectangle. Next, let the two pieces of wood be slanted to one side, the cards being carried with them. Study now the side of the pack. The parallelism of top and bottom remains, because the thickness or depth of the pack is unchanged; the new parallelogram is between the same parallels as the old; while, instead of an upright figure, we have a slanting one. Yet that slanting figure is made up of the same identical material, namely, the combined edges of the cards; these combined edges cannot be more or less in the one position than in the other; whence it is proved, with mathematical certainty, that the area of any slanting parallelogram is equal to the area of the upright parallelogram; which is the point aimed at by the proposition. With the pack of cards before one, the proof would not take half the time to comprehend that the explanation now given takes to read. This important proposition established, one other step brings the pupil to the celebrated 47th of the same Book: the square described on the hypotenuse of a right-angled triangle is equal to the sum of the squares on the two sides.

It is not to be maintained that such familiarising devices will either supersede the technical machinery of geometry, or go far into the depths of the science; but they are valuable helps for overcoming to a certain extent the abstruseness and the mystery that envelop it; whence they may be the means of increasing considerably the number of minds able to grasp its more elementary truths.

GOING ASHORE.

'THERE she is, sir; that's she just off the pint there. She's a-coming stem on; and in arf an hour, if she ain't on Bunk Sands, I'm a Dutchman.'

My companion was no native of dam-land, for there was Briton written in every feature of his bronze-red face, as he stood by me in Paythorpe shore, in his canvas trousers, heavy fisher's boots, blue Jersey shirt, and tarpaulin hat, tied on with a bit of oakum band, while the flap behind beat about in the tremendous wind that was raging in our faces.

'Bang!' went the dull smothered report of a heavy gun, and in the shade of the coming night I just caught sight of a faint flash of light. Where we stood, the spray came rushing in like a heavy storm of rain; while the whistling of the wind, and the thundering in of the huge rollers as they curled over and over upon the sands, tearing it out from among the clays, and scraping it away by tons, made standing in the face of such a storm extremely confusing; and yet hundreds were out upon the shore close under the great sand-bank, drenched to the skin with the spray, for the news

had spread through the village that a three-master was going ashore.

Going ashore! Simple words to a landsman's ears; but what do they mean? The noble vessel tearing and plunging through the broken water—now down in the trough of the waves, now rising like a cork upon the white crests, and then a shock as she strikes upon the sand, and seems immovable; a shuddering quiver through plank and beam; and then crash, crash, crash—mast after mast gone by the board—snapped like brittle twigs on a dead stem; while huge ropes part like burned twine; then the rising of the apparently immovable vessel, as she is lifted by the waves to fall crashing again upon the sands, parting in the middle; rushing billows pouring tons upon tons of water over the deck; a wild, wild cry for help; and then the shore strewn with fragments, casks, bodies, as the merciless waves sport with them, tossing them on to the sands, and then curling over to drag them back. Going ashore; not safety from a wild storm, but death.

'Ah,' said the old-salt by my side, shouting at me with his hand to his mouth, 'did yer hear that gun?'

I nodded.

'There goes another,' he continued, stretching out his hand, and pointing to where the flash could be seen, while directly after came another dull heavy report. 'Can't yer see her now, sir?'

Mine were not sea-going eyes; and it was no easy task to make out a distant object through the blinding storm of spray which beat dead in my face; but I just managed to make out a dark mass right out amongst the boiling waves, and I shuddered as I thought of the fate of those on board.

'She must come to it,' said the man; 'she'll come in just there;' and he pointed to a spot amongst the waves where they seemed roughest; 'she'll be there in less time than I said; and then, Lord have mercy upon 'em! Amen!'

As he said this, the old man reverently took off his tarpaulin sou'-wester, and stood with the storm tearing through the remains of his grizzly hair; bald, rugged, and weather-beaten, the coarseness of his features seemed for the moment subdued—softened by the feeling within his breast—as he stood there no inapt representation of a seer of old.

'Is there no chance for them?' I shouted.

The old man shook his head and shrugged his shoulders. 'Precious little,' he said, 'unless them chaps come down with the life-boat; but who'd go out?'

It did look a desperate venture, indeed, to attempt to launch a boat with such a sea on, and having no reply, I stood shading my eyes and gazing out to sea.

'Bang!'

There was another flash, and another dull, echoless report, and as the veil of spray seemed to clear during a lull in the storm, I could perceive a large three-masted vessel about five hundred yards from the shore; and once, as she heeled over, and shewed her deck, I could see that it was crowded with people.

'God help them!' I muttered.

'Amen!' said the old man; and just then, away to our left, we saw the life-boat carriage coming down at a trot, drawn by two stout horses; while a loud and prolonged 'hurray!' welcomed its

arrival—as another flash, and its following heavy report, seemed to come from the doomed vessel like a groan of pain in its hour of sore distress.

'They'll never go out to her,' said the old man, shouting in my ear, for after the lull, the storm came down with redoubled fury—the wind shrieking and howling past, cutting the crests of the waves off as it came tearing over the hill of waters, and dashing the salt spray in my face till it almost seemed to cut the flesh; while at times the women who had come down were completely held back against the steep sand-bank.

'There! look there!' cried the old man, suddenly seizing my arm. 'Catching at straws. Why, there's a boat-load coming ashore. There; don't you see—now a-top o' that breaker?'

I caught sight of a small boat crowded with figures, and then there seemed to be a tall wave curl over it, and I saw it no more.

'Gone!' said the old man; 'I knowed it! Nothing could live in such a storm.'

'Let's go to the life-boat, and see if they are going off,' said I; but the old man was intently gazing out to sea.

'There; just as I said,' he shouted hoarsely, 'just in the place. She's struck.' And then, above the yelling of the storm, we could hear a crash, and a wild shriek, that seems to ring through me now upon a stormy night, when far inland I listen to the howling wind.

'It's now or never!' said the old man, as he ran down towards where the life-boat stood upon its carriage, with a crowd of men and women around, the women hanging on to their husbands, and apparently begging that they would not dare the perils before them.

The sea had looked fearful enough from where we stood before; but here, as close as we dared go to the breakers, it looked perfectly awful, while the attempt to launch a boat seemed absolute madness. It was evident that the men thought so too, though, as we came up, one sturdy fellow shouted: 'I'm ready, mates, if you're going;' a remark that elicited no response, for every one stood stolidly gazing out towards the doomed vessel.

Just then, in the dull haze seawards, a blue light shone out over the water like a dull star; but still no one moved. All at once, the old man by my side laid hold of my arm, and whispered: 'Give me a lift, sir;' and before I knew hardly what his object was, he had climbed by my help into the boat. 'Now, then, you boys,' he shouted wildly; 'I can't stand this! Stand aside, and let some of the old ones come!'

The spell was broken. Women were hastily thrust aside, and a boat's crew was soon made up, amidst the shrieking and wailing of sweethearts and wives, who ran about the beach wringing their hands.

'Hurray for old Marks!' shouted a voice at my elbow, and the crowd loudly cheered the old man. Then oars were shipped and all made ready, the old sailor seizing the steering-oar as he stood up in his place with a life-belt on and his hat blown off—looking nobler than ever.

'Now, are you all ready?' he shouted.

'No, no,' was the cry; and in the hush of expectation, two men rose in the boat, dashed off their life-belts, and amidst half-muttered groans, leaped out from their places, and ran up the sands to the bank, where they disappeared.

'Two more!' shouted old Marks, and for a few moments, so dread was the peril, not a soul moved; then two stout lads came rushing towards the boat, pursued by an elderly man—a perfect giant.

'Stop them!' he roared. 'Yer shan't go, lads.'

He came up to them by the boat-side as they were climbing in, and endeavoured to stop their progress; but in his turn he was seized from behind by a couple of men, and the two new-comers were in half a minute equipped for the dire struggle before them and in their places.

'Let me go!' shrieked the man; but the others clung to him, as the signal was given, the carriage backed down into position, the time accurately chosen, and with a wild 'hurrah!' heard above the storm, the life-boat was launched.

My attention had been so taken up that I had ceased to look upon the man who was struggling to regain his liberty; but just as the boat was leaving its carriage, a bystander was driven violently against me, and the moment after I saw a figure dash across the intervening space, and seize the side of the boat; and then came the roar of the storm and the rush of spray; while for a few minutes the life-boat was invisible. Then a short distance off, she was seen rising upon a wave, and then disappearing again into the dull haze, which, mingled with the coming night, soon shut everything from our gaze but the foaming water.

'Over seventy, sir,' shouted a voice in reply to a query. 'Old man-o'-war's-man. Been in many a storm; but this here's awful.'

Awful it was; for so wild a night had not fallen upon that part of the coast for many years; and as the folk upon the shore gazed in the direction the boat had taken, they shook their heads, and shouted in each other's ears.

There was a long and awful pause, only broken by the shrieking of the wind, and then came a loud shout: 'Here she comes!' and in another minute, obedient to their steersman, the rowers timed their strokes to a second, so that the boat, heavily laden, rode in upon the summit of a giant wave so far that twenty willing hands were at her side, and she was run right up the sands, and fifteen shivering, half-drowned fellow-creatures lifted out and hurried up the shore.

'Now, my lads,' cried old Marks, 'on to the truck with her, and we're off again.'

The boat was soon mounted, and every man at his post, the father of the two lads taking his place by the side of the old cockswain; for no amount of persuasion on either side could effect a change.

There was another cheer, rising above the storm, and again the gallant crew were launched into the surf, that seemed to curl round the boat as though to fill it in an instant. It rose and fell a dark mass amid the white foam for an instant, and then seemed to plunge into a bank of foggy blackness, for night had fallen.

I could not drag myself away from the stirring scene around me, for I seemed held to the spot by a strange fascination. All at once a lurid light shot up, for a quantity of straw had been set on fire, and the flames roared and crackled as dry sea-weed and pieces of wood were heaped up to increase the glare, which appeared to gild the crests of the waves, and threw into bold relief the figures on the sands—some gazing out to sea; some watching eagerly the fringe of breakers, ready to rush down and secure anything that might be washed ashore from the wreck.

More straw was heaped upon the fire, and the flames and sparks rushed inland, as they rose with the mighty current of air, and darted across the sand-bank. Out seaward all seemed black darkness, and the eyes strained after the life-boat were for a while stained in vain.

All at once there was a cry of 'Here she comes;' but it was prolonged into a wild wail of despair; for by the light from the fire the boat could be seen broadside on, and close inshore; and then, after tossing about for a moment, she was dashed, bottom upwards, upon the sands.

There was a rush to aid the men struggling in the surf. Some were dragged ashore; some scrambled unaided from the water; while more than one was sucked back by the undertow; but the life-belts they wore kept them afloat; and at last, more or less hurt, the whole crew was ashore—three being carried up to the village insensible.

I now learned that, about half-way to the vessel, the steersman's oar had snapped in two, and the boat fell into the trough of the sea; when, in their efforts to right her, a couple more blades were broken; a wave swept over them and washed two men from their seats; but they regained their places, and then, with the dread of death upon them, the boat became unmanageable in their hands; for in spite of the efforts of the old cockswain, the men appeared panic-stricken, and rowed at random.

The light that glared upon the shore now shewed that it was completely strewn with wreck; and I looked with horror upon the various signs which so plainly disclosed the fate of the good ship. Spar, plank, beam, and cask, entangled with rope, were being churned over and over in the sand; and twice I saw something dragged ashore, and carried away, which sent a shudder through my frame.

At last, heart-sick and weary, I turned away, and inquired where the crew of the boat were, and who had suffered; when, to my sorrow, I learned that the only one seriously injured was old Marks, who had so gallantly set the example that evening—an example which had resulted in the saving of fifteen poor creatures from a watery grave.

On entering the village, I soon found where the old man had been conveyed, and a few minutes after I was at the bedside of the sufferer. I found him sensible; but with a change in his countenance that no amount of pain or suffering alone would have placed there. He was quite calm, and smiled as I entered.

'Has she gone to pieces?' he whispered, stopping to wipe the blood away that oozed from his lips.

'I fear so,' I replied: 'the shore is strewn with wreck.'

'I knowed she would,' he gasped. 'Poor things, poor things! How many did we bring ashore?'

I told him fifteen.

'Ah!' he groaned, 'not enough, not enough.'

'But it was a most gallant act,' I said; 'and more would have been saved but for the accident. Where are you hurt? It is not serious, I hope?'

'Serious!' he whispered; and then, with a sad smile: 'No; it ain't serious. I'm the only one hurt; and my time's up long ago—four year and more. So it ain't serious.'

'Where are you hurt?' I said.

'Ribs all crushed,' he whispered. 'I was under the gunwale of the boat; and it's all over. I could see it in the doctor's looks.'

A gush of blood stopped his utterance, and I dared not whisper the comfort I could not feel.

'It's all right, sir,' he whispered, after lying with his eyes closed for about half an hour—'it's all right, and an old tar couldn't die better than doin' his duty. I never thought to; but I always felt as I should like to die in harness, as they say, and so I shall; but I wish there had been more.'

'More what?' I said.

'More saved,' he whispered. 'Yer see I've been afore now in action; and the Almighty only knows how many souls I've cut off; and I should like to feel sure as I'd saved more than I did for—that's all. Perhaps they might go in the scale, to help balance the bad.'

'But you did all as a part of your duty.'

'Ah!' he whispered, 'duty! Yes, sailors should do their duty; and I felt it was mine, to-night, to go. We old men-o'-war's men were trained to answer to a call in calm or storm; and when lives were at stake to-night, I felt that I was called, and I hope I did my duty. Will you ask them fifteen to just say a word or two for the old man in their prayers, sir; I mean when I'm gone? I think I should like them to, for I'm an old sailor, and can't boast of my past life.'

'Have you no relatives?' I whispered; 'no friends that you would like to see?'

'Far away—far away,' he said with a mournful shake of the head; 'and some are a-waitin' for me to join their watch. Don't leave me, sir,' he said piteously.

I promised I would not; and sat watching hour after hour listening to the hard breathing of the sufferer, who seemed to sink into a state of stupor, only moaning at intervals as he tossed his head from side to side of the pillow, and muttered a few words broken and half-spoken. The storm gradually sunk, till the wind quite lulled; and about three o'clock I half drew the curtain and looked out upon the sea, which still tossed fearfully; though all above was calm and peaceful—a light cloud just drifting slowly past the pale bright moon.

I stood gazing at the soft blue sky, now so placid and serene, almost wondering that so great a change could have taken place, when I started, for a voice behind me shouted: 'Morning watch. Draw the curtain, and let that moon shine in.'

I obeyed—turning cold and trembling as I did so—still looking at the dying sailor, who sat erect in the bed. 'Here,' he said; and as I approached the bed he seized my hand. 'Hark! don't you hear that? It's the boatswain piping for me to keep my everlasting watch. Ay, ay, sir! There—hark again! There's the waves a-lashing upon the further shore. Breakers ahead! breakers ahead! Look out there! The old vessel's struck, and she's going to pieces—the old seventy-four, that's weathered so many a storm, going ashore. Farewell, messmate; one short struggle, one cold plunge, and a hopeful heart—a brave striking out through the harsh breakers! Land, ho! land, ho! on the other side—and it's a land of rest—a land of peace and hope. Now for it! The rush of the dark waters is coming—blinding—deafening—but a bold heart, messmate. God bless you! I'm going ashore.'

For some minutes, I sat motionless. The old man's eye had lighted up as he gazed straight before him, out upon the moonlit heavens. His voice seemed to peal through the silence of the

night, till I shivered as he described the wreck then taking place. To the last word, his voice had rung out loud and resonant; then he sank back motionless upon the pillow—stained now with his life-blood; and I passed softly from the room, for I knew that his life-bark was stranded by the sea of Death.

MAY SONNETS.

Harde is his heart that loveth nought
In May, when all this mirth is wrought.
Chaucer.

I.

THE queen of all the months is with us now,
Stepping through woods and foliage-bannered dells,
Over the regal purple of harebells,
With a right royal step, and crowned brow:
And flaxen-headed elfs, that gather flowers,
Sustain her rich robe's flower-broidered train,
Unconscious of her presence in the lane,
Where dandelions serve to tell their hours:
And mirth of holiday gladness comes with her,
Nature's fair pageant, and divine array;
Flutter of wreathing leaves, like garments gay,
When pomp of grand processions is astir.
For mirth of olden times comes back with May,
Whereto all meadow-sights do minister.

II.

Old Chaucer's daisy ope's its golden eye
To see more meadow-gold among the grass,
Where happy kine 'mid tufts of amber pass,
And crush out fragrance wheresoe'er they lie;
For everywhere, 'mid lush luxuriant green,
Crowds the effulgence of the lavish May;
Cowslips, and dandelions bright as day,
And radiant as the halo of their queen.
May's yellow buttercup, eagerly seen,
Like treasure found not under every sky,
The merry milkmaid's sweetheart doth espy,
And to her raised chin holds its tell-tale sheen.
A merry month this month hath ever been,
And ever brimful of glad melody.

III.

The odorous air, made up of meadow-smells,
Is bubbling with sweet sound of blended song:
A hundred larks into the heavens throng,
A thousand wild bees hum their drowsy spells
Over fair flowers, which droop their charmed bells,
And unaware yield up their honey-wealth.
Music is born of simple life and health,
Wherever life this merry May-time dwells.
The olden minstrelsy of breeze and stream
Proclaimeth still the merry reign of May,
Blending with those sweet voices, heard away,
The poets who interpret nature's dream,
And to all times in dulcet numbers say,
For love and mirth, May bears the palm supreme.

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LOST WILLIE.

IN TWO CHAPTERS.—CHAPTER I.

'THE more I think of it, the more it seems to me that it must be done,' said my mother, as she was washing up the breakfast things the morning after her return from Deepvale.

'What is it that must be done, mother?' said I.

'Just this, Susannah,' she answered: 'that you must go and live at Deepvale for a while, and look after Davy and the poor bairn. It will never do to leave them entirely among strangers; for Davy's so feckless in a house, that anybody with a mind to it might rob him right and left, and he be none the wiser. If he was by himself, it would be different: he might then give up the house, and take a decent lodging in the village, and fight on as he did afore he was married; but having the lad to look after makes all the difference. I would fain have brought Willie back wi' me, but Davy's feelings are so sore just now, that he wouldn't hear of it; so, as I said before, it seems to me there's nothing for it but for you to go and look after Davy's comforts for a time, and act a mother's part by the poor lad.'

My mother's words almost took my breath away, and well they might. I was now close upon twenty years old, and in all my life I had never been further from home than the nearest market-town; yet here was my mother talking coolly of my going to Deepvale, which was thirty miles away across the hills, and quite in another world, as one might say!

It was a sad business enough that had taken mother herself all the way to Deepvale, at that busy time of the year, when she could so ill be spared at home—nothing less than the sickness and death of my sister Alice. How often it seems in families that it is the brightest and best—those that will be missed the most—that are called away first; or may be it is that we notice such cases more than others, and that makes them seem to come oftener in proportion than they really do. All I know is, that our brightest and best was gone

when Alice died, and that I couldn't even go and press one last kiss on the beautiful white face before it was put away for ever. I did feel it hard not to have that poor consolation; but my father was so ill at the time that he couldn't be left both by mother and me; so I had to stay at home and nurse him, and look out every morning, with a sickening heart, for the postman, till I got the black-bordered letter which told me all was over.

Alice had only been married eight years when she died. Her husband, David Winterburn, came from a long way off—'down south,' as he used to say himself, and was a stranger to everybody in our village when he opened school in old Nixon's place. He was a thin, sickly-looking young man; and being lame of one leg, he had to use a thick stick to help him in walking. Finding, after a time, that the school didn't pay him very well, he got a situation on the railway, and went to be station-master at Deepvale. But he had won our Alice's heart, and got her promise to wed him before he went away; and a month or two later, he came over and married her. It was that soft-spoken, drawling, south-country tongue of his that cozened my sister into loving him—she that might have had her pick of half-a-dozen as handsome fellows as any in the county. He used to give her writing-lessons, and read poetry to her, and tell her all about the moon and stars, and how the earth is made; and so, after a time, love-making came easy to both of them; and it was a comfort both to mother and me afterwards to know that Alice had never repented her choice.

I quietly thought over for two or three days what mother had said to me, striving to see clearly where my duty lay, and at last I settled that I would go to Deepvale, and look after Davy and the child. So mother wrote a few lines to say when Davy might expect me; and after that, it was a busy time with both of us till the day came round, though the hard work mainly lay on mother's shoulders; while, for myself, I had to go tea-drinking to one friend's house after another, and I never seemed to have had it brought home to me how much people really cared for me till

now, when the nearness of my departure brought hidden feelings uppermost, and hearts warmed to one another in a way that would always be pleasant to think of afterwards.

Mother's busy fingers got everything ready in good time, and that last night of my stay at home we spent together by our two selves, sitting in the cosy nook by the kitchen-fire, and quietly talking things over. We were up early next morning, and had breakfast by candle-light, as the coach started at six o'clock. Peter Lovick took my box down to the coach-office in his barrow, mother and I walking a little way behind through the quiet shut-up streets, all white and rimy with the first frosts of autumn.

'The box seems heavy, mother,' I said, as Peter stopped to rest for a minute before going up the hill.

'Nay, it's not very heavy,' said my mother; 'but I'll warrant Peter was tipping last night, and so feels a bit shaky this morning. But when you come to open the box, Susannah, you'll find a couple of bottles of elder-wine; a drop of it warmed will be nice for Davy when he comes in cold from work of a winter's night. And you'll find poor Alice's china mug, that I gave her when she was six years old; Davy will may be like to drink his wine out of it—elder-wine should always be drunk out of china. And there's a few pots of black-currant jam, good for colds and sore throats, let alone puddings. Then there's a dozen or two nice eating apples for the lad, dandy brown russets; only be sure, Susannah, that you don't let him have more than one now and then, for I'm not one as holds wi' giving children overmuch fruit. If my eyes stand good through the winter, I intend to knit the lad a few pair of warm socks, and—— But there's the coach all ready to start. Be sure to write in a day or two, and let us know how everything is going on. I'll be bound now that Peter Lovick won't be content with less than sixpence for carrying the box, when a fourpenny-bit ought to be quite enough.'

A warm squeeze of the hand, a hearty kiss, a 'Good-bye, mother,' followed by a 'Good-bye, my lass, and God bless you,' and next minute I was being borne swiftly away through the dear old familiar streets, crying silently, and feeling for the first time in my life as if I were quite alone in the world. But I grew more cheerful presently, and then I could not help enjoying my ride through the clear, crisp morning air, away into that strange country, of which I had often dreamed, but had never seen before.

The coach only took me half-way, and I had to wait several hours at an inn in a little town till the cross-country carrier was ready to start. He made me a tolerably comfortable nest with some straw at the bottom of his wagon; and we set out, just as the afternoon was beginning to darken, to cross the dreary fells that stretched nearly all the way to Deepvale.

Davy was waiting for me at the inn-door when I got to my journey's end. Poor fellow! he looked

more sickly and hollow-eyed than ever, and my heart ached to see him.

'Welcome to Deepvale, Susannah,' he said in his grave quiet way; but I just put my arms round his neck, and gave him two hearty kisses; and then I could not help crying a bit to think how different everything would have seemed if my poor dead darling had been there to meet me.

We had not far to walk; and leaving my box to be sent after me, we soon reached Davy's snug little home, where a fire had been lighted in the best room in honour of my coming, and tea was laid out ready for me.

'David, my man,' I said as soon as the old woman who attended to these things had left the room, 'I can't take either bite or sup till I've seen the lad. Where is he?'

'Where should such small-fry be at this time of the night but in bed?' said David, with his sweet womanly smile, which I remembered so well; and with that he took the candle, and led the way to a little room up stairs, in which was a little bed, in which, as snug as any dormouse; little Willie lay coiled, and fast asleep. He started up half-mazed, and began to rub his eyes.

'I haven't been asleep, dad,' he said; and then he caught sight of me, and favoured me with a long steady stare. He had got his mother's blue eyes and flaxen curling hair, and all the sweet features of her face carved in little.

'This is thy aunt, Will, come all the way from Thringstone,' said David.

'I thought it was mother come back again to see us,' said the lad; 'only angels don't wear black clothes, do they?' he added, as he glanced at my mourning gown; and with that, his little hand, as warm as a mouse just out of its nest, stole into mine, and he screwed his lips into a little cherry-mouth, which he held up for me to kiss, and from that moment we loved one another dearly.

Next forenoon, as soon as I had got through my house-work, I set out, with Willie for my companion, to look about me a bit, and become better acquainted with my new home. But first of all, Willie and I made our way to the little churchyard behind the hill; and there, by the grave of my dear dead Alice, I promised again in my heart to do my best towards filling a mother's part to the poor bereaved lad. After that, we two wandered through the little village, which was quite hidden from the station by a turn and dip of the road. David's house, on this account, seemed more lonely than it really was; and travellers by rail, passing Deepvale as they went on their way north or south, might well wonder for what reason a station had been placed in such a seemingly desolate spot. The house itself was about three hundred yards away from the station proper, the road to which wound round by the end of the garden, so that everybody going to or coming from the trains passed within view of our window, which made it pleasanter and more lively than at first sight you would have supposed. To be sure, not many trains descended to stop at such a poor place as Deepvale; but by the forenoon penny-a-mile, and by the market-train on Saturdays, there was generally a tolerable muster of passengers. At one end of the platform was built

a little house, in which, with his wife, lived old Luke Moffatt, the porter who attended to the signals and the lamps, and did the rougher jobs about the station under David Winterburn's instructions.

As you stood at the other end of the platform, your eye could follow the line, which was nearly straight just here, to where it was lost in the entrance to the Deepvale tunnel, half a mile away. This tunnel was three-quarters of a mile in length, and pierced right through the heart of the hills by which the little valley was shut in on three sides.

I soon got used to the quiet routine of life at Deepvale; and if not happy, I at least grew contented with my lot in life, which is as much, I suppose, as the generality of people can say. That winter, Davy busied himself with re-arranging and labelling his collection of butterflies and moths and other insects. Strange-looking objects many of them were, goodness knows, and very curious in their way, I suppose, since so many ladies and gentlemen came at different times to see them, and seemed to think so highly of them. In warm weather, whenever Davy had an hour or two to spare, he was off into the fields, or wandering down by the brink of the river, with a big net in his hand, on the look-out for his favourites; and during those winter nights, as I have said, he busied himself with them at home. Davy had a good collection of books too; and he used to bring home other books and magazines from the village library; and having so much leisure this winter (the housework seemed a trifle to me after what I had been used to at home), I got into the way of spending all my spare time in reading, and grew by degrees to have a love for books, which has stood me in good stead many a time since, when, but for them, my life would have seemed weary and comfortless indeed. And so my first winter at Deepvale sped quietly and pleasantly away; and as for the lad, he just thrived wonderfully, and day by day he seemed to grow closer to my heart.

Winter was hardly over when the valley was invaded by a number of engineers and surveyors, who had come to arrange for the new branch-railway, which was to join the main line a mile or two below the Deepvale station; and presently there came a horde of navvies with spade and pickaxe, who turned our quiet village into a bawling pot-house during the year that they stayed among us. Happily, we at the station saw very little of them. The money for their wages came to Davy from head-quarters every Friday, but was fetched away by one of their overseers, and we saw nothing of the men themselves. After a little while, this overseer and Davy grew to be very friendly; and then Davy took to bringing him over to have tea with us of a Friday evening, after which he would sit and smoke, and chat for an hour or two, and then march off with his bag of sovereigns, and be seen by us no more till Friday came round again. The name of this man was Hugh Sanderson; and if what I heard afterwards were true, he had himself when younger—he was now about eight-and-twenty years old—handled pick and spade; but being much superior to his companions, both in education and manners, he had been gradually advanced to his present position. He was tall, being over six feet in height, and strongly built; he had a big brown beard and moustache, and a handsome disdainful sort of face, that seemed never to have been touched by the

finger of care. Both Davy and I found Hugh Sanderson very good company; and we soon got to look forward to Friday evening as the pleasantest time of the week. His presence seemed to lighten up our somewhat dull little household wonderfully; he brought with him, as it were, a waft of fresh, bracing air from the world outside, that was very refreshing. Besides having seen a great deal of his own country, he had been employed on one or two railways abroad; and he had an easy laughing way of telling about what he had seen and gone through, that was as fascinating to Davy as it was to myself. As it happened, he was having tea with us the very evening that I got the letter informing me of the death of my godmother, Lady Halcomb, and that five hundred pounds had been left me by her Ladyship's will. Davy came round the table when I had finished reading out the letter aloud, and kissed me, and congratulated me on my good-fortune; and then Hugh Sanderson got up and shook hands with me, and said that he also must be allowed to congratulate me.

'I hope that good-fortune will not spoil Miss Deriton,' he added, 'as it does so many people, nor teach her to forget old friends.'

'Nay,' said Davy warmly, 'you don't know our Susannah as well as I do, or you would never think of such a thing. All the gold in the world wouldn't spoil her.'

I felt the hot colour mount right up to the roots of my hair. Why should Hugh Sanderson think for a moment that my 'good-fortune,' as he called it, would make me forget old friends? To be sure, he himself was no old friend of mine, although he might choose to put himself in the category. All that night, I thought more of Hugh's words than I did of the five hundred pounds that had come to me so unexpectedly.

I suppose I may put this down as the first dim consciousness I had of the delicious trouble that was creeping slowly over me: it was a consciousness that day by day, from that time, made itself more clearly felt. There were times when I struggled with it, when I fought against it in the dark with tears and prayers; for always in my heart there was a vague prescience that my acceptance of it would bring me nothing but sorrow and trouble without end. At other times, I abandoned myself to this new sweet feeling, and allowed myself to be borne unresistingly along on the current of that beautiful river which flows ever through the dreamland of Love.

And he—the man who, little by little, was stealing my heart away? Ah, yes! he too loved me, or seemed to do so. Could I be mistaken in my reading of the language of those dark eyes, that followed me so constantly as I moved about the room, and dwelt on me so meaningfully as I sat opposite to them by the fireside? Could I fail to apprehend the veiled tenderness that lurked in the undertones of his voice when he spoke to me alone? No, I never doubted from the first that I was loved.

Then, in the young spring-time of the year, when primroses and violets were thick in hedge-bottoms, and the orchards were white with blossom, he met me one evening on the field-path by the river, and there, leaning over the gray moss-grown stile, he told me how dearly he loved me, and asked me to become his wife.

What could I answer but yes—a thousand times yes!

What a happy spring-tide was that of which Hugh's confession by the moss-grown stile was the sweet forerunner; and what a happy summer, following fleetly with winged footsteps, so that all too swiftly it was gone for ever! But I have no heart left to write about that time: it is an idyl whose pages are closed for ever; and it were well for me could its sweet rhythm be utterly forgotten. A week or two after Hugh had spoken to me, he took a lodging in Deepvale, by which means he was able to spend four or five evenings a week at our house. But let him come as often as he might, I never tired of his company; and if he ever grew tired of mine, he took care that no one should be aware of the fact but himself. We had many a pleasant walk and many a long talk together during those summer evenings, you may be sure. If there was one subject that Hugh was fonder of discussing than another when we were by ourselves, it was how, and in what way, we should dispose of my five hundred pounds. Hugh's one idea was to buy a business with it, and give up his present mode of life; while I was for leaving it in the bank, and trying to add a little to it every year; but our disputations always ended with a kiss, and a laugh at our castle-building; and we both agreed that it would be time enough to consider the question seriously after our marriage, which was fixed to take place in the course of the following spring; by which time the branch-line would be completed, and a week or two's holiday become possible for Hugh.

By the beginning of autumn, the Deepvale end of the branch-line was completed as far as Hugh and his men were concerned, and Hugh was obliged to change his quarters to Red Cross, a village about six miles away. He was still able to come two or three times a week to see me, for his work now lay so wide that his employers had been obliged to provide him with a horse, and it was little trouble for him to ride over of an evening, and stay an hour or two; besides which, he was often obliged to come on business; so that our courtship was not greatly interrupted by the change.

And all this time my happiness was without a flaw. Looking back now, and reading this lesson of my life by the light of after-events, I can see what a blind and trusting fool I was; I can bring to mind a thousand weather-signs, in which, had I not wilfully shut my eyes to all such monitors, I might have read the presage of coming shipwreck and disaster. But my confidence in the man was so complete, I trusted him so thoroughly, that no mere petty gossip, no vague hearsay of a third person, nothing short of evidence so complete and overwhelming that it could not be disputed, would have had power to shake, ever so slightly, my faith in his truth and honour. Carefully as he thought he had provided against every contingency, such evidence, alas! was forthcoming at last, and in a way that neither he nor I could ever have imagined.

A favourite walk of mine in fine weather was along the footpath which ran by the banks of the Dore, the little river which meandered through Deepvale, and formed such a pleasant feature of its scenery; and after my house-work for the day was over, I often used to ramble off, sometimes with Willie, sometimes alone, or with some favourite book only for a companion, and follow the windings of the stream till I was tired. For part of the way

that I used to go, the river was fringed with a thick growth of underwood and dwarf trees, close outside which ran the footpath. As I was one day hunting about for wild-flowers inside this shrubbery, I lighted on a wee fairy dell, wrought by Nature's own fingers, of which, after the fashion of all discoverers, I at once took possession. Here, seated on the moss-grown bole of an old tree, with my feet on a lump of rock, I could see the babbling river glance and shimmer close before me, while shut in in every other direction, with interlacing boughs of softest greenery, among which brooded many a twittering bird; here I passed happy hours, reading, sewing, or day-dreaming; and thinking much of that married life on whose duties and responsibilities I was now so soon to enter. I kept the secret of my fairy dell to myself; I never so much as took Willie there, nor did I ever speak of it to Hugh: I felt that it was good for me to have one place where I could be entirely alone: I would tell Hugh my secret after marriage, but not before.

Sitting *perdue* in my sylvan retreat one pleasant autumn afternoon, busily stitching, and as busily thinking, I was attracted by the sound of voices, apparently those of two men who were coming along the footpath outside. Presently I recognised the voice of one of them as that of Hugh Sanderson; and then I felt, rather than knew, that the other must be that of no less a person than Mr Pennington, one of the firm of contractors by whom Hugh was employed, and whom I had seen a few times at the station. It was Mr Pennington who was doing most of the talking, and from his loud harsh tones, I judged that he was very angry. 'I tell you plainly, Sanderson, that this sort of thing won't do,' he said. 'It is neither the first nor the second time that I have had occasion to warn you. Should it occur again, you and I must part. It is most discreditable to a person in your position to be seen drunk, as I saw you last Monday night. What an example to set to those under you!'

'It shall not occur again, Mr Pennington; I give you my word for it,' said Hugh.

'So be it; but do not forget the warning I have just given you. There's another thing, by the by, I want to mention to you. That woman—what's her name?—came pestering me again the other day, and complaining that she could get no assistance from you. Most disgraceful of you, Sanderson, if such is the case. Anyway, I can't be annoyed with her; and I must request that you will take steps to prevent her intruding on me again.'

Hugh's muttered reply was lost in the distance.

Hugh—my Hugh drunk! and on Monday night too! Why, at that very moment there was hidden in the bosom of my dress a note written by him, and received by me at noon on Tuesday, in which he stated that he had been unable to visit me on the preceding evening, according to promise, in consequence of having certain overwork to do. What was I to believe? What could I believe? However black the evidence might seem against him, at least I would not condemn him unheard. I would await his coming with what patience I might, and his own lips should say whether he were innocent or guilty. And who was that woman of whom Mr Pennington had spoken?

Just as I was putting to the shutters that evening, and before I had lighted the candles, Hugh strode into the little station-house as jauntily as ever he had done. 'If he will only confess, and not lie to me, I think I can forgive him everything,' I said

to myself. Davy was busy at the station, and Willie in bed asleep.

He put his arm round my waist, and was going to stoop down and kiss me, as he always did when he came in and found me alone; but I turned aside my face, and uncoiled his arm, and pushed him quietly away.

'Hullo! what's the matter now?' he said. 'Out of sorts a little, eh?'

'Hugh Sanderson, I want a straightforward answer to a straightforward question,' I said. 'Where were you, and what were you doing, on Monday night?'

He started, but there was not light enough for me to see his face by. 'Where was I on Monday night, and what was I doing?' he said, repeating my question. 'Why, Susey, you little vixen, didn't you get the note I sent you on Tuesday, explaining why I was unable to come?'

'That is not a straightforward answer to my question,' I said. 'Why you did not come to see me I don't care to know; but I want you to tell me, how you were occupied on Monday night.'

'Why, working overtime, to be sure, as I told you in my note.'

'You lie, Hugh Sanderson!' I said. 'You were not working overtime; you were drunk.'

He fell back a step or two, and a terrible oath burst from his lips. A cold shudder ran through me as I heard him. 'Who told you that?' he exclaimed, seizing me savagely by the arm. 'Whoever it was, I'll tear out his lying tongue by the roots!'

'Never mind who told me, so long as it is the truth,' I replied. 'From this night, Hugh Sanderson, you and I are strangers to each other.'

In an instant, he was his old caressing self again, smiling, and shewing his white teeth, and looking as though he had never been out of temper in his life. 'Nay, nay, Susey, that will never do,' he said insinuatingly. 'You mustn't be too hard on a poor beggar. It's quite true that I did get a wee drop too much t'other night, as many a better man has done before me; and I didn't like to let my little puritan know that a beast I had made of myself. It's the first time in my life that I ever forgot myself that way, and—'

'Another lie!' I said doggedly. 'It's neither the first nor the second time that you have been drunk. But I want to hear no excuses from you; you go your way, and I'll go mine.'

'No, no, little one; the sentence is too severe,' he answered. 'You must forgive me this once, and I'll never offend again—on my soul, I won't! Those lips were made to kiss, not to pout in anger; those eyes—'

'Oh, go, go!' I cried, now thoroughly roused, and stamping my foot on the ground. 'Why don't you leave this room? Let me never see your face more. I tell you again that from to-night you and I are strangers.'

'What, really in earnest, my pretty Susannah?' he said with one of his mellow laughs. 'Well, I must obey instructions, I suppose. I go, but only for a little while. It would be too bad to dismiss your own Hugh for ever for the sake of one little mistake. You are too good-hearted for that, Susey. I'll leave you now, but I'll come again on Saturday, by which time I hope you will have found out how pleasant a thing it is to forgive your enemies, let alone those you love; and so good-bye for the present.'

He was gone at last. I sank into a chair, and drew my apron over my head, and burst into tears—the bitterest I had ever shed. 'So end all your fine love-dreams, Susannah Deriton!' I said to myself.

VISIBLE SPEECH.

MR ALEXANDER MELVILLE BELL has recently brought under the notice of the Society of Arts his very remarkable system of *Visible Speech* or *Universal Language*, intended to remove an absurdity which vitiates all ordinary alphabets and languages. This absurdity is the utter want of agreement between the appearance of a letter or word and the sound which it is intended to convey; between the visible form of the symbol and the sound and meaning of the thing symbolised; between (for instance) the shape of the letter C and the value of that letter in the alphabets which contain it. This is an old difficulty—how old, we do not know; but to understand the proposed remedy, it will be necessary to have a clear idea of the defect to which the remedy is to be applied.

Spoken language may, for aught we know, have had its origin in an attempt to imitate, by the organs of the voice, the different sounds which animate and inanimate nature present. Man could thus recall to the minds of those around him those notions of absent objects and past actions with which the sounds are connected. The expression of abstract qualities by the same means would be a later object, and one more difficult of attainment. When the *eye* instead of the ear had to be appealed to, or the signs rendered visible instead of audible, the system of hieroglyphics would at once suggest itself, by marking on a tablet or paper, a piece of ground or a smooth surface of sand, a rude picture of the object intended. When we get beyond these preliminary stages, however, the difficulty rapidly increases. There is no visible picture by which we could convey the meaning of such sentiments as are called in English *virtue*, *justice*, *fear*, and the like, except by so elaborate a composition as it would require an artist to produce; nor could an audible symbol for each of these sentiments be framed. It would take a Max Müller to trace how the present complication gradually arose. That there is a complication, any one may see in a moment. What is there in the shape of the five letters forming the word *table*, in these particular combinations of curved and straight lines, to denote either the sound of the word or the movements of the mouth and other vocal organs which produce its utterance? Nothing whatever. Any other combination of straight and curved lines might be made familiar by common use, and substituted for our plain English word, with as little attention to any analogy between the visible symbol and the sound of the thing symbolised.

Numerous attempts have been made to devise some sort of alphabet in which the shapes of the letters should in some way be dependent on the movements of the vocal organs—not actual pictures of them, but analogies, more or less complete. Without going to earlier labours, we may adduce those of Professor Willis. Nearly forty years ago, he shewed that the ordinary vowel sounds—a, e, i, o, u—are produced on regular acoustic principles; that the different vowel sounds may be produced artificially, by throwing a current of air upon a reed in a pipe; and that, as the pipe is lengthened

or shortened, the vowels are successively produced'—not in the order familiar to us, but in the order *i, e, a, o, u* (and with the continental sounds, *i* like *ee*, *e* like *ay*, *a* like *ah*, *u* like *oo*). Eighty or ninety years ago, Mr Kratzenstein contrived an apparatus for imitating the various vowel sounds. He adapted a vibrating reed to a set of pipes of peculiar forms. Soon afterwards, Mr Kempelen succeeded in producing the vowel sounds by adapting a reed to the bottom of a funnel-shaped cavity, and placing his hand in various positions within the funnel. He also contrived a hollow oval box, divided into two portions, so attached by a hinge as to resemble jaws; by opening and closing the jaws, he produced various vowel sounds; and by using jaws of different shapes, he produced imperfect imitations of the consonant sounds *l, m, and p*. By constructing an imitative mouth of a bell-shaped piece of caoutchouc, imitative nostrils of two tin tubes, and imitative lungs in the form of a rectangular windchest, he produced with more or less completeness the familiar sounds of *n, d, g, k, s, j, v, t, and r*. By combining these, he produced the words *opera, astronomy, &c.*; and the sentences *Vous êtes mon ami—Je vous aime de tout mon cœur*. By introducing various changes in some such apparatus as this, Professor Willis has developed many remarkable facts concerning the mode in which wind passes through the vocal organs during oral speech.

The useful work would be, however, not to imitate vocal sounds by means of mechanism, but to write them so that they should give more information as to their mode of production than our present alphabet affords. Such was the purport of the *Phonetic system*, which had a life of great activity from ten to twenty years ago, but which has since fallen into comparative obscurity. Mr Ellis and the Messrs Pitman published very numerous works, either printed in the phonetic language itself, or intended to develop its principles. Bible Histories, the New Testament, the Sermon on the Mount, *Pilgrim's Progress, Paradise Lost, Macbeth, The Tempest*—all were printed in the new form; and there were numerous works under such titles as *Phonetic or Phonographic Alphabets, Almanacs, Journals, Miscellanies, Hymn-books, Note-books, Primers, Lesson-books, and the like*. The intention was not so much to introduce new forms of letters, as new selections of existing letters to convey the proper sounds of words. There was an unfortunate publication, the *Fonetik Nuz*, which worked more harm than good to the system, seeing that it was made a butt for laughter and ridicule—more formidable to contend against than logical argument.

Mr Bell contemplates something more than this. He has been known in Edinburgh for twenty years in connection with numerous works relating to Reading, Spelling, Articulation, Orthoepey, Elocution, the Language of the Passions, the relations between Letters and Sounds, Logograms for Short-hand, and the like. As a writer and teacher on these subjects, he had felt, with many other persons, how useful it would be if we could have a system of letters of universal application; letters which, when learned in connection with any one language, could be vocalised with uniformity in every other. There are two obstacles to the attainment of this end: first, that the association between the existing letters and sounds is merely arbitrary; and second, that international uniformity of association is impracticable, because the sounds of different

languages, and their mutual relations, have not hitherto been ascertained with exactitude or completeness.

Mr Bell, as he tells us, feeling that all attempted collations of existing alphabets have failed to yield the elements of a complete alphabet, tried in a new direction. Instead of going to languages to discover the elements of utterance, he went to the apparatus of speech itself, endeavouring to classify all the movements of tongue, teeth, lips, palate, &c., concerned in the pronunciation of vocal sounds. By this means, he hoped to obtain, from the physiological basis of speech, an organic scale of sounds which should include all varieties, known and unknown. To transfer these sounds to paper, in the form of visible characters, a new alphabet was necessary. To have adopted letters from the Roman, Greek, or other alphabets, constructed on no common principle of symbolisation, would have been to introduce complexity and confusion, and to create a conflict between old and new associations. He therefore discarded old letters and alphabets of every kind. He set himself the task of inventing a new scheme of symbols, each of which should form a definite part of a complete design; inasmuch that, if the plan of the alphabet were communicated by diagrams, each letter would teach its own sound, by expressing to the reader's eye the exact position of the sound in the physiological circuit. Could this object be attained, not only would there be a universal alphabet; there would be a scheme of letters *representative* of sounds, and not, like ordinary alphabets, associated with sounds only by arbitrary conventions.

Mr Bell believes that he has achieved this result, and his expositions before the Ethnological Society, the College of Preceptors, and the Society of Arts, have had for their object the presentation of various phases of the system. The fitness of the term *visible* speech may, he urges, be shown by the analogy of an artist who, wishing to depict a laughing face, draws the lines of the face as seen under the influence of mirth; he depicts, in fact, *visible* laughter. Every passion and sentiment, emotion and feeling, has this kind of facial writing; and an idea of it might be expressed on paper by a picture of the muscular arrangements of the face, so that all persons seeing the symbols would have a common knowledge of their meaning. In forming any sound, we adjust the parts of the mouth to certain definite attitudes; and the sound is the necessary result of our putting the mouth in such a shape. If, then, we could represent the various positions of the mouth, we should have in those symbols a representation of the sounds which cannot but result from putting the mouth in the positions symbolised. Now, Mr Bell claims to have applied this system of symbolisation to every possible arrangement of the mouth; he claims that, whatever your language, and whether you speak a refined or a rustic dialect, he can show, in the forms of his new letters, the exact sounds you make use of. If this be so, a Chinaman may read English, or an Englishman Chinese, without any difficulty or uncertainty, after he has learned to form his mouth in accordance with the directions given him by the letters. Nearly all the existing alphabets contain vestiges of a similar relation between letters and sounds—a relation which has nearly disappeared during the changes which alphabetic characters have gradually undergone. Mr Bell gave the following anecdote illustrating this

relation. 'Shortly before I left Edinburgh, in the early part of last year, an elderly lady called on me, accompanied by two young ladies, who were going out to India as missionaries. The elderly lady had been for upwards of twenty years engaged in mission-work, and she spoke the language of the district like a native. Nevertheless, she could not teach the English girls to pronounce some of the peculiar sounds which she had acquired by habit. They had been for some time under her instruction, but they could not catch the knack of certain characteristic elements. Having heard of "Visible Speech," the lady called to solicit my assistance. I know nothing of the language she pronounced before me. Some of the sounds I had never heard in linguistic combinations, though, of course, I am acquainted with them theoretically. I saw the young ladies for half an hour, but this proved long enough to give them the power of pronouncing the difficult sounds which, while they did not know precisely what to do, they could not articulate. Strangely enough, since I came to reside in London, I heard a clergyman and former missionary, speaking of these very girls, remark on the great success with which they pronounced the Canarese language before they left this country; and the speaker knew nothing of their previous difficulty, or how it had been overcome.'

The system analyses all sounds according to the mode in which they are produced. The number of sounds discriminated in various languages amounts to several times the number of letters in the English alphabet; and even in English, although there are only twenty-six letters, there are at least forty different sounds. The Church Missionary Society employ nearly two hundred different letters or symbols in their several printed books; and the list is even then imperfect as regards many of the languages.

Mr Bell finds thirty symbols sufficient to denote all the two hundred varieties of vowel and consonant sounds. What kind of symbols they are, we do not know (for a reason presently to be explained); but he states that, while each elementary sound has its own single type to express it in printing, he requires only thirty actual types to express them as used in language. Each symbol has a name, which does not include the sound of the letter, but merely describes its form. The learner has thus at first only to recognise pictures. But the name of the symbol also expresses the arrangement of the mouth which produces the sound; so that, when the symbol is named, the organic formation of its sound is named at the same time. In order that thirty symbols may denote two hundred sounds, Mr Bell has adopted certain modes of classification. All vowels receive a common generic symbol; all consonants another; vocalicity and whisper have their respective symbols; so have inspiration, retention, and expulsion of breath; so have the touching and the vibration of the several vocal organs; so have the lips, the palate, the pharynx, the glottis, and the different parts of the tongue; so has the breathing of sounds through the nostrils, or through nearly closed teeth. There are thirty of these generic meanings altogether, and they are combined to make up letters, every part of every letter having a meaning. The thirty symbols need not be represented mechanically by exactly thirty types; they may be embodied in a larger or smaller number, according to taste or convenience: such of the symbols as together represent simple

elements of speech being properly combined in single types. 'The highest possible advantages of the system,' we are told, 'would be secured by extending the number of types to about sixty. At present, I and my sons—as yet the only experts in the use of visible speech—write the alphabet in a form that would be cast on between forty and fifty types, which is but little more than the number in an ordinary English fount, including diphthongs and accented letters. This number does not require to be exceeded in order to print, with typographic simplicity, the myriad dialects of all nations.'

Mr Bell pointed out the prospective usefulness of his system in telegraphic communication. The symbols of speech may, in all their varieties, be transmitted by telegraphy through any country, without the necessity for a knowledge of the language adopted on the part of the signaler. He would only have to discriminate forms of letters; he may be totally ignorant of the value of a single letter, and yet may convey the telegram so as to be intelligible to the person to whom it is virtually addressed. It is known that the telegrams from India now reach London in a sadly mutilated and unintelligible state, owing to their passing through the hands of Turkish and Persian agents who do not know the English alphabet; an evil which, it is contended, would be removed by the adoption of the new system.

The mode in which Mr Bell illustrated his method was curious and interesting. His son uttered a great variety of sounds—whispered consonants, vocal consonants, vowels, diphthongs, nasal vowels, interjections, inarticulate sounds, animal sounds, mechanical sounds—all of which are susceptible of being represented in printed or written symbols. Then, the son being out of the room, several gentlemen came forward and repeated short sentences to Mr Bell, some in Arabic, some in Persian, some in Bengali, some in Negro patois, some in Gaelic, some in Lowland Scotch, some in Norfolk dialect; Mr Bell wrote down the sounds as he heard them, without, except in one or two cases, knowing the purport of the words. The son was called in, and, looking attentively at the writing, repeated the sentences with an accuracy of sound and intonation which seemed to strike those who were best able to judge as being very remarkable.

There is something a little tantalising in the present state of the subject. We know that there is a system of symbols, but we do not know the symbols themselves. Mr Bell states that, besides the members of his own family, only three persons have been made acquainted with the symbols, and the details of their formation—namely, Sir David Brewster, Professor de Morgan, and Mr Ellis. He has not intended, and does not intend, to secure his system to himself by any kind of patent or copyright; and yet, if he made it fully public at once, he would lose any legitimate hold over it to which he is rightfully entitled. He has submitted his plan to certain government departments, but has found that it is 'nobody's business' to take up a subject which is not included in any definite sphere of duty. He has next endeavoured to interest scientific societies in the matter, so far as to induce them to urge the trial of his plan by the government. He says: 'I am willing to surrender my private rights in the invention *pro bono publico*, on the simple condition, that the cost of so introducing the system may be undertaken at the public

charge.' Teachers there must be; because 'the publication of the theory of the system and the scheme of symbols must necessarily be supplemented by oral teaching of the scales of sounds, in order that the invention may be applied with uniformity.' The reading of the paper gave rise to some discussion at the Society of Arts, not as to the value and merit of the system itself, but as to anything which the Society can do in the matter. It is one rule of the Society, that no new invention shall be brought forward without a full explanation of the *modus operandi* as well as of the leading principles; and in this case, the objection lay that the inventor declined to make public, unless under some government agreement, the actual secret of his method. Mr Bell replied that, if even he were to write a sentence in view of the audience, it would add very little to their real knowledge of the subject; but, he furthermore said, he was ready to explain the details of the system to any committee whom the Council of the Society, or any other scientific body, may appoint. To us it appears that neither Mr Bell nor the Society is open to blame in the matter; he has the right to name the conditions under which he will make his system public; while they have the right to lay down rules for the governance of their own proceedings. The results actually produced struck the auditors generally with surprise; and there can be little doubt that the system will in some way or other, at all events, work itself into public notice.

M I R K A B B E Y.

CHAPTER XXXVI.—OUT OF THE CAGE.

THE immense ball-room was now a blaze of light, and full, though by no means crowded, with brilliant company. One of the windows, as Steve had said, had been thrown up, and through it the scene was as distinctly displayed to Ralph as though he were within. He stood there alone, for a feeling of respect kept others from the immediate neighbourhood. He beheld fair Letty, hostess and belle in one, moving from group to group, who broke out into smiles at her approach; he beheld dark Rose whirl by 'in gloss of satin and glimmer of pearls'—the self-same 'parure' which had enslaved poor Anne Rees—and followed by many an admiring eye. He beheld Master Walter's smiling face bent down to whisper to some blushing girl, who forgot, perhaps, for the moment that the handsome captain was already married—that he had been entrapped by that scheming young person with the extremely self-confident manner. Lastly, he beheld the man he sought talking with a gentleman of apoplectic habit, and the air of a prosperous licensed victualler, but who was no less a personage than the Earl of Marrobone, and Lord-lieutenant of Wheatshire. His Lordship had sought the open window for fresh air, and the two were conversing upon county matters, in which Sir Richard, young as he was, already took the keenest interest.

'You will take your seat on the bench at once, Sir Richard, I hope,' were the first words which Derrick caught. 'Your commission is, of course, already made out, and you will probably receive it to-morrow.'

'I thank you, my Lord. Yes, I shall make a point of being a regular attendant at the petty sessions.'

'And you will be wanted, too, at Dalwynch;

for between ourselves, the old general yonder is a little past his work in that way. I don't wish to prejudice you, I am sure, against a man in such a respectable position; but the fact is, he and I are not such good friends as we might be. He wants me to make Mr Chesham—you know, of course, who that is, the relation in which they stand to one another, and so on—a magistrate for the county. Now, I do think that that is a distinction which should never be conferred upon any natural son—that is, unless the family of the father should be really of mark, which is not the case with our friend the general, whatever may be said of Lady Theresa. I don't think, because a man has married into the peerage, that he should therefore be himself admitted to all the privileges of good birth.'

'With all deference, my Lord,' returned Sir Richard stiffly, 'I consider that under no circumstances whatever, no matter whether the father be peer or commoner, should the commission of the peace be conferred upon a bastard.'

'Then Richard Lisgard must never sit upon the bench at Dalwynch!' exclaimed a malignant voice close beside the speaker.

In an instant, Sir Richard was upon the lawn without, face to face with his insulter. No one in the ball-room, save the two gentlemen who had been conversing together, had overheard the exclamation, and his Lordship had not caught it distinctly. The band was playing on, and as accurately as before, and the dancers were dancing in tune; the cavaliers were whispering their soft nothings, and the ladies making their sweet replies, while the two men without—the one so scrupulously apparelled in the latest fashion, the other dishevelled, travel-stained, and in all respects what we call 'a Rough,' but both as brave as lions—were grappling one another by their throats. Sir Richard, who never forgot any man's face—a faculty not uncommon with persons of his class and character—had recognised Ralph Derrick, the turbulent interloper in his parish, the evil counsellor of his brother, at the first glance; and enraged at his audacious trespass at such a time, quite as much as by his late brutal insult to himself, which he set down as the result of drink, he threw himself upon the gold-digger with the utmost fury. The Earl of Marrobone stepped outside also, and closed behind him the ball-room window; the stout old nobleman was one of the coolest hands in England, and never lost his presence of mind. Even thus debarred from making that public exposure of the young baronet which Derrick had promised himself, he might have said something which his Lordship would not have forgotten—for he was one of those who had seen too much of the world to believe anything untrue merely because it seemed impossible—but that, at the first touch of Sir Richard's fingers, Ralph's fury deprived him of all utterance except a few desperate imprecations. He would have liked, with folded arms, to have impeached the young baronet as a base-born impostor (for he felt convinced that the reason for my Lady's flight was known to him and the rest of the family), and have stated his own wrongs in a few earnest and pregnant words before the whole company in yonder room; but now that he had his enemy so close, 'the blind wild beast of force within him, whose home is in the sinews of a man,' was driven to strike and strike again. So the precious half-minute that elapsed

before help came to Sir Richard, was wasted, and Derrick found himself helpless, and with his wrougs untold, in the clutch of half-a-dozen men, and one of them the village policeman, whom Steve had found at last, and despatched for that very purpose.

'Take him and lock him up,' exclaimed Lord Marrobone, perceiving that Sir Richard was too excited to speak. 'A night in the watch-house will sober the drunken brute, and cool his courage. Take him away, I say,' for Ralph began to weave afresh his choicest flowers of speech—mere onion-ropes of the wickedest words—'and put the foul-mouthed scoundrel into quod!' So they bore Ralph forth, not without very rough treatment, through the gates, and cast him into a small but well-secured tenement, known as 'the Cage,' but so seldom used in the orderly little village, that it was in the occupation of a certain white rabbit and her family (pets of the constable's children), who had to be ejected, to make room for this very different tenant.

Sir Richard Lisgard went up stairs to refit, and returned to the ball-room, where none had even remarked his absence, with an unimpeachable white cravat concealing an ugly bruise upon his windpipe; but all smiles had departed from his noble features, and it was observed by Mrs Walter Lisgard, in confidential conversation with the Honourable Poppin Jay, that her dear brother-in-law looked more like Don Quixote de la Mancha even than usual. He had made up his mind that, under the circumstances, it was impossible he could be upon the bench of magistrates while Derrick's case was being entered into, and was disturbed by the apprehension that the old general would not look upon the matter in a sufficiently important light, or punish the offender with all the rigour of the law.

By no means quietly, however, had the affair passed off without doors. There was nothing, according to rumour, which drunken Derrick had not done in the way of misbehaviour towards the young baronet, from bad words to the use of a bowie-knife, and nothing which he did not deserve. The news flew from mouth to mouth like wild-fire; the tenantry, the peasantry, and the household were all in possession of the facts—and of very much more than the facts, within half an hour of their real or supposed occurrence. Last of all to hear it was Mistress Forest, for whom a wholesome respect was entertained by all the domestics, and to whom, being notoriously the object of Derrick's affections, it was of course a delicate matter to communicate such intelligence. Little Anne Rees, however, stole up stairs to Mary's own room, where she knew my Lady's waiting-maid was sitting, far from all the noise and gaiety, and thinking sadly of her poor dear mistress and her troubles. 'O ma'am, please ma'am, such a dreadful thing have happened!' said she. 'Mr Derrick have come back again.—Don't ye faint; don't ye take on so' (for Mistress Forest had turned as white as Anne's own apron); 'he's not dead. But he's gone and pitched into Sir Richard before all the company, and they fought together dreadful, I don't know how long.'

'What did he say, girl?' exclaimed Mistress Forest eagerly; 'I mean, what did they fight about?'

'Well, he did not say much, didn't Mr Derrick, beyond cussing most uncommon strong. It took six on 'em to carry him away, for all the world like a corpse, except for his kicking and swearing;

and when they said he would be up before the bench on Thursday, he said "He wished it was to-morrow, that was all;" and at the same time he laughed that wicked, that it went quite cold to the small of my back.'

'And where have they put the poor man, after all?'

'In the Cage, ma'am. The key was not to be found, but they've barred him up just like a wild beast. And oh, Mistress Forest, it isn't my place, and I ask your pardon, but don't you give him no more encouragement, for he is a wild beast, and nothing less, if you could only see him.'

'That will do, Anne; though I'm obliged to you for coming to tell me. I must speak to Sir Richard to-morrow, and try and beg him off. Good-night.'

'And aren't you coming down to supper, nor to see the fireworks, nor nothing?' inquired the little maid in amazement.

'No, Anne; I was not in a humour for such things before, and certainly I am not so now. I am going to bed.'

But no sooner had the grateful little girl—who, though she waited no longer on Mrs Walter (who had brought her own maid with her), yet always remembered that she owed her enfranchisement to Mistress Forest—gone down stairs, than Mary took up her bonnet and cloak, and hurried softly after her. It was impossible not to meet persons at every turn; but it was not difficult, in the general hubbub and excitement, to avoid their observation; and this she did. The night was very dark; and once away from the gleam and glitter of the house and lawn, Mary had to slacken her pace even down the avenue she knew so well. When she was half-way down it, as nearly as she could guess, she heard a noisy throng of men approaching from the other direction, and shrank on one side, behind a tree. Some of them carried lanterns, and as they went by, she recognised Styles, the rural policeman, and also Mr Steve.

'I am as sorry as can be,' the latter was saying, 'and would much rather see the poor fellow well away.'

'Take care you go no further than wishing, however,' responded the guardian of the law. 'It would be a bad night's work for any man who should let that fellow out, mind you: ordered into custody by the Lord-lieutenant himself, and charged with assault and battery of a baronknight—I never set eyes on such an owdacious scamp.'

'He's simply mad, that's all,' returned Steve, sadly—'mad with drink. For whoever heard one in his senses, or even drunk in a natural way, talk such infernal rubbish! Didn't he say he was "my Lady's" husband?'

The answer was drowned in a great shout of laughter, and so the men passed on. Mary waited until she was sure there were no more to come, then walked on with her arms outstretched before her, as fast as she dared go. Suddenly there was a sharp and rusty shriek behind her, and a glare of lurid light which shewed her the gateway right in front.

'They have begun to fire the rockets,' muttered she; 'so there will be nobody in the village, that is certain.' The little street, much lighter than the way by which she had hitherto come, was indeed quite empty, but by no means noiseless; a sound of confused shouting came dully up from the bottom of the hill, where, as she well knew,

the Cage was situated; and truly, as Anne Rees had said, it struck upon the ear like the roaring of some angry beast making night hideous. Mary stopped for a moment to listen; and when she went on, her face was paler, though not less determined-looking than before.

'Sir Richard is a bastard—a bastard—a bastard! My Lady is not nearly so good as she should be; and I'm her husband in the lock-up! Down with the Lisgards—down with them; and down they shall come!'

These were the words, but interspersed with the most hideous imprecations, with which Mistress Forest's ears were greeted as she approached the little round house. Taking advantage of a momentary pause in the stream of denunciation, she knocked with her clenched hand at the nail-studded door.

'Sir Richard is a bastard! no more Sir Richard than you are!' shrieked the voice within. 'Be sure you go to the magistrates' meeting at Dalwynch on Thursday, and let all Mirk go with you; then shall you see pride have a fall, and the Lisgards come down with a run! Down with them—down with them—and down they shall come!'

'Ralph—Ralph Derrick, it is me.'

'Who's me? a woman?' inquired the prisoner eagerly. 'Then I'll tell you about my Lady, because you'll enjoy it. She's not my Lady; she's no more my Lady than you are.'

'Ralph Gavestone, I know that,' answered Mistress Forest, with her mouth glued to a crack in the door.

'Oh, you know that, do you? Then you must be the devil, whom I have lately suspected to be of the female gender, and am now convinced of it. You are of course aware, then, that I am her husband?'

'Yes, I am.—Will you be quiet, and go away to Dalwynch, and not try to enter the Abbey grounds again this night, if I let you out?'

'Certainly. To-day is Tuesday, or it was so before midnight. I shall therefore have to wait for my revenge till Thursday, if I am not set free; whereas, if you let me out, I can go to work at once; I can see an attorney to-morrow morning. That should please you rarely, if you are indeed the devil. There's another bolt still over the hole through which I kicked Steve's leg. I left my mark on some of them, mind you—R. G.'

Mary Forest had opened the Cage; and behold there stood her whilom lover, bleeding and ragged, his red beard plucked a thousand ways, his features haggard, his eyes flaming with rage and hate.

'Oh, it's you, is it?' said he, with something of softness in his turbid but vehement speech. 'I might have known that, if I had thought a little. But it's no good, my partridge—plump still, though a little gray. I'm meat for your mistress now; I am the master of Mirk; or at least I shall be in a day or two. I'm her Ladyship's husband—better luck than she deserves, you'll think; and I can't be two women's husband at the same time, any more than my Lady could have two mates. That was her little mistake, for which she's about to reap the fruits. Sir Richard is a bastard—a bastard—a bastard!'

'You said that if I unbarred this door, you would start for Dalwynch,' observed Mistress Forest firmly. 'You used to be a man whose word could be relied on. Why do you not go?'

'I am going at once, my plump one. You have revenged yourself and me at the same time. There is no kindness in this, I well understand, you know; there is no such thing as kindness in the world.'

'You are wrong there, Ralph Gavestone. It is because I love my mistress, rather than pity you—although I do pity you still—that I have come hither to save you from a night's lodging in such a place. It would have grieved my mistress to the heart to think you were so served, I know.'

'To the what?' returned Ralph with a savage laugh. 'To her heart, did you say? Why, the thing doesn't exist, wench! If, however, there does still cling to her anything of the sort, when I tell them that Sir Richard's a bastard, that'll wring it.'

'Blessed are the Merciful, for they shall receive mercy,' cried Mistress Forest, terrified at the deadly menace of his tone, and uttering her words as though they were a charm against an evil spirit.

'Blessed are the merciful!' echoed Ralph bitterly. 'That may be so, for I have never known them; but cursed are the treacherous and the false! You have heard of the avenging angel—well, though my wings are so tattered and torn just now, that's me. Do you see the mimic lightning yonder over the Abbey? It will be stricken to-morrow from turret to basement by a forked shaft. Down with the Lisgards, and down they shall come!'

Shrieking this to a sort of frenzied measure, he suddenly broke away, and took the Dalwynch road, up Mirkland Hill. Mary listened with some feeling of relief to his fading strains, then sighed, and wiped from her eyes a few honest tears.

'He was not always a bad man, I am sure,' soliloquised she pitifully, 'and now God forgive him—he knows not what he's doing! He is mad.'

CHAPTER XXXVII.—THE RECONCILIATION.

The day after a great festivity in a great house is generally a dull one. It begins late; for both servants and guests are wearied, and there is nothing about it which is not inferior to other days except the luncheon, which in the way of 'sweets,' at all events, is always exceptionally good. Sir Richard, however, who went through life as nearly as could be to an automaton, was up at his usual time; and descending to the empty breakfast-room, beheld, seated in an arm-chair which he had wheeled to the window, a little wizened old man, in brightest Hessian boots, drab breeches, and a cut-away coat with flap-pockets of the fashion of half a century ago.

'Dr Haldane!' exclaimed the young man in extreme amazement. 'God bless my soul and body!'

'I hope he will, sir,' rejoined the visitor drily, extending three fingers somewhat stiffly.

'No, sir; surely your whole hand!' cried the baronet warmly. 'Your face is the pleasantest sight—save that of my dear mother's—that I could hope to set eyes on in Mirk Abbey; and I am not going to be fobbed off with such a salutation as that.'

'You get nothing more from me, Richard, unless the business I have come about—very much against the grain, I can tell you—gets satisfactorily accomplished.'

'Does it relate to my dear mother, sir?'

'Of course it does, young man. What else do you think would have had power to break my resolution—to bring me hither—to this room, in which I have not set foot these twenty years, and where I last sat, side by side with — But what is that to you? I suppose a man is not very likely to be moved by the memories of a dead father, who pays no respect to the feelings of his living mother.'

'I am not aware, Dr Haldane,' began Sir Richard with some haughtiness —

'I know *that*, sir,' broke in the other impetuously. 'You are so wrapped up in selfishness—you and that scampish brother of yours—that neither of you have any thought except for your own miserable quarrels. You were not aware, I dare say, that their constant repetition is driving your mother into her grave, as they have already driven her from her once happy home; and it is because you don't know it—because you won't see it—that I am come hither, once for all, to inform you of the fact. But perhaps such a little matter has no interest in your eyes: in which case I assure you, since it is entirely for her sake, and not at all for yours, that I have come, I shall be exceedingly glad to go away again.'

'Have you any message to deliver, Dr Haldane,' asked the baronet with an angry flush, 'direct from my mother, or are you merely stating your own doubtless valuable, but quite unasked-for opinions?'

'I have a message from her to deliver to you, and to the rest of you, young man; and if you think it worth while to send for your brother and sister, you had better do so.'

The young man rang the bell, and gave the necessary orders. Dr Haldane took up a book of family prayers that lay beside him, and grunted cynically as he read Sir Richard's name on the title-page. 'What a work for a fellow like this to write his name in, who drives his mother out of her own house!' muttered he, and then affected to be immersed in the contents. The baronet did not reply, but occupied himself in opening his letters, one of which was from Madame de Castellan. That lady expressed herself as 'desolated' at the news of her old friend's departure from the Abbey, the cause of which she was dying to hear. 'If, however,' ran the postscript, 'the absence of my lady was for any reason likely to continue, might not Mary Forest be despatched, at all events in the meantime, to Belcomb, where Madame was absolutely without any waiting-maid at all—with the exception of old Rachel—until another could be procured from France, to supply the place of wicked Annette, departed almost without a word of warning.'

'Cunning old wretch!' murmured Sir Richard, crumpling up the pale thin paper with its scratchy foreign caligraphy, and throwing it into the grate. 'She thinks of nothing but herself.'

'How odd!' exclaimed the little doctor bitterly. 'The lady's case must be quite unique.'

Not a word more was spoken by either until Letty entered, a little pale, but looking exquisitely lovely.

'Dear Dr Haldane, who would have thought of seeing you *here*? How pleased I am!'

The doctor rose with alacrity from his seat, and kissed her affectionately upon the forehead.

'I am sure,' said she with earnest gravity, 'that you have brought us news of dearest mamma.

'So you have thought of her, have you, little one?' answered he fondly. (Letty was about three inches taller than the doctor.) 'I fancied she would have been no longer missed. Everybody was so happy here yesterday, I am told; and everything went on so well without her.'

'It did not, indeed,' returned Letty indignantly. 'Nothing seemed to go right in her absence, notwithstanding all I could do; and as for being happy, I can answer for myself and my brothers, that not five minutes elapsed all day without our thinking of her, and grieving for her loss. And oh, dear Dr Haldane, do you know why she has left us in this sad manner, and when we shall see her back again?'

'I have her own explanation of why she has left Mirk Abbey,' replied the doctor; 'but as for her return, that will depend upon yourselves—I mean upon Sir Richard and Captain Lisgard. For you, Letty, she bids me say have been at all times what a loving child should be to a parent—Master Walter, your servant, sir.—No; I will not shake hands with a man who ruins his mother by gambling debts, and breaks her heart with hatred of his own brother.'

'That is not true, at least, I do hope, Walter?' said Sir Richard quickly.

'No; false, upon my honour,' returned the captain. 'My mother never told you to say that, sir.'

'Not quite that—no, she did not,' admitted the little old man, whose eyes had begun to lose their hard and inexorable expression, notwithstanding his harsh words from the moment that Walter entered the room. It was so difficult even for a social philosopher to be severe and stern with that young man. 'Yet I am bound to say, Walter, that it is you who have been most to blame with respect to that good mother, who only lives but for her children, and whose very love for them has compelled her to withdraw herself from beneath this roof. I will not now dwell upon your clandestine marriage; I leave yourself to imagine how the want of trust in your best friend as well as parent evinced in that hasty step must have wounded her loving heart. Nor do I wish—that is to say, your mother herself requests me not to bear hardly upon you with respect to your gambling debts. You know the full extent of them perhaps—yes, I was afraid of that—better than she does even yet; but she has paid enough of them already to seriously embarrass her own affairs.'

'I have made a solemn promise never to bet or gamble more, Dr Haldane,' said the captain hoarsely.

'I am glad of it, Walter; but what I was about to say was, that in this case, as well as in that of your marriage, it was not so much the error itself, as the want of frankness evidenced by your concealment of the matter. To be ashamed of having done wrong, is a proper feeling enough; but if it be not accompanied by the acknowledgment of the offence, it only shews one to be a coward, not a penitent. However, bad as your conduct has been in these two particulars, your mother would doubtless have done her best to forget, as she hastened in both instances to forgive it. But what she could not forget, since it happened every day and every hour, were the quarrels between yourself and your brother.' Here the doctor turned sharply round on the young baronet, who had been hitherto listening, not, perhaps, without complacency, to the catalogue of his brother's misdeeds.—

I think, from what I have seen myself, Richard, that it is *you* who are most in fault here. It is no use your looking proud and cold on me. I never cared three brass farthings for such airs, though they now and then misbecame even your poor father, who was worth a dozen of you. But this ridiculous assumption of superiority—founded upon mere accident of birth—naturally offends a high-spirited young man like Walter, who, if he was in your place, would certainly not make himself *odious* in that way, however he might fail in other matters belonging to your position, which suffers nothing, I readily allow, in your able hands. That you have the administrative faculty in a high degree, sir, I concede; but this is not Russia, and if it were, you are not the Czar.

'No man in Mirk ever called me a tyrant, Dr Haldane.'

'Perhaps no man ever dared, sir; but I dare to say that a son whose conduct is such that his mother can no longer bear to witness it, is something worse than a tyrant. And be sure that if you continue so to behave, you will never see her face under this roof again.'

'My God, but this is very horrible!' cried Sir Richard, striking his forehead. 'I had no idea—I never dreamed that matters were coming to any such pass as this—Walter—brother, did it seem to you that we were so very like to Cain and Abel?'

The two young men embraced, perhaps for the first time in their lives.

'Oh, when you tell her what you have seen, sir, do you think my mother will come back?' cried Richard, with the tears in his fine eyes.

'I cannot say that; I am sure, however, that she will be greatly comforted. May I tell her that this is not a mere impulse of the moment, but that you are resolved from this time forth to be brothers indeed?'

'I will do my very best, Walter.'

'And I mine, Richard,' answered the other. 'Don't reproach yourself like that—for the vast frame of his elder brother shook with sobs—it is much more my fault than yours: and you have been very good to me about my debts; kinder than most fellows in your position would have been—yes, you have, Dick; yes, you have. How very, very long it is since I have called you Dick; not since we were at school together! You used to call me Watty, then, you know.'

'Yes, Watty; yes. I had almost forgotten it. Let us go to our mother at once, lad—as we used to do when we made up our quarrels in the old times—and ask her to come back again, and take her place here, where we all miss her so much.—Where is she, Dr Haldane?'

'I don't know—that is, I may not tell, my boy,' returned the old gentleman hesitatingly, who, with Letty's hand fast clasped in his, was staring out of window as hard as he could, but his eyes were very dim.

'Have you nothing more to tell us, sir?' asked Sir Richard humbly.

'Well, no, boys. The letter'—

'The letter!' ejaculated Letty; 'I remember now that dear mamma told me herself that when this very thing should come to pass—although I little knew at the time to what she was alluding—we should find a letter in her desk.'

'It is not there now: she put it into my hands, and I—I tore it up,' observed the doctor. 'I have told you faithfully all that it contained, with one

exception. I do not choose to speak of that, dear Letty, and I have your mother's permission not to do so.'

'Let me speak of it, then,' said Sir Richard, stealing his arm round his sister's waist, and kissing her very tenderly. 'The message the doctor will not give respects yourself, dear, and his son Arthur. My foolish pride'—

'Pride, indeed!' broke in the little old man impetuously; 'your confounded impertinence, I call it.'

'Very well, doctor,' continued the baronet smiling; 'let it be so, if you will. I had the audacity to suppose, Letty, that Mr Arthur Haldane was not good enough for you.'

'Nor is he,' contested the little doctor with irritation. 'Nobody's good enough for Letty Lisgard. But he is as good as can be found in England, that I will say, though the young man is my own son. And if he does not make you a pattern husband, I'll cut him off with a shilling.'

'I shall be glad to give you away to such an honest fellow, Letty,' said the baronet warmly; 'so let that matter be considered settled.'

It was very pleasant to see the blushing girl hiding her tearful face in the old man's arms. 'O mamma, mamma,' murmured she, 'how happy I should be if you were but with us!'

'Well, well, that will be soon, I hope, my dear,' said the doctor, patting her silken head. 'I will do all I can on my part to persuade her: I am sure I shall make her happy with this news.'

'Yes; but in the meantime,' said Letty, 'how terrible it must be for her to be all alone. If you know where she is, can you not at least send Forest to be with her?'

'No, no; but, by the by, I have forgotten to do your mother's bidding with respect to that very person. She expressly desired that until her own return to Mirk, Mary may be sent to Belcomb, where Madame de Castellan is just now in saddest need of her.'

'Ay, she writes to me that she has lost her French maid,' said Sir Richard, picking up the crumpled note: 'in that case, Mary had better go off at once.'

'There is worse trouble at Belcomb than that,' remarked the doctor gravely. 'That poor fellow Derrick, who, I hear, made so much disturbance at the *fête* yesterday, has met with a sad accident.'

'Why, the man was put in the Cage quite safe,' said Sir Richard.

'Yes; but unfortunately for himself, he was let out again, and starting in the dark over Mirkland Hill, whole drunk, and half mad, the poor wretch wandered into the mill-yard.'

'Through that gap in the wall!' exclaimed the baronet with excitement. 'Didn't I say the very last time we went by, that some accident would happen there, through that man Hathaway's neglect?'

'Well, it has happened now, with a vengeance,' pursued the doctor drily. 'I was sent for this morning at two o'clock, to Belcomb, where this poor fellow had been carried, because it was a better place for him to lie in than the mill. Hathaway had been working over-time, it seems; the sails were going till near midnight, and the story is that this poor fellow strayed beneath them, and was absolutely taken up and carried round; but, at all events, he lies there, very ill—dying, I think—with concussion of the brain, and Heaven knows

what beside. I dare not move him even to examine his ribs.'

'Good God! what can we do for him?' exclaimed Sir Richard. 'Is there nothing we can send?'

'He has everything he requires, or that he ever will have need of, poor fellow, in this world. But old Rachel is not a good hand at nursing, while Madame de Castellan, although good-natured enough—for a Frenchwoman—is quite incapable of such a task; so you couldn't do better than send Mary, as Madame has requested, though little knowing how much she would have need of her: her assistance will be invaluable, and indeed some sort of help must be had at once. I am going over there myself immediately, and will take her in my gig, if you can spare her, Miss Letty, and will tell her to get ready.'

'By all means,' cried Letty, hastily leaving the room upon that errand.

'Of course, all notion of prosecuting this poor fellow is now put out of the question, whatever happens,' observed the doctor.

'Quite so—quite so,' answered the baronet eagerly. 'Poor drunken wretch; I am sure I'm very sorry. And I tell you what, Dr Haldane, if this man dies, there should be some sort of deodand laid upon that Mill. Hathaway ought to be punished for wilful neglect.'

'That won't bring the poor man to life again, though,' observed the doctor.

'No, of course not; though, if one may be allowed to say so, he really led such a sad life, by all accounts, it seems almost as well that he should end it. It would be a happy release, I mean, if he was to die, poor fellow; don't you think so?'

'Yes, I do. It would be better for himself, and better for others,' returned the doctor very gravely.

'Just so,' said Sir Richard; 'better for all concerned. Poor man!'

IMPERIAL ROME.

ANCIENT Rome, even under the splendid rule of that great builder, the Emperor Augustus, never could boast quays and boulevards like Paris, parks like London, nor squares like Berlin. A congeries of hills, intersected by narrow winding valleys, and bordering on a swift narrow river, fed by mountain streams, could never afford space for streets like Regent Street, or squares like the Place de la Concorde. The Vicus Longus, according to the best modern writer* on Roman topography since Papencordt, Gregorovius, and Ampère, ran between the Quirinal and Viminal hills, was only about three-quarters of a mile long, and ended in mean suburban houses. The lesser streets were narrow and short, never more than fifteen feet wide; while the alleys were not more than a yard across, being, in fact, just such cut-throat passages as still intersect the Corso, that great artery of modern Rome. The enormous houses, the height of which Augustus reduced to seventy feet, were let in flats, like the eight-story buildings still existing in the Old Town of Edinburgh; and as many of the garret mountaineers threw out balconies from their windows, the lower stories were cool, but dismally dark; the blue sky was hidden, and the sun was a stranger to the underlings, who, however, considered the close atmosphere and shadow

of these alleys favourable to health. Horace and Juvenal both speak bitterly of the dirt and tumult of Rome, of the dangerously crowded streets, and the danger of falling houses.

The summits of the seven hills belonged to the patricians, and were devoted to gardens and temples. The only parts within the circuit of the ancient Servian walls where Caius or Codrus could breathe the air, were the Circus Maximus, the Forum Boarium, and the Forum Romanum. After emerging from the stifling lanes, choked-up alleys, and mountain-walls of houses, the Roman citizen must have drunk down the sunshine with delight in the great Circus, three-eighths of a mile long, and a furlong broad, and with the towering buildings of the Palatine and Aventine hills looking down upon him. But the Capitol was the true centre of Rome's religion, power, glory, and wealth.

Let us place ourselves for a moment in the age of Augustus and on the highest part of the Via Sacra, where the Arch of Titus now stands. Rome's splendour and pride break full upon us. On the northern summit of the Capitol Hill stands the vast temple of Jupiter Optimus Maximus, Juno, and Minerva. Its gilded tiles repel the golden darts of the fierce Italian sun; the sky, of deepest sapphire, burns with the intense heat that scorches the Grecian pillars of the portico, the statuary of the pediment, and the triple marble statues. Near this temple rises a colossal statue of Jupiter, and hard by there is also a giant figure of Apollo. The smaller temples of Honour, Virtue, and Fortune, guarded by groves of statues, also adorn the hill of the Citadel; while on the southern summit is the temple of Juno Moneta.

Near the Summa Sacra Via, where we are supposed to be standing, are some of the most ancient monuments of Rome—the *Edes Iarum*, and that temple of Jupiter Stator that was founded by Romulus. Opposite these, is that market for fruit and toys to which Ovid and Propertius have alluded. In the time of Augustus, the Forum was thirty feet deeper than it is now. Cities, like churchyards, rise in the course of centuries, as the ground gets more encumbered with debris. The hills which enclose the Forum are now only one hundred feet high, they must have gained nobility by the addition of a sixth part to their altitude.

Let us now mount the hill of the Capitol, the crest of which is lined by a double row of arcades, one above the other. This is the Tabularium of Catulus. On a high terrace to the north, stands a temple of Concord; and to the south, on a lower level, a temple of Saturn. In front of the latter is the gilt Milharium, set up by Augustus as a standard for distances within the walls; behind, is the small temple to Ops; and to the left, in the corner, is the Schola Xantha—probably the office of the *adile* and his scribes. Over and beyond it rise the *arx* and the temple of Juno. On the eastern face of this portion of the hill, and visible from the Forum, is the Tarpeian Rock, where criminals were executed and traitors thrown down headlong. At the upper end of the Forum, below the Citadel Hill, was the Comitium, the sacred quarter-deck of the whole enclosure of this open-air Westminster Hall of Rome. Here stood the tribunal of the *Prætor Urbanus*, as well as one of the *Rostra*, and a great many statues. A sacred fig-tree, under which Romulus and Remus had been suckled, was shewn in this part of the Forum. Some of the boundary-

* *History of the City of Rome, its Structure and Monuments.* By Thomas H. Dyer, LL.D. Longman, 1865.

walls of the Comitium were adorned with fresco-paintings, that had been brought from Sparta. Near the south-western end of the Forum rose the splendid Basilica Julia, erected by Cæsar; and higher to the east was the temple of Castor. The latter stood on what at first almost seemed a spur of the Palatine Hill, but what was really a huge terrace, twenty-four feet high, formed of cyclopean masses of tufa and Alban stone. The steps of this temple served the purpose of rostra from which to address the people. Near this building stood the *Ædes Vestæ*, a little round shrine standing in a grove near the Tiber. At no great distance from the present Arch of Severus, was the celebrated bronze temple of the two-faced Janus, whose doors were closed in peace, and opened in war. Near this and the Basilica *Æmilia*, Augustus built his *Chalcidicum*, supposed to be an open space for the use of the senators, and surrounded by a colonnade. Near this was the Senate-house; and before that stood the *Rostra*, or columns adorned with the beaks of captured galleys.

But let us pass on to the *Campus Martius*, the parade-ground and park of ancient Rome. It is a vast grassy plain, bounded by the winding Tiber, intersected by the *Via Flaminia*, bordered with villas, and with a blue horizon of gently-rising hills—to the right the *Pincian*, and to the left the *Vatican*. It was in the *Campus*, when there were no inundations, that the great horse-races were held twice a year. Here the legionaries paraded or assembled to prepare for triumphal processions. It was also the play-ground for the robust youth of Rome; here, half stripped, they wrestled and rode, the while the skiffs skimmed down the river, and the loaded barges from *Ostia* and the sea toiled up against the current. The war-galleys were moored at the *Prata Quinctia*, at one end of the *Campus*.

At the southern extremity of the plain of Mars was the fashionable quarter of Rome. There, on a broad level space, in good pure air, rose the grandest and the most beautiful houses that the patricians could erect. Strabo enumerates temples, porticoes, groves, theatres, and amphitheatres all decorating this faubourg.

The Forum was the centre of commercial and legal business in Rome. Plautus describes the idlers, braggarts, the 'straw-bail,' scandalmongers, gourmands, pretentious beggars, and retiring rich men of that locality. The *Via Sacra* and other streets leading to the Forum were so choked with ceaseless crowds, that Augustus found it necessary to throw open a third Forum. The dandies and fashionable loungers sought out a more retired promenade in the porticoes of the *Circus Flaminius*; while those who wished a ride or drive repaired to the *Appian Way*, just as the Roman cardinals and nobles now frequent the road to *Santa Agnese*, outside the *Porta Pia*.

Rome itself was as noisy and dirty as London. Conflicting noises, jarring clamours, competing din, tortured nervous students like *Martial*, and quiet poets like *Horace*. In the morning, there were the wrangling school-boys and scolding masters; at night, the bakers, and all day long the clattering coppersmiths: the vendors of sulphur jostled the buyers of broken glass, and the hoarse cooks bragging about their hot sausages, outroaring the shipwrecked mariners, the vociferating beggars, and the energetic beggars. The energetic builder, hot and hurried, with his mules and porters, and his

trucks of beams and stones, ran up against pompous funerals, ponderous wagons, mad dogs, and head-long swine. Such was the Rome of the time of *Juvenal*, of *Horace*, and of *Martial*.

Augustus divided Rome into fourteen Regions. Each region had its subdivisions, or *vici*. Each *vici* had its little temple and *Lares*, its annual feasts, and its magistrates to take the census, and to command the public slaves when a fire occurred. There were about seven thousand police (seven cohorts) in Rome, who were also firemen. Augustus created twelve prætorian cohorts of imperial guards, but nine of these were cantoned outside the walls. The number of inhabitants in the vast hive of Rome is now generally allowed to have been about two million souls, including slaves and foreigners.

The temples in Rome, in the time of Augustus, were as splendid as the churches of the modern city. The emperor made a patron saint of *Apollo*; and after his victory over *Antony* at *Actium*, erected a temple there to the *Leucadian Phœbus*. *Propertius*, who was present at the dedication of this temple of Augustus, eulogises its splendour, which may serve as a type of what Roman temples were. The cornice of the portico was probably gilt. The columns, fifty-two in number, were of yellow African marble; between them stood statues of the fifty *Danaïdes*, and a figure of *Danaus*, their father, waving a sword. There was also a statue of *Apollo* sounding his lyre, and the god had the face of Augustus. Around the altar stood the four bronze oxen of *Myron*. The temple itself was of white marble. Over the pediment was a bronze chariot, representing that of the sun. On the ivory gates were sculptured the destruction of *Niobe* and her children, and the repulse of the Gauls from *Parnassus*. Inside the temple stood the statues of *Apollo*, *Latona*, and *Diana*. Under the base of the sun-god's statue, Augustus deposited the *Sibylline books* in gilt chests. Attached to the temple, there was a library of Greek and Latin books, where poets, orators, and philosophers recited their productions to friendly audiences. In the hall of the library stood a bronze statue of *Apollo*, fifty feet high.

The *Pantheon* was another magnificent structure of the Augustan age. It still exists in all its ancient size and magnificence. It was erected by *Agrippa*, the son-in-law of Augustus, 27 B.C. It probably contained only the images of deities specially connected with Rome and the Julian race. Adjoining this sacred rotunda were the public baths of *Agrippa*, which also, like other Roman baths, contained rooms for gymnastic exercise, and apartments for lectures, discussions, and recitations.

Having mentioned the grandeur of the temples and *thermæ*, let us now briefly describe *Nero's Golden House*, one of the most sumptuous of imperial palaces. The great fire, 65 A.D., which lasted six days, enabled *Nero* to erect an enormous palace facing the Forum and Capitol. A colossal statue of the royal charioteer and fiddler, one hundred and twenty feet high, stood in the vestibule. At the back of the palace was an artificial lake, on whose banks were clusters of houses, to resemble small cities. The slopes of the *Cælian* and *Esquiline* hills were converted into fields, vineyards, pastures covered with cattle, and woods filled with wild beasts. The imperial domains were comprised

in three porticoes, each a mile long—a circuit comprehending three out of the seven hills of Rome. This abode of the Seven deadly sins blazed with gold, and scintillated with mother-of-pearl; the banquet-rooms had ceilings of pierced ivory, so that perfumes might be sprinkled from above. Nero now condescended to say 'that he had at last begun to live like a man.' He had engrossed two-thirds of the city, and contemplated changing its name to Neropolis. He had also formed the mad idea of extending Rome as far as Ostia, and bringing the sea to the old city by a canal.

Let us pass from the temples and palaces to the places of amusement. Of these, the Colosseum was the most stupendous. Augustus had planned an amphitheatre in the centre of the city, but was probably deterred by the cost. The lake at the back of Nero's palace furnished, when drained, a noble site for the new arena, which was one hundred and fifty-seven feet high, and calculated to hold eighty-seven thousand spectators. Vespasian began the Colosseum, and Titus finished it, at the same time as his baths, probably on the site of the house of Mæcenas. The Roman citizens were greedy for bloodshed at all times. The dedication games lasted one hundred days. There was a combat of storks, and a battle between four wild elephants. Dion Cassius says that nine thousand wild beasts were killed on this occasion, and some by women. The amphitheatre was then filled with water, and horses and bulls were brought in and slain as they were swimming and wading. Vessels were next introduced, and their crews represented a celebrated sea-fight between the Corinthians and Corcyreans.

On the Cælian Hill, near the Flavian Amphitheatre, as the Colosseum was called, there were schools and hospitals for the gladiators, and rooms where the dead fighting-men were stripped for burial.

Such were the glories and crimes of old Rome. When may London, the enormous, the black, the wealthy, the dismal, hope to rival its predecessor in the world's empire? When will Buckingham Palace become an Aurea Domus? When will St Paul's match the bright and intellectual splendour of the temple of Apollo? When shall we have a theatre like the Flavian Amphitheatre?

It was the great clearing fire in Nero's reign, and the great conflagration in the reign of Titus, that made Rome a city of palaces. London lost her opportunity, and it may never return. May it never return is what we say, if it must return only by means of despotic orders such as those that are now piercing the Quartier Latin, and ravaging the Luxembourg. If cities become beautiful only when Pharaohs and Domitians reign, may London ever remain mean, dirty, deafening, and dangerous.

PARIS OMNIBUSES.

ANY one possessed of but moderate means, who wishes to study Paris thoroughly—that picturesque old Paris, which is daily changing beneath the wand of the enchanter—must begin by being extremely well up in his omnibuses. I went systematically to work, and having purchased for the sum of six sous an *Itinéraire*, or grammar of the science, I commenced its study both practically and theoretically. I found it uncommonly like

learning Euclid. 'The line AB corresponds with the lines C and D, and is intersected at the point H by the lines F, G, and I.' It is worse than algebra, for the lines X, Y, and Z are by no means content to be regarded as unknown quantities, but insist on having their evolutions and involutions thoroughly fixed in your brain. It is more puzzling than Euclid, for parallel lines are perpetually meeting, and two journeys that are equal to the same are by no means equal to each other. When you come to the practical part of the business, and wish to use your *correspondance*, which, judiciously employed, will enable you to travel about eight English miles for threepence, it behoves you especially to mind your *ps* and *qs*, otherwise, when you fancy you have reached your destination, you will be very apt to find yourself, like a slow race-horse, placed nowhere.

It is certainly rather startling when, on stopping at the office on the Place St Michel, and while looking, perhaps for the fiftieth time, with fresh admiration, at the colossal figure of the angel, now doubly fallen, trampled under foot by the triumphant saint, to hear a gruff voice shouting in your ears: 'Quelqu'un ici pour l'Enfer?' (Any one here going to Hell?) This awful and unpleasantly personal query, however, simply intimates that the omnibus serving the Barrière de l'Enfer corresponds at this point with the jovial Halle aux Vins, the learned Collège de France, and the pious Daughters of Calvary. There is another station where the omnibus going to the Rue du Paradis corresponds with that for the Barrière de l'Enfer; and then the question is put: 'Allez-vous au Paradis ou à l'Enfer?'

Speaking seriously, however, the system of the Paris omnibuses is as nearly perfect as any arrangement of the kind can be supposed to be. The Grande Compagnie Générale des Omnibus has, under the supervision of the government, the working of the whole. Paris and its surrounding suburbs are so ingeniously mapped out and intersected by the various lines, that no matter at what point you may find yourself, you can always arrive at any other by the moderate expenditure of threepence for a place in the interior, and half that sum for one on the imperial. The latter payment, however, does not entitle the passenger to correspondence. The mechanism of this latter arrangement I will illustrate by an example.

Suppose that, finding yourself one morning at the Arc de Triomphe, you wish to go to the Collège de France, in order to hear one of the most charming lecturers in Europe, M. Philarète Chasles. You enter the omnibus bureau, and say to the blue-capped official, seated behind a desk: 'La Bourse, s'il vous plaît.' He hands you an oval green ticket, with a large black number on it—1, 2, or 3, if you are in luck; 20, or the succeeding numbers, if many applicants for places have preceded you. You then seat yourself either on the cushioned benches in the office, or on the wooden ones out of doors, and await the arrival of the omnibus from Passy. It approaches—it draws up—and the anxious eyes of those waiting are directed over the door, to see whether the fatal word *COMPLÈTE* appears in large white letters. Yes, there it is! No chance this time. Yet stay! That fat old gentleman, with a white moustache, and a tiny red rosette in his button-hole, is leisurely descending, followed by a thin pale woman, with a baby in her

arms, poorly dressed, but wearing a cap of irreproachable whiteness.

'Deux places à l'intérieur !' cries the conductor.

'Un, deux, trois, personnes avant le quatre !'

'Le quatre commence,' replies the official of the bureau.

The happy possessor of No. 4 enters, followed by No. 5, and the omnibus drives off; No. 6 comforting himself mentally, or herself audibly, by the reflection that that numeral begins next time. Your number being 12, you have probably to wait for three omnibuses; but as they succeed each other at intervals of six minutes, the delay, after all, is not great. On entering, you pay for your place, and say: 'Correspondance, s'il vous plait.' You are then handed a small oblong ticket, white, red, brown, or green, the colour being changed every three hours; and you can, at your choice, descend at the Rue Royale, and entering the omnibus that goes to the Pantheon, pay for your place with your correspondance; or going on to the Boulevard des Italiens, take that for the Odeon; or at the Place de la Bourse, that for the Halle aux Vins; any one of which will bring you near your destination; for nearly as many roads lead to the venerable Collège, as are proverbially said to conduct to Rome.

At the bureau from whence an omnibus takes its first departure, the *numéros d'ordre* are issued by fourteen of each number; for, as there are in each carriage that amount of places, it follows, of course, that fourteen passengers can mount. What a scene it is, on a wet afternoon, at some of the more crowded stations—that at the Place de la Bourse, for instance! The small office is filled with crinolines, which, even in their diminished and mitigated form, can be accommodated in only a limited number, and flow over into the Place, completely extinguishing the luckless masculine garments wedged in amongst them. The tickets being issued are the eights, and the threes are in process of mounting, so that you have to await the departure of several omnibuses before your turn comes. Of course, there is some pushing and scrambling for places at the door of the vehicle; some feminine tens in front having an insane conviction that they will be allowed to enter before the masculine sevens in the rear rank. But the conductor is as inflexible in the duty of rejection as another conductor we wot of, and each one is forced to enter in his and her own order. No nines are issued, lest, by the obvious process of inversion, they should be made to do duty as sixes. Under no possible pretext is one over the number admitted; and the four upper places at each side of the omnibus being divided by arms, no one can encroach or be encroached upon by his neighbours. The three seats next the door are indeed undivided, and so two passengers, possessing an abnormal amount of either crinoline or *embonpoint*, will often, as I know to my cost, leave very little room for the unhappy individual riding bodkin between them.

The omnibus lines intersecting Paris are thirty-one, indicated by the twenty-five letters of the alphabet, and six diphthongs in addition; and the system of correspondance between these various lines is admirably arranged, only that, as before intimated, it requires some amount of study and experience to make yourself master of its intricacies. The conductors are, generally speaking, an honest, civil, and respectable class of men; they are forced to be so; for at the Central Bureau, any

charges of ill-conduct or incivility brought against them are carefully investigated, and if proved to be well-founded, are severely punished. They, as well as the coachmen, are very hard-worked, as the omnibuses begin to run at eight o'clock in the morning, and continue to ply without intermission until midnight. Occasionally, at stated intervals, each *employé* has a holiday. An honest conductor was once asked how he had spent his last *jour de congé*. 'Ma foi,' he replied, 'to amuse myself, I followed the route of my omnibus !'

THE SERENADE.

AWAKE, and leave the baby Sleep

In soft down hid ;

The sun impatient tries to peep

Within that lid.

The robin sits upon the bough

Of leafy beech that shades thy brow,

When the white moonbeams come at night,

And whistles sweet with all his might.

Then wake, awake, my lady, wake.

At the rough bole of the meadow elm,

A little crowd

Of violets fresh in summer's realm

To thee are vowed ;

They will adorn the bosom white

With softest bloom of purple light,

A fitting ornament to deck

Thy snowy dress without a speck.

Then wake, awake, my lady, wake.

Why tarriest thou asleep so long ?

I fear thy soul

Hath wandered through some angel throng

Beyond control,

Forgetting where its form doth lie,

Partner of equal purity ;

And so some dream of sinless love

Delays thee in a sphere above.

O wake, awake, my lady, wake.

At the porch, so small and delicate,

Of thy white ear,

All pleasant sounds of morning wait

For thee to hear :

The fresh-greened leaves, and flowers rare,

Sweet breath of blossoms in the air,

Shrill song of birds above, around—

All greet thee from thy garden ground.

Then wake, awake, my lady, wake.

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C A B B Y.

'Lost on Saturday night from a cab, a case of tobacconist's goods, in or near Stamford Street.'—
'Lost in a cab, or dropped, a "Plan for saving the Atlantic Cable;" one pound reward.'—
'Left in a cab on Tuesday night, between ten and eleven o'clock, a green fancy work-box, containing two small books, and a white enamelled brooch with blue stone and white pendants.'—
'Left in a Hansom cab, that took a gentleman from the Strand to Ebury Street, a black bag, valuable only to the owner.'—
'Supposed to have been left in a cab, or on the London, Chatham, and Dover Railway, a small leather bag, brass lock.'—
'Left in a cab, at Waterloo Station, on Wednesday last, a black leather bag, containing two books, of no value except to the owner.'—
'Lost off a cab, near the Waterloo Station, a leather case, containing patterns of cloth, useless to any but the owner.'—
'Three pounds reward for a black portmanteau, left in a cab which took a gentleman to the Great Eastern Railway.'

Cabby thinks that articles of this kind ought to be—not exactly *loot*, like the Banda and Kirwee booty which we are reading so much about, and which employs seventeen solicitors and thirty-seven learned counsel to settle—but lawful prize, plums in his scanty pudding, lucky drawings in a lottery containing many blanks. Whether they are so or not, depends a good deal on the carefulness of the hirer. If he (or she) takes a note of the number of the cab, say No. 999, he has a certain hold upon cabby, a mode of binding him over to good-behaviour. But very few people do this, least of all such folks as have the remarkable quality of leaving their property behind them. We may be pretty certain that persons who so foolishly forgot the parcel of tobacconists' goods, the green fancy work-box, the numerous black bags, the black portmanteau, and the patterns of cloth, have not usually the forethought necessary for taking the number of their cab. They are thinking of other things when they enter; they are thinking of other things when they alight; the property is

lost, and then they get bewildered. Sometimes they advertise how much they will give to the restorer of the lost property; sometimes they take refuge in the vague 'handsomely rewarded.' Concerning the 'Plan for saving the Atlantic Cable' (probably a manuscript intended for the press), let us hope that it is found by this time; the welfare of two continents may perchance depend upon it.

Cabby, as we have said, thinks he ought to keep the waifs and strays thus found in his vehicle; he may not say so, but he thinks so, nevertheless. The commissioners of police entertain a different opinion. Any property left in a cab, in accordance with an express clause in an express act of parliament, must be taken by the driver to the nearest police station, within twenty-four hours, unless claimed and restored before that time. The losers of the property must make application at the office of the commissioners of police in Great Scotland Yard. If already in the hands of the police, and if sufficiently described and identified, the property will be delivered up on payment of any expenses incurred, and of such *douceur* to the driver as may be determined by the commissioners. We can all of us easily understand how varied are the circumstances which may prevent the loser from making formal application at a particular office, and how much his chance is lessened if he has taken no note of the number of the cab. Hence the advertisements in the daily papers, which cabby no doubt occasionally profits by. Even with all the irregularities in this matter, it is said that the lost property restored by cabmen amounts in value to ten thousand pounds in a year.

There is much that is curious and anomalous in cabby's position. He says the law will not allow him to be a free-trader; seeing that the price for his services, the fare per mile, is determined for him whether he will or not. The public, on the other hand, declare that he is a free-trader, who makes free with more than his proper fare whenever an opportunity offers for so doing. The legislature and the magistracy seem to be deeply impressed with an opinion that cabby is not to be trusted.

This cab-law is a remnant of an old state of things, that has lasted longer in this particular branch of trade than in most others. Hackney-coaches began to be used in London towards the end of the reign of James I.; Taylor, the Water-poet, was a bitter enemy to them, on account of their interference with his trade as a waterman. He spoke in mockery of 'two leash of oyster-wives who hired a coach to carry them to the Green Goose Fair at Stratford the Bow; and as they were hurried between Aldgate and Mile End, they were so be-madam'd, be-mistress'd, and ladyfied by the beggars, that the foolish women began to swell with a proud supposition of imaginary greatness, and gave all their money to the mendicant cansters.' In another place, he spoke of the unfitmess of the ill-paved streets and roads for the reception of such vehicles: 'It is a most uneasy kind of passage in coaches on the paved streets of London, wherein men and women are so tossed, tumbled, jumbled, rumbled, and crossing of kennels, dunghills, and uneven ways.' These coaches seem to have been kept for hire in the yards or stables of the owners; but in 1634, one Captain Bailey, quitting the sea for the land, established a coach stand. He provided four hackney-coaches, put the drivers in livery, and appointed them to take their station near the May Pole in the Strand; he laid down a tariff of fares which the men were to charge. What became of the gallant captain, we do not know; but the system evidently suited the public, for other speculators started in the same line. Charles I., and after him Cromwell, tried, by proclamation, to keep down the number of hackney-coaches, but all in vain; the people liked them, and would have them. 'A century ago, there were no less than a thousand of these vehicles in the metropolis. The government deemed it a good opportunity to get a little revenue out of them, in the form of licence-duty.

They were, throughout the long reign of George III., divided into two classes—the hackney-coach, to accommodate four persons (or six on a pinch); and the hackney-*chariot*, to accommodate two: the vehicles being drawn by two horses each. O the fun that used to be made of old jarvey! He took life easily. He buried himself in a multiplicity of capes. In cold weather, with his every-way 'great' coat upon him, he realised to the life Tom Hood's picture of a stage-coachman—

With back too broad to be conceived
By any narrow mind.

When he was having his bit or his sup at the nearest hostelry, he was not wont to hurry himself to attend to a 'fare.' Why should he disturb his own comfort to provide comfort for others? Why, indeed! Tom and Jerry were wont to play him tricks; harlequins are known to have bewildered him by jumping in and out of the windows as soon as his back was turned; and ventriloquists perplexed him by making him believe that half-a-dozen people at the very least were in his coach.

Cabby, as we now know him, was born in the year 1823. In other words, the Parisian *cabriolet* was introduced into London in that year. The old jarvey fought a fierce battle against it, but was ultimately obliged to yield; the new vehicle was cleaner, swifter, and cheaper than the old, which it gradually superseded. How the word *cabriolet* became shortened into *cab*, need not be told. But what an odd lot those first cabs were! The

builders did not know where to put the driver; they perched him here, they poked him there, to ascertain how best a single-horse vehicle could be balanced on the supporting framework. The first cab was a kind of open-hooded chaise, in which the driver and the fare sat side by side on the same seat. A comic song, greatly in favour at that time, spoke of it as

A thing with a kiver to it,
Called a cabriolet.

To this succeeded another form of cab with a curious little seat on the right-hand side of the vehicle, leaving room for two passengers on the principal seat. Next was introduced a queer-looking affair, very much like a slice from an omnibus, with the driver in front, a door behind, and two seats to hold one person each, sitting sideways as in an omnibus. Then came the four-wheeled cab, the 'four-wheeler' that has flourished ever since, the most successful and generally useful of all the varieties. By affording space for four passengers, cabby has an opportunity of earning more than by the smaller vehicles that preceded it. Lastly, appeared the patent cab, with the low frame, the large wheels, the open front, the fast-trotting horse, and the perched-up seat behind, on which cabby sits in rather a dare-devil manner—ready to pitch head-foremost over his cab on the smallest provocation. Mr Hansom was the first patentee of cabs in this form; and *Hansom*s they have been ever since.

Cabby was brought under act of parliament in 1832; and certainly the legislature seems to have viewed him as a dreadful fellow, binding him down with all sorts of restrictions as to what he might or might not do. Twenty years later, a still more cogent act was passed; and then cabby resolved that he *wouldn't* stand it. He and his *compères* struck in 1853. At one particular midnight hour, all the cabbies drove home to their stables; and Lords and Commons, whose private carriages were not in waiting, had to walk home from the two Houses. Next morning early, not a cab was to be seen. In vain *Paterfamilias* sent his housemaid to find a cab to convey him to a railway station; no cab could Betty find; he had to trudge on foot with his carpet-bag—and lost the train. Counsel, solicitors, merchants, City traders, all who had not private vehicles, were nonplussed. The trains brought their usual numbers of passengers to the metropolis during the day; but there were no cabs to carry away the luggage. The Companies did their best. They ferreted out all the old omnibuses which could with any safety be used; they improvised carts, barrows, and hucksters' vans; porters and messengers of all kinds were at a premium; flies and glass coaches came forth into light; and telegrams were sent to distant towns for all the vehicles that could be spared. This continued three days; after which cabby gave way; he found that society and the press were against him, so he returned to work.

Cabby's position at the present day is not much more definite than in past times. He is sometimes at loggerheads with his employers; on other occasions, he and the police differ in opinion; while he is almost every day of his life at war with the public, either making or receiving accusations. Concerning the cabs themselves, there are more than six thousand now in the metropolis. They

are owned, some by men of considerable means, some by petty jobbers, and others by the men who drive them. A well-built cab, whether 'four-wheeler' or 'Hansom,' costs about fifty pounds, and the harness five pounds; but there are makers, or rather cab-cobblers, who patch up a wretched affair for a very small sum, and let it out on easy terms to cabby, who thus becomes a sort of petty master. The man buys a cheap horse, an equally cheap set of harness, and hires the cobbled cab at ten shillings a week; he may either drive it himself, or let it out at a profit to a driver who has no capital at all. A good horse for a good four-wheeler costs from sixteen to twenty-five pounds; while a Hansom sometimes boasts of a horse worth twenty to thirty pounds; but we need only to glance at some of these wretched animals to see how far their average value is below this. A careful owner will give his horse thirty pounds of provender per day, oats, beans, and chaff; whereas many of the poor beasts have every motive to imitate Oliver Twist, and 'ask for more.' Some owners allow two horses per cab per day, making provision for illness, accidents, &c.; while others have five horses for two cabs. Altogether, there are supposed to be about thirteen thousand horses. The trade is certainly a precarious one. Weather, luck, holidays, accidents, dishonesty—all combine to give a speculative character to it. An owner of several cabs at the east end lost three thousand pounds, and then gave way; the Great Eastern Railway lost four thousand pounds in four years by an injudicious cab-contract; one man lost one thousand six hundred pounds in three months; and another found that six hundred pounds was absorbed in one year for accidents, compensation, and law expenses. The smaller owners are said to be generally in an atmosphere of debt and bill-discounting. The larger owners, who take some pride in their stables as well as in their vehicles and horses, employ one horse-keeper to every six horses; but sometimes one poor drudge is required to look after ten horses.

The drivers themselves are subject to as many uncertainties as their employers. Sometimes cabby keeps about one-third of the gross earnings, giving two-thirds to the owner. At other times, a sort of tariff is laid down, to the effect that he must bring home a certain definite sum to his master every day; this definite sum is named so low as eight shillings for a four-wheeler, and ten for a Hansom, and so high as sixteen shillings for the former, and eighteen for the latter. It is evident that these discrepancies point to wide differences in the masters, the men, the horses, and the cabs. It is popularly said that cabby gets about three shillings a day; if this be all, then we must say he works very hard for his money—early and late, rain and snow, wind and sleet; but it is scarcely possible that this can be the average. Some of the men are brutal to the horses, dishonest to the owners, and insolent to the public; and it is rather hard to the respectable cabby that his good name should be tarnished by being mixed up with these roughs. The larger owners keep a kind of black-book among themselves, containing the names of men who have been found faithless and unreliable. Sometimes the owner loses considerably by these fellows. The *Times*, in connection with some curious statistics relating to the cab-trade, lately stated: 'A newly-engaged driver kept a valuable horse and good cab out for eighteen hours, during

which time he had been to Hounslow and elsewhere, having a spree with a set of roughs. He was caught by his master at two o'clock in the morning, drunk inside his cab, with a rough on the box furiously driving him about. When brought to the police-court, he was only fined five shillings—paid, of course, out of what money belonging to his master he had in his pocket. In this case, the master lost his horse, which was never again of any use, and the police gained five shillings fine, which was really the master's.' The loiterers, the cabmen who tout for customers instead of going to a stand, are not to be trusted; their cabs are generally wretched things, hired at a small rental. Most police cases against cabmen are said to relate to these loiterers. Licences to cabmen are given too readily. A badge is given for five shillings to a man with a recommendation from some shopkeeper or other, without in any way testing whether it is worthily bestowed.

There is something clumsy and ineffective about all this. Why should cabs and cab-drivers be subject to so many anomalies?

MIRK ABBEY.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.—RALPH'S APPEAL.

HOWEVER Dr Haldane, at my Lady's own request, may have misrepresented to the young folks at the Abbey the motives which had caused her flight, he told them truth as respected Derrick. That unfortunate man had indeed met with the frightful mischance described. When he left Mary Forest on the previous night, his mind confused with vague revengeful passion, and his brain muddled with blows, as well as with the spirits he had of late taken in such quantities, and the effects of which were beginning to tell upon his exhausted frame, he had staggered up Mirkland Hill almost like one in a dream. The night was pitchy dark, and although ever and anon a burst of light came forth from the fireworks in the Abbey grounds, they were of course perfectly useless for his guidance. The top of the hill being quite bare of trees, was less obscure than the way he had already come, and in any other circumstances he could scarce have come to harm; but as it was, stumbling blindly on with his head low, he entered the mill-yard through that fatal gap in the wall, without even knowing he had left the high-road. The very roaring of the sails, which revolved dangerously near the ground, might have warned him, but that his ears were already occupied with the seething and tumult of his own brain; and when the terrible thing struck him, before which he went down upon the instant as the ox falls before the poleaxe, he never so much as knew from what he had received his hurt. There he lay for more than an hour, underneath the whirling sails, which one after another came round to peer over his haggard face, gashed with that frightful wound. The lad in charge knew nothing of what had happened, being engaged in the top story watching the fireworks in the park beneath; but about midnight he stopped the mill, and descending with his lantern, its rays by chance fell upon Ralph's prostrate body. Some persons returning from the festivities at the Abbey happened to be going by at that very time, and with their assistance he was

carried across the road to the lodge at Belcomb (there being no sort of accommodation for one in his condition at the mill), and from thence to Madame de Castellan's little cottage.

That lady was for the time, as she had stated in her letter to Sir Richard, the sole inhabitant of Belcomb; but with the injured man, old Rachel and her husband the gatekeeper of course arrived, and the former did what she could as sick-nurse until the arrival of Dr Haldane, for whom a messenger was at once despatched. The old Frenchwoman, who was aroused with difficulty, and characteristically kept them waiting at the door while she made herself fit for the reception of company, was so shocked and terrified by what had happened, that she was at first of no use at all. She had expressed herself in broken English as being very glad to be of any service to the poor sufferer while they were bearing him within, and had even busied herself in procuring hot water and bandages; but no sooner did she catch sight of his ghastly face, seamed with that cruel gash, than all her resolution appeared to desert her, and she swooned away. By the time the doctor arrived, however, she had established herself in the sick-room, and although he had described her as incapable of doing much in the way of tendance, she was at least doing her best.

As for Ralph, he lay breathing stertorously, but quite motionless and unconscious. His mighty chest rose and fell, but by no means equably; his large brown hairy hands lay outstretched before him on the white coverlet; his face washed clean indeed from the recent blood-stains, but with the tangled beard still clotted with gore. It seemed strange that that powerful English frame of his should lie there so helplessly, while Madame, with her snow-white hair and delicate fragile hands, was ministering to him with such patient care; she that must have been his senior, one would have thought to look at them, by at least twenty years. Perhaps it was the sense of this contrast which caused the doctor to glance from the one to the other so earnestly, even before he commenced his examination of the wounded man.

'Will he live?' asked Madame in English. 'God knows,' added she with trembling accents, 'that I have no other wish within my heart but to hear you say "Yes."'

'Of course, Madame,' returned the other with meaning, 'I do not pay you so ill a compliment as to suppose you to wish him dead, because he inconveniences you by his presence here; but I cannot say "Yes" or "No." He is terribly hurt. The spine is injured; and there are ribs broken which I cannot even look to now. But it is here!—he pointed to the forehead—"where the worst danger lies: unhappily, the mischief has been done when he was—in the worst possible state to bear such a blow in such a place.'

'Does he know, doctor?'—

'He knows nothing, Madame; perhaps he may never know. You must not speak so much, however; or, if so, pray use your native tongue. It is better, if consciousness does return, that the brain should be kept quite quiet. I think you had better retire to your room, Madame, and leave myself and Rachel to manage.'

'Yes, yes, we can do very well, lady,' assented old Rachel. 'This is not a place for such as Madame, is it, sir? If we could only get Mistress Forest, now; she is first-rate at nursing; she nursed me for three whole nights last winter, when I was

most uncommon bad with the shivers, caught a-comeing from Dalwynch in the spring-cart—and the cover on it, when it don't rain, is worse than nothing, for there's such a draught drives right through it'—

'Yes, yes,' interrupted the doctor impatiently; 'you are quite right, Rachel. We'll send for Mistress Forest the first thing in the morning: she can easily be spared from the Abbey, now my Lady's away.'

'Ah, the more's the pity!' returned old Rachel. 'And this looks almost like a judgment, don't it, sir, that this poor man, who was so rude to my dear mistress—or wanted to be, as I have heard—should have been carried in under her own roof here, feet foremost'—

'Be silent, woman!' broke in Madame de Castellan with severity. 'We have nothing to do with Lady Lisgard's affairs here. This house is my house for the present; this wounded man is my guest.'

'Speak French, speak French, Madame,' exclaimed the doctor imploringly. 'Did you not hear me say so before? You had much better return to bed.'

'No, no,' returned Madame, in her native tongue; 'I cannot do it. I will be prudent, I will be careful for the future; but I cannot leave him, until, at all events, Mary Forest comes. O send her—send her, and let this woman go, whose presence is intolerable to me.'

Accordingly, in his visit to Belcomb about noon next day, the doctor brought Mistress Forest over with him, who was at once installed as Ralph Derrick's sick-nurse; old Rachel being sent home to the lodge. No change had as yet taken place in the sufferer; but the doctor's practised eye perceived that one was impending. This time, he made a long and earnest examination of his patient.

'Will he live?' asked Madame again, when he had finished, with the same earnestness, nay, even anguish as before.

'There is hope; yes, I think there is hope,' returned the doctor cautiously.

'Thank God for that; I thank Him for His great mercy!' ejaculated Madame with clasped hands and upturned eyes.

'Who is that?' inquired a hoarse voice from the bed. The words were indistinct, and uttered with difficulty, but on every ear within that room they smote with the most keen significance. The two women turned deadly pale; and even the doctor's finger shook as he placed it to his lips, in sign that they should keep silent.

'Hush, my good friend,' said he to the wounded man, whose eyes were now open wide, and staring straight before him: 'you must not talk just now; speaking is very bad for you.'

'Who is that who was thanking God because there was hope of my life?' reiterated Ralph. 'Neither man nor woman has any cause to do that, I'm sure; while some have cause enough to pray that I were dead already, or at least had lost my wits. Doctor—for I suppose you are a doctor—have I lost my wits or not? Am I a sane man, or one not in my right mind?'

'Hush, hush; you are sane enough of course, except to keep on talking thus when I tell you that to speak is to do yourself the most serious harm.'

'You hear him—all you in the room here,'

continued the sick man in a voice which, though low and feeble, had a sort of malignant triumph in it, which grated on the ear. 'This doctor says I am quite sane. He says also that there is hope of my life—just a shadow of a hope. He is wrong there, for I shall die. But, anyhow, I lie in peril of death, and yet in my right mind. Therefore, what I say is to be credited—that, I believe, is the law; and even the law is right sometimes. What I am about to say is Truth—every word of it. I wish to make a statement.—No, I will take no medicines; pen and ink, if I could only write, would be more welcome than the Elixir of Life, but I cannot.' Here a groan was wrung from his parched and bloodless lips. 'O Heaven! the pain I suffer; it is the foretaste of the hell for which I am bound!'

'O sir,' ejaculated Mistress Forest, moving to the bedfoot, so as to shew herself to his staring eyes, 'think of heaven, not of hell. Ask for pardon of God, and not of revenge upon man.'

'Ah, it is you, is it, good wench? I thought that no one else could have wished me well so piously a while ago. You did me an ill turn, although you did not mean to do so, when you let me out of the Cage last night. Was it last night, or a week, or a month ago?'

'It was only last night,' interposed the doctor gravely. 'Now, do not ask any more questions, or I shall have to forbid them being answered. It is my duty to tell you that with every word you speak your life is ebbing away.'

'Then there is the less time to lose,' answered Derrick obstinately. 'As for answering me, I do not want that. All I ask of you is, that you shall listen; and what I say, I charge you all, as a dying man, to remember—to repeat—to proclaim.' Here he paused from weakness.—'Doctor,' gasped he, 'a glass of brandy—a large glass, for I am used to it. I must have it.—Good. I feel stronger now. Do you think, if you took down my words in writing, that I could manage'—here a shudder seemed to shake his poor bruised and broken frame, as though with the anticipation of torture.—'to set down my name at the bottom of it?'

'No, my poor fellow—no. You could no more grasp a pen at present than you could rise and leave this house upon your feet. You must feel that yourself.'

'I do—I do,' groaned Ralph. 'It is all the more necessary, then, that you should listen. My real name is not that one by which I have been known at Mirk. It is not Derrick, but Gavestone: the same name, good wench, by which your mistress went before she was married to Sir Robert Liscard. But that was not her maiden name—no, no. Do you not wonder while I tell you this? or did I speak of it last night, when I was mad with drink and rage?'

'You said something of the sort, sir; but I knew it all before that. You are my Lady's husband, and Sir Richard and the rest are all her bastard children—that is, in the eye of the law.'

'You knew it, did you?' returned Ralph after a pause. 'You were in the plot with her against me, then? I am glad of that. I should be sorry to have left the world fooled to the last; for I thought that you at least were an honest wench, although all the world else were liars. So, after all, you knew it, did you? Well, at all events, it is news to the doctor here.'

'No, sir,' returned the old gentleman, quietly applying some *Eau de Cologne* and water to the

patient's brow; 'I must confess I knew it also.'

'And yet you told nobody!' ejaculated Ralph. 'You suffered this imposture to go on unexposed!'

'I only heard of the facts you speak of—from Lady Liscard's own lips—two days ago at furthest,' returned Dr Haldane; 'and I certainly told nobody, since the telling could do no good to any human being—not even to yourself, for instance—and would bring utter ruin and disgrace upon several worthy persons.'

'Ha, ha!' chuckled the patient hoarsely; 'you are right there. Disgrace upon that insolent Sir Richard, and on that ungrateful puppy, Master Walter.'

'True,' continued the doctor gravely; 'and upon Miss Letty, who is dear to all who know her, but dearest to the poor and friendless.'

'I am sorry for her,' said Derrick; 'but I am not sorry for my Lady—she that could look me in the face, and hear me tell the story of our early love, and of her own supposed death, to avert which I so gladly risked my life, and all without a touch of pity.'

'No, sir,' with much pity, broke forth Mistress Forest. 'I myself know that her heart bled for you. She never loved Sir Robert as she did you, ungrateful man! She loved you dead and alive; she loves you now, although you pursue her with such cruel hate, and would bring shame upon all her innocent children.'

'Ay, why not?' answered Ralph. 'Have they not had their day, and is it not my turn at last? Who is the woman behind the curtains? Let her stand forth, that I may see her; she, at least, is not a creature of "my Lady," like you and the doctor here, and ready, for her sake, to hide the truth and perpetuate my wrongs. Let that woman stand forth, I say.'

CHAPTER XXXIX.—DYING WORDS.

Thus adjured, Madame de Castellan stepped forward to the same position which Mary Forest had occupied at the foot of the bed: nowhere else could Ralph see her, for he was on his back just as they had first laid him, and could not turn his face a hairbreadth to left or right.

'Who are you?' asked he bluntly. 'I do not remember having seen your face at Mirk.'

'They call me Madame de Castellan,' replied the old lady in good English, 'and I live here at Belcomb by favour of Sir Richard Liscard.'

'Ah, you have reason, then, to be friends with him and his,' returned the sick man bitterly. 'You will none of you see me righted. Curse you all!'

'I will not see you wronged, if I can help it, sir,' replied the Frenchwoman solemnly, but keeping her eyes fixed always upon the floor.

'Will you not? Well, you have an honest face, I own; but faces are so deceptive! Mistress Forest's face yonder, for instance, is pleasant enough to look upon, but still she plays me false. Master Walter's again—why, he seems to have robbed an angel of his smile, and yet he is base-hearted like the rest; and, lastly, there was my Lucy—not mine now—no, no; but what a sweet look was hers! And there was guile and untruth for you! But that is what I have to tell you. You have said you will not see me wronged, and I must believe you, since there is none else to trust to here. Besides, you are too old to lie; you will be

called to your own account too soon to dare to palter with a dying man. Yes, I am dying fast—More brandy, doctor—brandy. Ah, that's life itself!—And yet, although you are so old, Madame, I dare say you remember your youthful days, when you were fair—for you *were* fair, I see—and courted. You were not without your lover, I warrant?'

'I was loved, sir,' returned Madame, in low but steadfast tones.

'And did you marry the man you loved?'

'I did, sir. My husband was very dear to me, God knows, though we did not live long together.'

'He died young, did he?'

'Alas, yes, and I was left alone in the world without a friend or a home.'

'His memory did not fade so quickly that you could love and marry another man at once, I suppose?'

'His memory never faded,' replied the old lady gravely, 'for it has not faded now; but after an interval of three years, I married another man.'

'And loved him like the other?'

'No, sir; there is only one true love—at least for a woman. But I was a dutiful wife for the second time; and there were children born to me—three children—inexpressibly dear; and when I lost their father, who loved me, though I could only give him grateful duty in return, I had something to live for still.'

Whether the grief-laden tone of Madame touched him, or the sad story she was telling, Ralph's accents seemed to lose something of their bitterness when he again broke silence.

'But if, lady, your first husband and true lover had, by some wondrous chance, returned, as it might be, from the very grave, and you were satisfied that it was he indeed, and knew him, although he knew you not, and he was living a bad life among bad company, with no one in all the world to call him friend, would you not then have held your arms out to him, and cried: "Come back, come back!" and told him how you had loved him all along?'

'No, sir; not so. If I had been alone, like him, with only my own feelings to consult, I might, indeed, have so behaved; for my heart would have yearned towards him, as it does, Heaven knows, even now. But, sir, in such a case there would not only have been Love to be obeyed, but Duty. If this man were living the wild life you speak of, would he not have made a bad father to my poor children (left in my sole charge and guardianship by a just and noble man), an evil ruler of a well-ordered house, a bad example to all whom I would have had respect him? Nay, worse, would not my acknowledgment of him—which I should otherwise be eager to make, and willing to take upon myself the shame that might accrue to me therefrom—would not that, I say, have brought disgrace on those who had earned it not—have made my own children, lawfully begotten, as I had thought, all Bastards, and soiled the memory of an honest man, their father?'

A long silence here ensued, broken only by the sick man's painful breathing, and the sobs of Mistress Forest, who strove in vain to restrain her tears.

'I thank you, Madame,' said Ralph very feebly: 'you have been pleading without knowing it for one who— Do you see these tears? I did not think to ever weep again. Either your gentle voice—reminding me of the very woman of whom I

had meant to speak so harshly—or perhaps it is the near approach of death which numbs these fingers, that would else be clutching for their revenge—I know not; but I now wish no one harm.'

Doctor, you must feed this flame once more; let me but speak a very few words, and then I shall have no more use for Life.—Mary, good wench, come here. You will shortly see again that mistress whom you love so well, and have so honestly served. Tell her— Nay, don't cry; I do not need your tears to assure me that you feel for poor Ralph Gavestone—castaway though he be. I heard your "Thank God" when the doctor said (though he was wrong there) that there was hope for me. Those were very honest words, Mary.'

'I did not say them!' ejaculated the waiting-maid earnestly. 'O Madame, tell him who it was that said them.'

'It was I,' murmured Madame de Castellan, coming close to the bedside, and kneeling down there.

'You, lady! Why should you pray so earnestly that I might live, whose death would profit many, but whose recovery none?'

'Because I have wronged you, Ralph. Yes, Ralph! You know me now. Do not ask to see my patched and painted face again, because it is not mine, but listen to my voice, which you remember. I am your own wife, Lucy, and I love you, husband mine.'

'She loves me still,' murmured the dying man: 'she owns herself my wife, thank God, thank God!' The tears rolled down his cheeks, and over his rough and ghastly face a mellow softness stole, like the last gleam of sunset upon a rocky hill. Dr Haldane rose and noiselessly left the room, beckoning Mary to follow. The dying husband and his wife were left to hold their last interview alone.

'What I have been telling you, Ralph, as the history of another, is my own. I have never forgotten you. I have loved you all along. Forgive me, if I seem to have sacrificed you to—to those it was my duty to shield from shame. I could not bear to see disgrace fall upon my children, and so I fled from them, in hopes to save them from it. And yet I loved them so that I could not altogether leave them, but took this cottage in another name, and under this disguise, in order to be near them.* O lover, husband, who saved my life at peril of his own, a mother's heart was my excuse—be generous and noble as of old—forgive me!'

'Forgive you!' gasped the sick man: 'nay, forgive me! How could I ever have sought to do you wrong! My own dear Lucy!' In an instant she had plucked away so much of her disguise as was about her face and head, and was leaning over him with loving eyes.

'How many years ago, wife, is it since you kissed me last?' murmured the dying man. 'My outward sight is growing very dim; I do not recognise

* The author having been informed by a critical friend that he has exposed himself to the charge of plagiarism, by representing Lady Gisard as thus assuming the character of another person, begs to state—first, that he has never had the opportunity of reading the powerful novel, *East Lynne* (wherein, as he understands, a similar device is employed); and secondly, that the idea of the metamorphosis is taken from a short story (written by himself) which was published in *Chambers's Journal*, under the title of 'Change for Gold,' so long ago as 1854.

my Lucy's face, although I know 'tis she; but I see her quite clearly sitting in the cottage-porch beside the shining river. How it roars among the rounded stones, and how swiftly it is running to the sea! Round my neck, love, you will presently find the little locket with that dead sprig of fuchsia in it which you gave me when we plighted troth. Let that be buried with me; I have had no love or care for sacred things, but perhaps— They say that God is very merciful; and since He sees into our inmost thoughts, He will know with what reverence I held that simple gift, because it was your own, and you were His. I loved you most, I swear, because you were so pure and good, Lucy. Ah me! I wonder, in the world to come, if I or he'—

A piercing cry broke from my Lady's lips. 'Spare me, Ralph—spare me!'

'Yes, yes. It was done for the best, I know. Don't fret, dear heart. Of course you thought me Dead. For certain, I am dying now—fast, fast. Thank God for that! It would have been a woeful thing, having thus found my Own, to have left her straightway, and taken my lone way through the world again, knowing the thing I know. But I would have done it, never fear. Are you sure of those two, Lucy—that were here a while ago—quite sure? My dying curse upon them, if they breathe to human ear our sacred secret! They love you? That is well. I would have all the world to love you; and may all those you love repay that priceless gift with tender duty.' Here he paused, as if to gather together his little remaining strength; and when he spoke again, it was with a voice so low that my Lady had to place her ear quite close to his pale lips to catch his words. But she did hear them, every one. 'The prayers of a man like me may avail nothing, Lucy, but at least they can do no harm. God bless Sir Richard—yes, yes! God bless Master Walter's handsome face! God bless Miss Letty! That's what I said on Christmas-eve with Steve and the rest of them, not knowing whom I spoke of, and I say it now, for are they not my Lucy's dear ones! God bless you, my dear wife. Kiss—kiss.'

Those were the last words of wild Ralph Gavestone. When the doctor and Mistress Forest re-entered that silent room, my Lady was upon her knees beside the pillow; she had closed the dead man's eyes, and folded his palms together, and taken from his neck the locket, but to be returned to him by a trusty hand when the time came.

CURIOSITIES OF NATURAL HISTORY.*

THIS work belongs to that delightful class of which the literature of natural history now presents numerous examples, and of which White's *Natural History of Selborne* was the first, familiar in style, unsystematic, yet truly scientific—the record of original observations, not set down in mere dry notes, but told in pleasant words, as men might tell the story to their friends. Mr Buckland writes as one who is on the best of terms with his readers, takes them

with him in his excursions, and into the society of his friends, introduces them into the very scene of his observations, and makes every subject interesting. His knowledge of natural history is extensive and intimate; he is capable of entering into the most difficult scientific questions; but much of the charm of his work is from the delight which he takes in watching the habits of animals. Mr Buckland does not study mere skins and dry bones, although no one knows better the importance of comparative anatomy, into the investigation of which he sometimes leads us, pointing out the wondrous adaptation of organs to their purposes, and the manifold variety of the Creator's works.

The new series of the *Curiosities of Natural History* embraces a somewhat wider field than the former ones. It is not exclusively devoted to the inferior animals. Man himself is the subject of some interesting papers, which describe abnormal peculiarities of the physical frame, or bring before us strange scenes and remarkable characters. There are also papers on miscellaneous subjects, some of them antiquarian.

The first paper in these volumes is entitled 'Robinson Crusoe at Portsmouth.' The principal subject of it is an old sailor, disabled by the loss of a hand, whom Mr Buckland found paddling about in a small boat at Portsmouth, spending most of his time on the water, and deriving his chief means of subsistence, as well as his chief enjoyment, from hand-line fishing. 'Such a boat it was!—more about the size and shape of the half of a house water-butt than a boat; so rotten, too, that a good kick would have sent it into a thousand bits. The planks started in many places, and there were great holes in the sides, mended with bits of old canvas, leather, and tin. Her bottom was covered with sea-grass and shells; yet in this boat old Robinson Crusoe faces weather in which no ordinary boat could live; he has no fear of the waves.

"I think the waves knows me, sir," said he; "they never hurts me and my boat. We swims over their tops like an egg-shell, and I am out a-fishing in all weathers, particular when a storm abates a bit, because the water thickens, and the fish bites. My boat never ships a drop of water, not so much as there is in that 'ere rum-bottle." The old man winked as he said this. "If I was a rich man, and got a thousand a year, I would still go out a-fishing, for I likes the sport; and I'd go to Greenwich Hospital, but then I'd lose my fishing. I am a very poor man, but I must have my fishing."

Robinson Crusoe was in the practice of fishing where wrecks lay at the bottom of the sea, and with greater success than elsewhere. The reason of this is not difficult to discover. Sea-weeds and barnacles grow upon the wrecks, and marine creatures of many kinds, the food of fish, soon become abundant there. Fish therefore also become abundant. Might not a hint be taken from this for a new expedient in pisciculture? It would be too expensive to sink old ships, in order to procure cod and whiting; but might not some one, having facilities for the purpose, try the experiment of sinking a few worthless trees or bushes, with all their branches, on some muddy or sandy sea-bottom?

We cannot notice all the papers in their order. We pass over the second, 'A Visit to Knaresborough,

* *Curiosities of Natural History*. A New Series. By Frank Buckland, M.A., late Student of Christ Church, Oxford, and Assistant-surgeon 24 Life Guards. Two vols. London, Richard Bentley. 1866.

Yorkshire,' which gives a brief account of the famous Dripping Well. The third is entirely antiquarian; it is very interesting, and shews that Mr Buckland has not forgotten, in his zealous pursuit of natural history, the classic acquirements of his early years. It is entitled 'A Roman Race-course.' Visiting Borobridge in Yorkshire, an ancient Roman station, Mr Buckland supposes himself to have discovered a Roman race-course, of which the three great blocks of stone, called the *Devil's Arrows*, were the *meta*, or goals; and he felicitously imagines the scene of a Roman Derby-day there, the assemblage of the Roman nobles and gentry residing at Aldborough, with the officers from the great garrison at York, the jockeys and the charioteers; concluding with an accident from the crash of a chariot-wheel on the biggest of the Devil's Arrows—the cry for the assistant-surgeon of the Ninth Legion, who, of course, was present at the races in the *Harmamaza*, or regimental drag, from York—the queer surgical instruments and ointments!

In the paper entitled 'Bird-catchers,' we are made acquainted with one of the modes by which song-birds are caught for the London market—by the use of a stuffed bird, limed twigs, and a call-bird. But we learn also, what is much more interesting, that a difference of song can be recognised in the birds of the same species inhabiting different districts, even in the vicinity of London. Mr Jesse, in one of his works, states his belief that there are provincial dialects among birds, and tells us that the song of a Devonshire thrush is very different from that of a thrush in the neighbourhood of London. The subject is very curious, and deserves further attention.—A paper on 'Nightingale-catching' is chiefly interesting from what relates to the imitation of the nightingale's song by human lips. Mr Buckland met with a nightingale-catcher who possessed this power in an astonishing degree, and of course made use of it to attract nightingales. Mr Buckland therefore believes the old story of a man being specially retained by the proprietors of Vauxhall or Spring Gardens, in days gone by, to sit in a bush and sing like a nightingale. He supposes that 'both Mr *Spectator* and Sir Roger de Coverley were grossly humbugged' with the singing of nightingales in Vauxhall. 'I am curious,' he says, 'to know how the "choirs of birds" were managed. I wonder, too, how much the human nightingale who sang under a bush in Vauxhall used to get as his weekly salary from the proprietor of the gardens, who used to boast: "Hear 'em, sir, why, you're sure to hear 'em. We keeps a nightingale."'

As might be expected, a considerable part of one of these volumes is devoted to the subject of the salmon. We have an interesting account of a visit to Galway and Connemara, in which notes on the natural history of the salmon are intermixed with notes on other subjects of natural history, with incidents and conversations, and with animated descriptions of scenery. We are carried from Galway to Lough Corrib, the Cong Pass, Lough Mask, and Maam, a barren and desolate place on the Ultima Thule of civilisation, where 'glorious mountain-tops pour down crystal streams, the nursery and breeding-ground of salmon-fry innumerable.' The Cong Pass is a canal, cut at great expense by Mr Ashworth, through the spur of the mountain which separates Lough Mask from Lough Corrib, in the hope of converting Lough Mask and its tributaries into breeding-ground for salmon;

the natural channel by which the waters of Lough Mask flow into Lough Corrib being such that salmon cannot ascend by it. It still remains to be seen if they can ascend by the artificial channel. A further experiment in fish-culture has been made here, in the formation of a large breeding-pond for salmon, in which three hundred thousand impregnated eggs were deposited on the gravel, and in due time the pond became well filled with salmon-fry. But the result exemplifies one of the difficulties which attend fish-culture. The bottom of the pond became covered with mud, and soon swarmed with water-beetles and the larvæ of dragon-flies, by which the young salmon were devoured, so that when Mr Buckland visited it, 'although it was a bright clear day, nothing could be seen moving in the pond but a few little salmon,' all that were left of the multitude concerning which so much hope had been cherished. Catching some of the water-beetles, Mr Buckland put one into a bottle of water, into which he also put a little salmon.

'Spying him from below, the beetle rose straight up at the unfortunate little fish, making direct for him—that peculiar, savage, determined rush that one sees when a bull-dog is slipped at his enemy. In an instant the beetle rose above the salmon, and then pouncing down upon him as a hawk upon an unsuspecting lark, dug its tremendous, scythe-like, horny jaws right into the back of the poor little salmon. The little salmon—a plucky little fellow—fought hard for his life, and swam round and round, up and down, hither and thither, making every effort to escape this terrible murderer, who stuck close as wax to his victim; but it was no use, he could not free himself from his gripe; and while the poor little wretch was giving the few last flutterings of his tail, the water-beetle proceeded coolly to pick out its left eye, and to devour it at once with evident gusto.'

The beetle was condemned to death, and promptly executed by the substitution of whisky for water in the bottle; but as there was no possibility of getting a sufficient quantity of potheen, or administering it to all the beetles in the pond, and the case of the salmon in it was evidently hopeless, the sluice was opened, and they were allowed to take their way to the safer waters of Lough Corrib.

In his observations on the salmon-fishery at Galway, Mr Buckland discovered the explanation of the fact, that the salmon in the sea at the mouth of the river are caught by nets only twelve feet deep, whilst the water is thirty feet deep. The reason is, that the fresh-water of the river floats over the salt-water of the sea, and that the salmon, about to ascend the river, prefer the fresh water to the salt. Yet it appears that the salmon feeds chiefly in the sea, and there only, increases much in size.

We are compelled to pass over many things in these amusing volumes, but cannot forbear from noticing the paper on Porpoises. It relates the endeavours made to procure a live porpoise for the Zoological Gardens of London. Several porpoises have been brought to the Gardens, but they have all died soon after their arrival there. Mr Buckland tells us what anxious care was taken to keep the skin moist by sponging with salt water during a railway journey, and how he administered doses of ammonia and of brandy to an exhausted porpoise in the tank at the Gardens, with evident benefit, although the creature was

too far gone to be saved by such means. But more interesting than this, and far more important, is the account of the anatomy of the porpoise given in the Appendix. The organs of locomotion are very particularly described, and the apparatus by which this air-breathing animal is fitted for its thoroughly aquatic life.

'Now we come to the most difficult problem of all—namely, how to prevent this mammalian air-breathing animal from being every minute of his life subject and very liable to death by drowning, and a most beautiful bit of mechanism we have before us. A porpoise has been most appropriately called a "sea-pig"—a "hog-fish," and when he was on the bench being operated on, his carcass was amazingly like that of a great fat bacon pig. We will therefore take a pig's skull, and make our comparison. In the pig, the nostril runs along the whole of the long nose, through a hole made there on purpose by nature; in the nearly as long-nosed porpoise this hole is soldered up, the upper jaw is quite solid, and with the under jaw is devoted solely to the purpose of catching his food. . . . Upon making a section of the skull of a porpoise, we shall find a curved hole bored through its substance by nature, and the windpipe ends (by the larynx) in this hole, and does not prolong itself into the upper jaw at all. The larynx, or Adam's apple, is also very peculiar in shape; it is elongated like a human finger, and fits accurately into the hole in which it works.'

To prevent the water from entering this windpipe, there is at the crescent-shaped opening of it, a valve formed of the skin, which is opened only when the animal wishes to breathe, and is instantly closed again. Within are the two nostrils, but in these are two valvular prominences, which pass, like the bolt of a double lock, right across the nostrils into cavities on the other side, which they fit accurately. Thus, if water should pass through the outer valve, it is prevented from further progress towards the lungs. But even this is not all. There are two large pouches, as large as oranges, and several smaller ones, above the obstructing processes, into which the water must go, there to remain until the porpoise again comes to the surface to breathe, when all the valves are opened, and it is expelled into the air along with the breath from the lungs.

We abstain from any particular notice of the papers—some of them very interesting—on giants, and other human beings exhibited in shows on account of their physical peculiarities, or of those on shows in general, which Mr Buckland seems to make a point of visiting, whenever opportunity occurs, in hope of seeing something really curious. And many things curious, in different points of view, he has seen and describes. He writes most pleasantly of such shows as the Performing Lions, the Performing Fleas, and the Performing Bull. It is really curious that the flea-trainer, the proprietor of the Performing Fleas exhibition, has to pay an average price of threepence per dozen for the fleas, old women supplying most of them; and in an extreme case, has had to pay sixpence for a flea; also that when he visits the provinces, his wife sends him fleas by post, in the corner of an envelope, remote from the stamp, packed in tissue-paper, and, more wonderful still, that he imports them from Russia, packed in pill-boxes in the finest cotton-wool.

As another extraordinary fact concerning the

trade of London, it may be mentioned that Mr Buckland saw in Jamroch's Animal Store, *sic* thousand paroquets, which had been brought in two ships from Australia.

Our author has the tastes of the sportsman, but those of the naturalist prevail over them. He may almost be said to have an affectionate regard for every living creature. More than once he expresses regret that so many sportsmen neglect their opportunities of observing the habits of animals in a state of nature.

He pleads earnestly that the rifle should sometimes be laid down, and the telescope taken up, so that our knowledge of natural history may be extended, even although the game-bag should not be so quickly filled, or the sportsman should not have so many trophies to shew of his success.

Books like the *Curiosities of Natural History* are calculated to diffuse a taste for one of the most interesting and profitable studies that can occupy the human mind. From them also the inexperienced may learn how to observe. Even with regard to the most familiar objects of nature, there is much still to be learned. No one can tell of what importance a single observation may prove, or to what discoveries or what useful applications of knowledge it may lead. And at all events, the observer is brought into contemplation of infinite wisdom and goodness; his own mind is enlarged, elevated, and refined, whilst the record of his observation is a contribution to the common store of knowledge accumulated by mankind.

LOST WILLIE.

IN TWO CHAPTERS.—CHAPTER II.

NEXT morning, after breakfast, when David had gone to the office, and Willie was off to school, I just slipped on my bonnet, and ran across to the station to see old Luke Moffatt's wife, who had a brother that worked on the branch-line, to whom Hugh Sanderson was doubtless well known, and from whom I might, perhaps, be able to ascertain something as to Hugh's general habits and character. I felt now how little I really knew of this man, to whom I had so carelessly given away my heart, and what a different Hugh he might be when out of sight and hearing of those whose good opinion he cared to keep.

'Yes,' Mrs Moffatt said, 'my brother Jesse knows Hugh Sanderson very well, and has known him a many years, and will no doubt be quite able and willing to tell you all you want to know about him. It was only last Sunday was a fortnight, when Jesse came over to see me and my old man, and have a bit of dinner with us, that I said to him as how I thought there was a bit of court-ing going on between you and Mr Hugh (excuse me all the same, Miss). Says he to me: "Then I pity the poor wench, whoever she is; for Hugh Sanderson ain't fit to be the husband of any respectable lass." "Why, how's that?" says I. "You ax me no questions, Mariar, an' I'll tell you no lies," says he; and not another word could I get out of him.'

I would not stay to listen to more, but got the address I wanted, and hurried away. It was a

six miles' walk to the place for which I was bound, and I timed my arrival so as to get there during the dinner-hour. I found fifty or sixty men seated about, some on the embankment, some under the hedges, some with their wives beside them, some alone, all busily engaged on their mid-day meal. I inquired for Jesse Dawkins, and the name was bawled out from one to another, till the owner of it answered for himself.

'Be wi' you in a minute, mum,' he shouted back, waving at me the huge clasp-knife with which he had been carving his dinner; and with that he disposed of his last mouthful, wiped and shut up his knife, swallowed the last drop of beer in the can, kissed his little daughter, and then came striding towards me—a fresh-coloured, shrewd-eyed man, with a look of quiet intelligence about him that reassured me at once.

'If you are Jesse Dawkins, the brother of Mrs Moffatt at Deepvale Station, I want a few minutes' private conversation with you,' I said.

'That's me, mum; an' I be quite at your service,' he answered. 'Step this way, if you please.—Now, mum, what is it?' he said in a kindly way when we were out of hearing of the other men.

'My name is Susannah Deriton,' I said, 'and I am sister-in-law to David Winterburn of Deepvale Station. I and a person well known to you, Mr Hugh Sanderson, were engaged to be married; but a few days ago I heard an accusation brought against Mr Sanderson, which makes me doubt whether I can ever become his wife. Part of this accusation is acknowledged by him to be true, but the remaining part he denies; I have therefore come to you, as to one who knows him well, to satisfy my mind as to the truth or falsehood of the allegations against him.'

'It's a ticklish job sometimes to speak as to another man's character,' said Jesse with a solemn shake of the head.

'Tell me,' said I earnestly, laying my hand on his sleeve, 'if I were your own daughter, and Hugh Sanderson came to you, and asked your consent to my becoming his wife, would you say Yes or No to him?'

'I should say No to him, and shut the door in his face,' said Jesse stoutly.

'Then try to think of me for a little while as if I were your daughter, and answer the few questions I shall put to you truthfully and without fear. Was Hugh Sanderson drunk on Monday evening last, or was he not?'

'He was drunk, sure enough; I never saw him worse.'

'Then you have seen him in the same condition before?'

'Well, I just have; there's no use denying it.'

'Several times?'

'Well, a goodish many. Hugh were allus fond o' his glass, he were, ever since I know'd him.'

'Then how is it that he has never been found out by his employers, and dismissed?'

'Oh, he's cunning enough to get his tipples when the gaffers are out o' the way. Once or twice, old Pennington has lighted on him when he's been a bit screwed, an' then there's been a row, like there was last Monday.'

'Putting aside his habit of taking too much to drink,' said I, 'do you know of anything else to the discredit of Hugh Sanderson which would cause you to hesitate before consenting to accept him as the husband of a child of yours?'

'Why, you see, Hugh ain't good-hearted at bottom,' said Jesse; 'leastways, that's my opinion. I know'd him do one or two shabby tricks by fellows that at one time he was proud to call his friends. Then there's another thing—though, if I weren't old enough to be your father, I should hardly like to speak to you about it.'

'I can guess to what you allude. Judge for yourself whether, in my position, I ought not to hear the story of this other woman.'

'Eh, but you're a sharp un! I said nowt about any other woman. However, you've hit th' right nail on th' head, an' the fax is these: about four year ago, when we were working away down the west o' England, Hugh fell in with a bonny-faced wench, who was barnmaid at a country public. I suppose his soft words an' good looks turned the child's head, an' when he left that part o' the country, she followed him. She says now that Hugh swore to wed her, but Hugh denies that. Anyhow'—

'Thank you; that will do,' I said; 'I don't care to hear more;' and slipping half-a-crown into his horny hand, I bade him good-day, and set my face homeward.

More than ever confirmed in the purpose which I had announced to Hugh the previous evening, I walked onward, in a hard and bitter mood, with many black thoughts coiling like noisome serpents round my heart. My walk was nearly over; I could see the spire of Deepvale Church through the trees, and was close upon that moss-grown stile in the fields by the river where, but a few short months ago, Hugh had asked me to become his wife, when suddenly I saw him coming towards me out of the clump of firs, looking as smiling and buoyant as though our love were but a day old; and a great pang shot through me at the thought that he was lost to me for ever.

'Good-afternoon, pretty one,' he said gaily, as he came up with extended hand. 'They told me at the house that you had gone for a walk, so I thought I should find you if I came this way. I could not rest after the scene of last night, till I had made it up with my darling.—What! refuse my hand? Then we still bear a little malice, do we? Too bad of you, Sussey; on my soul, it is!'

I have said that he was smiling, and so indeed he was; but his smile was not a natural one—it was a wretched artificial smirk; his eyes, too, were blood-shot, and his hands trembled slightly, despite all his efforts to keep them still. Even at that early hour of the day, he had been drinking, and drinking deeply. All my hardness and bitterness melted away as I looked; I had no feeling left but one of sorrow.

'I have already told you, Mr Sanderson, that the tie between us is broken for ever; and you have no right to speak to me thus,' I said. 'Allow me to pass, please.'

'Not quite so fast, young lady,' he said, still blocking up the path, so that I could not advance a step. 'I have dangled after you for your pleasure often enough; to-day, you must wait my pleasure. Have you any objections, Miss Susannah Deriton, to tell me where you have been this fine morning?'

'I have been to Garth Mills.'

'As I thought! To make some inquiry into the character and antecedents of one Hugh Sanderson?'

'Such was certainly the object of my journey,' I said.

'A praiseworthy labour for any young woman! And what have you learned, may I ask?'

'I have learned that you are an habitual drunkard, sir.—And now that you know this, you will perhaps allow me to pass.'

'Gently, Miss Deriton, gently! So you learned that I was an habitual drunkard, eh? But that was not all. You learned something more than that—I can read it in your eyes: something of a sin far blacker, as you look at it, than that other sin of drunkenness. Is it not so?'

'It is,' I said. 'You know what I have heard, there is therefore no occasion for you to allude to it further.—And now, sir, if you have any spark of manhood in you, you will not detain me here any longer against my will.'

'Not detain you here any longer!' he said with an oath. 'By Heaven, I have half a mind to murder you, and bury you in that wood! You cat! You hug yourself, don't you, on your narrow escape from having had a drunkard and a scamp for your husband? Well, maybe you're right; I am not going to dispute the fact. But there's one thing I'd have you bear in mind, Miss Deriton: from this hour, Hugh Sanderson is your enemy; and with me that means a good deal. It means Revenge. If not to-day or to-morrow, if not this year or next year, still at some future time—Revenge! Let me therefore request you not to forget that there is a little score between us, which will one day be settled in full, and in a way that you do not expect. Now go; and may my curse go with you, and cling to you, and never leave you from this hour till the day you die!'

He stepped aside, and glared down on me with baleful eyes, and pointed with outstretched arm the way I was to go. Trembling with affright, I hurried by him, nor ever ventured to glance behind me till I reached the stile which led from the fields into the high-road; then I turned to look, and saw that he was still standing where I had left him, but with folded arms and bent head, as though his scheming brain were already revolving some dark plot against me.

What a miserable time was that which followed! I seemed to have lost at one blow everything that made life worth living for. As for Hugh's threat of vengeance, I set little store by it, knowing that words are often said in passion which in calmer moments are disowned; and I trusted that in time he would learn to think kindly of me, as I thought of him already; for do what I would, I could not bring myself to think hardly of him, although nothing in the world would have induced me ever to engage myself to him again.

I just told Davy that the engagement between myself and Hugh was broken off, and he was considerate enough not to want a long explanation. So we fell back into our old quiet humdrum way of life at the little station-house, as though no such person as Hugh Sanderson had ever existed—only I could not so readily get him out of my thoughts. During that sweet summer of my courtship, I had often felt with a sort of pang as if I were neglecting Willie, although I was not doing so in reality; but Hugh was so much in my mind just then, that I seemed to have no time left to think about any one

else. Now, however, I was free to come back with an undivided heart, and the tie of love that bound me to the motherless lad seemed the only bit of sunshine left me.

He was quite a little man by this time, was Master Willie. He was six years and a half old, and brimful of health, mischief, and high spirits; a great adept at coaxing half-pence out of the pockets of his father or his aunt; a lad that was passionately fond of birds and rabbits, and all sorts of dumb animals; and whose highest ambition at that time was to drive an engine on the railway when he should grow to be a man, and keep the said engine whistling all day long.

There is seldom much scarcity of fog at Deepvale during the autumn and winter months, but the November of this year was wetter and foggier than usual. For a week past, the weather had been so bad that Willie had been unable to go to school; but at last there came a bright bracing morning, and I packed him off with his satchel, full of glee at the thought of getting back again among his playmates.

He took his lunch with him, and I did not expect him home again till a quarter past four. A quarter past four came, but no Willie. I looked out, and was surprised to find how rapidly the fog had come on again; I could not see more than a dozen yards down the road, and the station was quite lost to view. I waited ten minutes longer, and then, as there were still no signs of the lad, and as the afternoon was darkening fast, and the fog seemed growing thicker, I just slipped on my bonnet and shawl and tripped off down the road towards the school; first putting the tea to bask by the fireside, and a plate in the oven to warm ready for the toast, for Davy came in at half-past four to the minute. I felt no uneasiness about the child; I thought he had stopped to play a while with his school-fellows, as he had sometimes done before; besides which, he knew the road home so well that he could have found it blindfold. I expected to meet him somewhere on the road, but I got as far as the school without seeing anything of him. There I was told by the master that the scholars had all left half an hour earlier than usual, to save lighting up; so there was nothing left for me to do but to get back home again as fast as I could. I made sure that I had missed Willie on the road, and that I should find him at home when I got there; but I found only David, waiting patiently for his tea, and wondering where the lad and I had got to. He wondered still more when I told him that Willie was missing; and no tea was to be thought of by either of us till he should be found. David hurried off to the station, thinking that Willie might have gone direct there to fetch his father home, as he would sometimes do; while I ran back as fast as I could to the village to inquire here and there whether he had gone home with any of his school-fellows. I could hear nothing of him, except that he had parted from the other lads at the corner of Gantee Lane just as the church clock was striking four, and had set off running through the fog in the direction of home. As I was walking along, considering what ought to be done next, and wondering whether Willie had been found at the station, I ran full against Davy, who, himself unsuccessful, had come in search of me. We turned white frightened faces on one another as we met under the lamp-light.

'God help me, the poor lad's lost!' said Davy;

'and in such a fog as this, I know no more than the dead where to look for him.'

I had no grain of comfort to offer him, and by mutual consent, we turned our steps in the direction of the police station. In a little while it was known all over the village that Willie Winterburn was missing, and all the village seemed at once to become our friends. Davy was obliged to go back to the station to attend to the evening trains; and by the advice of Mr Ellis, the vicar, I went back home, while he kindly engaged to superintend the different gangs of volunteers who had proffered to go in search of the missing child. While he was settling in which direction each lot of men should go, some voice in the crowd suggested 'The river.' There was a murmured 'Hush!' from those around me, but I had caught the words, and the idea they conveyed was so terrible to my mind, that for several minutes afterwards I hardly seemed to know where I was or anything of what was happening about me.

When I got back home, there was no news of any kind. Mrs Chalfont, the doctor's lady, and Mary Jane Dallison, were kind enough to come and stay with me all that evening; but to sit quietly by the fire, and listen to their well-meant but useless attempts at consolation, was for me simply impossible. It seemed some little relief to my overwrought feelings to be able to walk from end to end of the room, and every quarter of an hour or so to go out into the croft behind the house and call my Willie's name aloud with all my might. But there was never the faintest answer to my calling; that gray deathly fog seemed to fling back my words upon myself, lapping me round with its dank chilling folds, like a huge impalpable winding-sheet, from whose suffocating embrace there was no escape.

Davy came in after the last train, but only to put on his top-coat, and then hurry off into the village. How I wished that I were a man, that I might have gone with him; it was so hard to have to sit down quietly at home and wait. But half the men in the village were out already on the quest, men who knew thoroughly every nook and corner of the valley, and who would only have thought me in the way had I proffered my services; and, indeed, the chances are that I should have got lost in the fog five minutes after setting out, and have needed being sought for myself. There was nothing for me to do but to wait and be patient.

About ten o'clock, I brought out some supper for Mrs Chalfont and Mary Jane; but to see them sitting over it as comfortably as if nothing had happened, and to listen to their endless dribble of petty village gossip, was more than I could bear; so I went up into the croft again, and stayed there a full half hour in the dark and the fog, sitting on a bit of broken wall, and thinking of my poor lost Willie and all his pretty ways; and of his dead mother, the loved sister of my youth; and of happy days long past. All at once, I started up, stricken through heart and brain by a new and terrible thought. Hugh Sanderson had not been in my mind once all that day; yet, with the suddenness of lightning, his last words had that instant flashed across me: 'From this hour, Hugh Sanderson is your enemy, and with me that means Revenge. There is a little score between us, that will one day be settled in full, and in a way that you do not expect.'

Could this be the revenge of which he had spoken? Was it he who had stolen my poor Willie, and taken him—whither? A deathly shudder shot through me as I asked myself these questions. I looked fearfully around. I fancied Hugh coming stealthily on me through the fog, with murder in his heart; and I turned and fled down the solitary croft, nor stopped till I was safe within doors, and listening once more to Mrs Chalfont's placid drowsy dribble, so commonplace and comforting, after what I had just gone through.

But when I came to question myself within doors as to what likelihood there was of Hugh Sanderson having done such a wicked and devilish thing as steal away the child, to be revenged on me, there seemed to me to be little or none. 'Bad as he may be in some things, I don't think he is bad enough for that,' I said to myself. Still, the thought, which had come to me with the suddenness of an inspiration, was there, and not to be dislodged at a moment's notice, and it would persist in intruding its ugly face upon me now and again.

About half-past eleven, Mrs Chalfont and Mary Jane Dallison being both thoroughly tired out, put on their things, bade me a kindly good-night, and set off home. At twelve, Davy came home, haggard and hollow-eyed, his beard and hair all dripping with the moisture of the fog.

'Any news?' I said, though his face was answer enough.

'None,' he answered in a hoarse whisper, for the fog had got to his chest, and his voice was gone.

I had a little drop of hot brandy-and-water ready for him in a minute, which I made him swallow; and then I put a candle into his hand, and kissed him, and told him to go off to bed, for I could see that he was dead beat, and that I would sit up and watch. He tried to protest, but I stopped him at once, and made him go; and when I stole up stairs, ten minutes later, and listened outside his bedroom door, I could hear his deep quiet breathing, and knew that he had forgotten his troubles for a while. 'The men have all come back home,' he had said before going up stairs: 'they can do no more till daylight. In the morning, they will start again.'

Left alone for the night, I made up a good fire, and fastened all the doors, and then put a lighted candle in each of the two windows—why I did so, I can hardly explain—and then drawing my warm winter-shawl round me, I seated myself by the fire, to wait through the dreary hours till daylight should come again. To have put out the lights, and gone to bed at such a time, would have seemed to me little better than a crime. I had taken a last look out of the door, when Davy came home: the dull gray wall of fog still shut the little house round as thickly as ever; and it made my heart ache, how bitterly no words could tell, to think of my poor Willie being out, nobody knew where, on such a night. But could he feel either the cold or the fog? Was he not past all longing for an earthly home? Should I ever see him alive again? Vain questions, asked again and again, to which the dark hours, as they rolled wearily away, brought no answer, or any echo of certainty.

Now that such a midnight stillness and solitude reigned through and around the house, the same indefinite haunting fear of something, I scarcely knew what, that had seized me in the croft, crept over me again. I moved about the house with hushed footsteps, and frequent glancings over my

shoulder: the dark shut-up little parlour, beyond the warm lighted house-part in which I now was, was dreadful to me, till, with a sudden spasm of courage, I had turned the key in the door, and so secured myself from any intrusion out of its shadowy depths. Twice, at long intervals, I started up, fancying that I heard Willie's voice faintly calling in the distance; and all my shadowy fears forgotten in a moment, I unbolted the door with trembling fingers, and stepped out into the fog, and listened and waited for a repetition of a sound that had no origin save in my own disturbed imagination, only to have to return indoors at last, wet and shivering, and with my old timorous fancies clustering thickly about me. The night-trains coming and going swiftly, with many shrill warning whistles, were brief welcome breaks in the brooding oppressive silence. Now and then, I got up to snuff the candles, or add a little coal to the fire; and once, towards four o'clock, having fallen unconsciously into a brief doze, I started up with the vivid impression on my mind that some one outside was trying the fastenings of the door. That this was merely a delusion of my own, I was speedily convinced, but it served to keep me broad awake for the rest of the night.

But I must hasten on. It was on Monday that Willie was lost. All day on Tuesday, the fog still hung over the valley as thickly as before, and although numerous parties of men were out from morning till night, nothing was discovered of the missing child. By Wednesday morning, the fog had entirely gone, and better hopes were now entertained that some trace of him, either dead or alive, would be found. All the valley was astir with the news; and scarcely a nook or cranny among the hills that shut it in had now been left unsearched, but all to no purpose; the river, too, had been dragged, although there seemed little fear that Willie could have fallen into it while wandering about in the fog, as, in order to reach it, he would be obliged to cross the railway, and when he had once found himself on the familiar iron road—familiar to him because he would often go and play about the station of summer evenings when there were no trains about—he would at once have known where he was, and have followed the line till it brought him to the station. A description of the missing child had already been sent to the police of the various outlying villages; and Mr Chorlton, the magistrate, had decided to offer a reward, unless some information should be forthcoming during the next twenty-four hours. A little after dark that evening, one of Farmer Widdowson's men startled us all by walking in with poor Willie's satchel, containing his slate and school-books, which he had just found, soaked through with rain, lying in a field a few yards from the high-road, as if it had been thrown over the hedge. My grief burst out afresh as I took these relics of our lost lamb in my hands. I sat down on the hearth-rug, and dried them by the fire, tenderly and reverently: perhaps these were the last tokens of him that we should ever see.

Thursday came and went as the two previous days had done, without bringing a single gleam of comfort to our aching hearts. The day was bright and frosty, but the sunshine outside seemed only to mock the sorrow within. As hour passed after hour without bringing any tidings, we felt that the hopes of finding our dear one alive—if he were

found at all—to which we had clung tenaciously all along, were now becoming faint and desperate indeed. We had lost him in the dusk of Monday afternoon, and now the dusk of Thursday was here, and we knew no more now than then what had become of him. Poor Davy! how thin and haggard he had become even in that little time! His timid uncomplaining nature seemed utterly crushed by this second blow, which wrecked so completely the happiness of his home; and I had to put on a cheerfulness I was far from feeling, and so lend him a little support that way.

Utterly wearied out for want of sleep, for I had passed the two previous nights half awake and half asleep, on two chairs before the kitchen fire, so as to be ready in a moment should I be wanted, I went to bed on Thursday night at my ordinary time, but with a rushlight left burning down stairs, for I had a strange fancy against the house being left in darkness till we had heard some positive news, either good or bad; and I dropped off to sleep the minute I laid my head on the pillow. Judging from what followed, I must have slept a quiet untroubled sleep for several hours, when all at once, being still asleep, I saw before me the form of my dead sister. She was standing close by the side of the bed, clothed in soft shining garments, and looking more beautiful than I had ever seen her look in life, but very sorrowful. The large dark eyes were bent mournfully on me. 'Where is my Willie?' she said. 'Why don't you find him?' I strove to answer her, for I felt no fear, but my lips were powerless to stir. 'My Willie is not dead. Why don't you find him?' With that she began to fade softly away; while I, struggling with the impalpable bonds that held me, broke through them at last, and in the effort I awoke.

The impression left on my mind by what I had just seen and heard was so vivid and lifelike, that in the confusion of my first waking moments I never paused to consider whether it were anything more than a dream; but imagining that I still heard the voice of Alice calling to me from a distance, I stepped out of bed, and groped my way down stairs, still only half awake, and with the dream-voice still ringing in my ears. The burning rushlight, and the familiar aspect of the room, brought me to a sudden pause at the foot of the stairs. 'Can it then have been nothing but a dream?' I said to myself. 'Oh! Alice—sister—speak to me, reveal to me by some sign or token the spot where our lost one is hidden!' A reply, faint and far off, seemed borne to me through the darkness outside; or was it merely the murmur of the night-wind as it swept round the house for a moment, and then carried its tidings away down the valley inland? I listened again intently, and then smiled at my own folly. 'Nothing but the wind, truly, and no spirit-voice,' I said sadly to myself, as I turned to go up stairs; but next moment there was a sudden noise of hurried footsteps outside the door, and then a loud imperious summons with the knocker.

My ghostly fancies had still such power over me, that I chilled for a moment at the thought that perhaps my dead sister had come back in answer to my summons, and was waiting at the door for me to let her in. Involuntarily, I shrunk further into the shadow of the stairs, and awaited in dread expectancy what might happen next. In the pause that followed, I heard the noise of some one breathing loudly outside the door, and then a strange voice, a woman's voice, exclaimed in anguished

accents: 'My God! why will they not open the door!' and with that the whole filmy mesh of weird fancies that had held me in thrall but an instant before, melted into thinnest air, and were gone utterly. I snatched my large plaid-shawl from off the nail on which it hung, wrapped it round me hurriedly, and then hastened to unbolt the door. The moment the door was opened, a woman, wild, staring, haggard, with disordered clothes, and her black hair tangled and blown about her face, burst into the room, who, after gazing vacantly around her, like one half-mad, fixed me with her bright black eyes, and clutching me tightly by the shoulder, laid her mouth close to my ear, and whispered: 'Look for him in Deepvale tunnel!' then putting one hand suddenly to her head, with a deep long-drawn sigh, she tottered forward into my arms, and sank fainting to the floor.

This woman's words fell on my ears like a revelation of something unthought of, undreamed of before. Look for him in Deepvale tunnel! The *him* of whom she spoke had for me but one interpretation. But there was no time to think or wonder: it was needful to act without delay. Having put the cushion of the arm-chair between her head and the floor, I sped up stairs to summon Davy. 'Hasten down stairs, and attend to the woman you will find there,' was all I said after I had succeeded in rousing him; then going into my own room, I put on a few things with fingers that trembled with excitement, and drawing my shawl over my head, hurried down again. Davy was not down yet, and the woman was lying as I had left her; but heeding only the great purpose I had in view, I let myself quietly out of the house, and closing the door behind me, I sped away down the lane, past the entrance to the station, and then straight along the Ilchester Road, till I came to the stile which admitted me into the meadows, through which ran a path leading in almost a direct line to the foot of the very hill that was pierced by the tunnel. A three-quarter moon was shining brightly, and lighted up every step of the way I went. Quitting the footpath at the point where it began to climb the hillside, I waded through the thick dank grass till I reached the wooden fencing at the edge of the embankment, over which I quickly scrambled; and next instant I found myself at the entrance to Deepvale tunnel. Here I was compelled to pause a short time, from sheer want of breath; and in that pause I could not help asking myself whether I had not come upon a fool's errand—whether it would not have been more sensible of me to have waited at home till the strange woman had recovered her senses sufficiently to tell me in what manner to begin my search. Here, indeed, was the tunnel close before me; but how was I to set about looking for my lost darling? Had he been murdered, and was his body hidden away in it from the light of day? If he were alive, what had there been all this time to prevent him from making his way out, and getting home? As I stood thus, bewildered with doubt, and not knowing whether to advance or go back home, my sister's words flashed across my memory—the words I had heard in my dream: 'My Willie is not dead;' and I hesitated no longer.

I could not help shuddering as I made the first step out of the moonlight into the black gulf before me, it seemed so like the entrance to the bottomless pit, as I had read about it in some book when a child; and by the time I had gone a yard

or two, I found myself pausing to listen, half expecting to hear, borne faintly from a far distance, the cries and groans, and wallings unutterable, of lost souls; but there was no sound save my own hurried breathing, with now and then a whisper and a sigh from the telegraph-wires as the night-wind touched them lightly with its fingers in passing. Shaking off with an effort the weird influence that was beginning to creep over me, I hurried on further and further into the heart of the great blackness which seemed to swallow me up, and absorb me, and draw me into itself, as though it were a living grave, from which I might never more escape. Never to me had moonlight looked so beautiful as that now shining with such tender radiance on the huge boulders and fantastic jags of rock round the mouth of the tunnel; but that way lay failure; so I set my eyes resolutely to the darkness again, keeping steadily to the narrow strip of ground which divides the two lines of railway—the up line from the down.

After a little while, I called aloud: 'Willie! Willie! where are you?' Instead of a natural echo of the place, it might have been a mocking fiend at my elbow that said the words after me, so full of malignant derision did the repetition sound as it died away in the depths of the tunnel. I listened shudderingly till all was silent; then onward again with wide-staring eyes and outstretched hands, that some lurking imp might any moment clutch, and so drive me crazy with terror. The tunnel curved slightly near the further end, so that, had I ventured into it even at mid-day, it would still have seemed as black and endless as it did now. Again I shrieked loudly the name of the lost child, and again I was answered only by a derisive echo of my own cry. Looking backward, the entrance to the tunnel seemed already diminished to half its natural size, and the moonlight beyond had faded to a pale sickly yellow. I was getting nearer the heart of the mountain; a thousand tons of rock were piled over my head; I felt as though I were removed by a hundred leagues from any living soul. A low seductive voice whispered in my ear: 'Go back; the child cannot be here;' but I set my teeth, and clenched my hand, and struggled forward again on my all but hopeless quest. Again my voice went up in a wild anguished cry, that seemed to pierce the roof. The echo came and went; but as its last faint reverberations died away in the darkness, I thought I heard a faint wailing cry in answer, and my heart stood still to listen. It came again, muffled and indistinct, like a voice from a shut-up tomb: 'I am here, aunty; Willie is here!'

'Great Father in heaven, I thank thee! I have found my boy at last!'

The revulsion of feeling was almost too much for me. I staggered forward like one drunk, calling to the child with a voice that sounded strangely different from my own; and guided by the sound of his in reply, I came at last to a little cell hollowed out of the rock, and opening out of the tunnel by means of a wooden door, intended originally as a storehouse for platelayers' tools, and the lamps made use of whenever the tunnel was under examination or repair. In this cell, cold almost as an ice-house even in the middle of summer, and with walls that trickled with continual moisture, had my darling been shut up from Monday afternoon till Thursday night, with nothing to lie upon but a bundle of old sacking,

and with nothing to eat save some fragments of his lunch, and a pennyworth of ginger-bread, which he had fortunately bought just after leaving school. The rude door had been carefully hasped outside, so that it was impossible for him to open it. My eager fingers soon discovered, and undid the simple fastening.

'Willie, lad, where are you?' I said as I pushed open the door.

'Here I am, aunty,' he answered—and I felt a hand clutch my gown—it seemed as if you would never come.'

I had my arms round him by this time, but hardly had he said the words I have just put down, when he fainted right away. I wrapped my shawl round him, and lifted him up, and laid his unconscious head on my shoulder; and set off back towards the mouth of the tunnel. It thrilled my heart strangely to find how thin and light he had become during those lonely days and nights of cold and hunger; and the thought that I might perhaps, after all, have come too late to save him, winged my feet, and gave me a strength more than my own. Onward I sped towards that dim, gray half-moon, that cut the darkness so clearly, and that slowly grew in size as I neared it. When about half my return-journey was accomplished, I was beset by a fresh terror. The night-express, with a wild shriek, burst suddenly into the tunnel at the opposite end. I could not remember on which of the two lines of rails it was running, so that I was obliged to turn round and watch for it, and wait till its great red eye came round the curve, and then, with Willie pressed closely to my heart, to shrink against the further wall, holding my breath while the fiery monster swept by me like a huge thunderbolt, and then onward again toward the haven that seemed still so far away. I reached it at last, just as Davy and one of his neighbours were hastening up in search of me. I had just strength enough left to give the unconscious lad into his father's arms, and then I too must needs faint away for a few minutes, and puzzle the two poor men utterly.

With time and care, Willie got round again, and became as strong and hearty as before his imprisonment. His account of the affair was as follows: He had been encountered by Hugh Sanderson as he was coming from school, and induced, by the bribe of a silver sixpence, to go with him as far as the mouth of the tunnel. Once there, Hugh had taken him up, and, despite his screams and cries, had carried him to the place in which I found him. Judging from Willie's account, Sanderson must have been drunk at the time he did this; indeed, he had been drinking wildly for a week or two previously, and on the Wednesday following the Monday of Willie's disappearance, he was attacked by delirium tremens. It was during the ravings incident on this attack, that his sister, who was in attendance on him, gathered certain particulars which gave her a clue to the devilish deed perpetrated by her brother. Without losing an hour, she had set off in a hired gig at dusk on Thursday on her twenty miles' journey to Deepvale; but the horse falling lame about half-way, she had walked the rest of the distance through country roads and miry cross-roads, often losing her way, and had only succeeded at last when it seemed impossible for her to have gone a yard further. At her earnest intercession, Davy agreed to take no proceedings against Hugh,

who, as soon as he recovered, disappeared suddenly, and was said to have gone to South America. Be that as it may, neither Davy nor I have seen him from that day to this.

COMMERCIAL TRAVELLERS.

WHETHER the position of the ambassador or of the commercial traveller be the more desirable, is a matter of opinion; but it is pretty certain that the same kind of qualities is required in either class. There can be little doubt but that the late Lord Palmerston, K.G., would have made an excellent ambassador, and there can be no more doubt that he would have made a first-rate commercial traveller. Nor in either case would the appendage K.G. have been out of place, for it is as becoming to an ambassador as a tail is to a quadruped, and it requires no great stretch of imagination to imagine the letters as an intelligible abbreviation of the words 'kommercial gentleman.' Etiquette, or jealousy, or tomfoolery may have established all sorts of petty distinctions between ambassadors and envoys and *chargés d'affaires*, and between commercial travellers and commercial gents and bagmen, but, as the greater contains the less, the inferior titles may be considered to be included in ambassador and commercial traveller. Each resembles the other in being a confidential messenger sent somewhat for purposes of negotiation. The potent princes call their messengers ambassadors; the merchant princes call theirs commercial travellers. Still, whatever name be given, the purpose of both is the same—that is, to watch over the interests, consolidate the friendships or alliances, and extend the connections, in the one case, of the potent prince and his country; in the other, of the commercial or merchant prince and his firm. The qualities required for success in either case are the same—adroitness, courtesy, discretion, energy, enterprise, equanimity, experience, firmness, good-humour, sagacity, tact, versatility. Above all things, it is of advantage to cultivate that happy temperament which was eminently displayed by the late Lord Palmerston in receiving deputations, addressing constituents, and disarming the hostility or refuting the arguments of opponents on the hustings. In more homely phrase, it has been concisely said, that commercial travellers should be always 'mellow.' The adjective is not here used in the sense in which it is applied in a popular song to him whose latter end is favourably contrasted with that of the man who 'drinks small-beer,' who 'fades as the leaves do,' and who dies before the period of Christmas festivities; but in contradistinction to crusty, cantankerous, and other similar epithets, applied to persons who have not the art of conciliating their fellow-creatures.

Again, as ambassadors have special privileges, so have commercial travellers; and that not only in matters relating to audiences, but in affairs more closely connected with their own personal convenience. Small, indeed, must be the experience of that man who has not at some time in his life been smitten with the comfortable appearance of a certain room in some country inn, found it empty, swept, and garnished; entered with alacrity, seated himself by the fire thankfully, pulled the bell

joyously, ordered refreshments speedily, but been informed curtly: 'Can't 'ave it 'ere, sir; this is the commercial room, and the gents is a-goin' to dine d'rectly.' To many a one it must have happened to unconsciously invade the commercial room, to enter affably into conversation with the only occupant, and to be asked the singular question: 'What do you travel in?' The simple answer: 'Oh! it depends upon where I am, but usually in railway-carriages,' is considerably looked upon as facetious, and leads to the rejoinder: 'Ha! ha! very good—but what articles do you travel in? I travel in gloves.' To reply, that you generally indulge in the same luxury, with the addition sometimes of mittens in winter, might bring about disagreeable complications; so you probably ask, receive, and give explanations, and are permitted to spend a pleasant evening in the company of the K.G.'s.

Another privilege which commercial travellers can hardly be said to enjoy (for many have lately professed in the papers not only a willingness but a desire to renounce it) is that of paying for a certain amount of wine, which perhaps they do not drink, and which, consequently, the more conscientious of their brethren feel bound to drink, at the risk of inebriety. Moreover, unless reports in newspapers be deceptive, commercial travellers have special schools, in honour whereof there are given periodical dinners, at which lord mayors preside, speeches are made, and the scholars are exhibited alive, with ruddy countenances, plump and shiny, to prove the excellence of the education—especially in the way of soap—they receive. Whether the instruction be special, and conducted with an eye to future excellence in the art of 'getting orders,' cannot be here declared; but would it be very ludicrous to hear a headmaster cry: 'Come up, sixth form, with the rules for extending the connection of a firm?' As commercial travellers have special schools, it might be erroneously supposed that they have special privileges in the matter of paternity. But this is not so. They do not appear to be quite so liable as curates are to have more arrows than they can conveniently find quiver-room for; but on the whole they have no occasion to be ashamed when they speak with their enemies in the gate. Families suggest wives, and commercial travellers are believed to be particularly fortunate in this respect. Nor is it wonderful that they should be regarded with favour by the daughters of the land; for, to say nothing of the qualities which have been already alluded to, and which include persuasiveness, commercial travellers must be able to talk like a book of fashion about many things which are profoundly interesting to the female mind. One could converse by the hour about silks and satins, and shawls and mantles; another would be inexhaustible on the subject of bonnets; a third would reveal secrets in connection with gloves, whereby a small hand might be set off to advantage, and a large hand made to appear a size smaller; a fourth would unfold a tale of boots which can transform a mere walking apparatus into a thing of beauty; a fifth would broach the delicate subject of perfumery, whilst all his garments smelt of myrrh, aloes, and cassia; and all would have some topic of conversation captivating to those whose dearest joy it is to 'go shopping.'

Commercial travellers also have (and avail themselves of) frequent opportunities of performing a work of great charity. On Sunday the commercial

traveller takes his ease in his inn, perhaps in a town where there is a large school; and the commercial traveller who knows a boy at that school, and knows how dreary is a boy's Sunday at a large school, moves his legs and the authorities to get that boy's release for one afternoon. There was once a commercial traveller who did that kindness for a little boy whom he had only seen once, and who is no longer a little boy, but who still remembers as if it were but yesterday that grateful act. The afternoon fare to which the little boy was looking forward was a very little hot mutton and potatoes and a good deal of cold Catechism 'to follow,' to say nothing of the evening refreshment of short commons and a long sermon. But just about mutton-time, the little boy found himself seated cozily by the fire in the commercial room of a snug inn, smiling wonderfully but happily on the commercial traveller with the marvellous memory who remembered the little boy but once seen; and in the evening (after sermon-time), a little bed in a large room was jumped into by a little boy, whose heart was warm with gratitude and good cheer, who was a new shilling richer than he had been in the morning, who had that day become the owner of a many-bladed knife and a cocoa-nut which monkeys would have fought for, and who dreamed, when he fell asleep, of a commercial traveller with a marvellous memory. He who was that little boy never saw, and probably never will see, that commercial traveller again, for commercial travellers, alas, are not exempt from the common fate; but if he of the marvellous memory be yet alive, here is a hand which would fain grasp his; and if he be dead, here is a hand which for his sake will write, 'Success to all commercial travellers.'

SONNET.

I HAVE 'no right' to weep for thee—'no right'
To treasure all the trifles that thy touch
Has hallowed—though from out my life the light
With thee has passed for ever—though the night
Brings to my heart no rest—though aching sight
Fails me through weight of unshed tears, and such
A load of agony ere this had slain
One who was new to sorrow. On my brain
Drop once again the words—'no right' to weep
'Tis not my name thou murmur'st in thy sleep.
No visions of the night reveal to thee
The weary void, the silent misery,
Henceforth my lot: nothing to hope again
Have I—yet still love one, though love and hope be
vain.

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THINGS THAT I REMEMBER.

MY NURSE.

I HAVE often thought of writing something for my neighbours to read. I suppose everybody has thought the same one time or other; but the truth is I am tired of *remembering*. I am always remembering, and I think that, perhaps, if I give my hand the trouble of writing down some of these remembrances, it may teach my memory not to be quite so troublesome.

I will begin with my dear old nurse. She, perhaps, is the first thing that I can remember; and tears come into the eyes of my memory whilst I write, and almost blind my perceptions. This fond remembrance, where can I begin with it? She seems to fill all my old life in the old home, now left for ever! She first came before me when she must have been at least sixty years old. She had been my mother's wet-nurse; had lived with her until her marriage; had followed her into a new life; and had nursed all the children of the next generation, thirteen in number. She used to amuse me, and all my brothers and sisters, with tales of her first home in service—my grandfather's. She remembered the days when riches were abundant in the family, and when great men thought it an honour to visit at the house. She told of days when the Duke of 'Orlines,' as she styled him, and the Count de 'Mouchoir' came to grand suppers; when three turkeys were roasted on one spit; when the master of the house, who was a gentleman every inch of him, was *carried* to bed every night, simply because he could not walk; and went to church once a year because, as she thought, it gave him a title to his grand pew.

She remembered the days when the master's aunt, who was indeed a lady, used to sit under a large yew-tree in the garden, and chew tobacco; and being too much of a lady to extract all its virtues, the old gardener used to take her vacant place, and make the tobacco do service a second time. She remembered when the governess of her three young mistresses was allowed only Sunday as her own day; and was pleased to mend her

stockings and other garments, whilst her young ladies were out driving in fashionable quarters and visiting great people.

The old woman never tired of these stories. But the one great idea of her old life was the injury done to Mrs Jordan by her royal lover: how that she was allowed to retain only one of her children in her abandonment, and that one only because she was a cripple. The beauty and the sorrows of Mrs Jordan were the old woman's grand thought. Whether these things were as she told us, I cannot say; I never heard excepting from this one witness; but I know that one of my youthful thoughts was, that Mrs Jordan was a sweet lady, virtuous, and cruelly deserted. These tales the old woman used to tell us generally in the evenings, when the fatigues of the day had made us fractious, and it required more than ordinary patience to make us in any degree calm.

She used also to sing old-world songs to us, and make us dance to very funny tunes. Poor old soul! Is there one like her now in the whole wide world? How often have I awaked in the night, and when did I ever find her asleep? The old woman always wore, summer and winter, a flannel dressing-gown in her bedroom and in her bed—this she did, she used to say, because she could get up and go about the room, and even about the house, at a few minutes' notice, without further dressing. I shall never forget that old dressing-gown.

During the season of walnuts, she used to go down stairs and into the garden, without further apparel than the said old dressing-gown, to gather walnuts under a large old tree—that old tree is now gone, and bitter tears accompanied its fall—these were brought up to the nursery as bribes for our good-conduct while dressing.

Morning baths were not the custom then: our ablutions were conducted in a very peculiar manner, and even now the thought of it makes me shudder. The old woman, or her satellites, but generally herself, used to cover her hand plentifully with what she called *lather*, and this was rubbed once and again over our devoted faces, flattening

our noses, irritating our eyes, and filling our mouths with the most hateful of all compounds, yellow soap.

I never could discover at what times the old woman slept—certainly not, to my knowledge, in the night, for I constantly found her sitting by the fire with a baby on her lap, singing generally about a dashing white sergeant. Sometimes, indeed, she was in bed with the baby lying across her, like a nightmare, and she nearly sitting up, with her mouth wide open, and her eyes shut. Could she have been sleeping then?

One of her favourite stories, however, was about a sleep of hers, so she must have slept sometimes. On this particular occasion she had been playing 'to whis,' as she called it, in the evening; and when in bed with the baby, as usual enacting nightmare, she fought her battles o'er again, and, dreaming she was playing a trump-card with great emphasis, she threw the infant out of bed. She was wonderfully fond of whist, and taught us all to play. She used to say: 'She thanked Heaven that all her young ladies could play a rubber "to whis."'

She had a peculiar habit of using what, I suppose, must have been bad language. I never considered it in that light then. For instance, she used to call us all devil's kin, and gutter-grubs; and when we offended her more than usual, she used to say: 'Drat the child; upon my life, she is enough to make a parson swear.' Perhaps parsons were more easily acted upon in those days. One day one of my brothers was struggling with a refractory boot—'Confound the boot!' he cried; upon which 'Mother'—for so we all called her—dashed at him, exclaiming, in an exalted voice: 'Drat it all, you little devil's kin, who can have taught you to swear!'

One of the worst crimes in her eyes was leaving soap in the water. I remember her once in church, when on her knees, turning to me and saying: 'Bless my heart, Miss Fanny, if I ain't left the soap in the water!'

My old nurse was a thorough churchwoman. She always made a low courtesy at the *Gloria*, as too did all the old people in the church at that time; and after communion, nothing would have induced her to rise from her knees until she had read all the collects at the end of the service. She loved church, and, next to that, reading the Bible. Her great delight was Ruth and 'Buz.' She always came into prayers, morning and evening, leading the other servants. My father used to say: 'Good-morning, Hannah,' or 'Good-evening; ' she made a low courtesy, saying: 'Your sarvant, sir.'

But one thing I remember respecting this old servant that perhaps some will scarcely believe—she never had wages, and she never wished for them. When she wanted clothing, she told my mother, and also when she wanted money. Our great pleasure was in seeing her well dressed. She had been very pretty, and we never thought her otherwise: she was fair, with blue eyes. When she went out to tea, which was not seldom—for she was a great favourite; the whole parish called her 'Mother'—we used to superintend her toilet. I usually made her caps, and we ornamented her with ribbons and other little devices. When completed she used to make a courtesy, and say: 'Now, sure, I am dornall fine!' I don't know what the expression means.

Christenings were her great days. The god-parents always gave her a guinea each; such was the custom. After dinner, she carried the baby to the dining-room, where she was expected to drink a glass of wine. She looked very hot on these occasions, but very proud. Before drinking her wine, she made a courtesy, and, looking round, said: 'My duty to all. This is the finest child we have had yet, ladies and gentlemen; though all our children are well enough, thank the Lord; though I say it that should not. Master and missus is a fine-looking couple, and never had a cross word, to my knowledge.'

She deserved this little pleasure, for she had endured all the fatigue and trouble preceding it. A monthly nurse was never seen in our house; they were considered plebeian appendages, and unbecoming our dignity. How well I remember the new babies: the wide open eyes with which we greeted their first appearance in the nursery. The dear old 'Mother' had a way of tucking them under her arm whilst preparing their food. They were never allowed to visit my mother excepting at stated times. They were fed from a silver boat, which had—the old woman often told us—been borrowed by Baroness Howe to feed a sickly baby of hers; so I suppose boats were not common then: their day must have been a short one. Dalby's Carnivative was her constant resort—we must have taken quarts of it—so it could not have been very injurious: it never injured us, and the smell of it still reigns in my nose.

'Mother' had firm faith in all kinds of unreasonable things—witches, dreams, death-spiders, &c.; and she imagined that a peculiar bird haunted our house, and tapped at the windows before calamities happened. I think we all inclined to this little superstition. I have watched for hours to see this bird, and I think I have seen him many times: he looked like a foreigner, with long wings and tail, and he generally tapped at a window half-way up the front stairs. There was a roof of lead outside, covering the store-room, upon which he used to stand. I have said that we all rather believed in this; but since we married and left the old place, our bird has never come. Never, though sorrows have followed us thick and fast; our banshee bird takes no trouble to warn us. Perhaps, since our dear old 'Mother' died, our faith has not been strong enough to keep him.

She also believed in personal visits from the Evil One. I wonder she ventured to take such sad liberties with his name. This belief she shared with other members of her family. I remember in my childhood I was going to pay a visit to my godmother, and the second nurse, who was the old lady's niece, was sitting up one Saturday night after twelve o'clock, preparing new clothes, when suddenly she began to scream, and awoke us all, declaring she had seen the devil. She was very ill for some time afterwards, apparently from fright. 'Mother' firmly believed in the visitation, forgetting that the Evil One could not have been guilty of a more impolitic action, seeing that from that hour the household determined to have a greater respect for the Sabbath-day, as well as for its vigil.

Another idiosyncrasy was her determination never to forget injuries; she remembered them from her childhood. I am sorry to think of this trait; it was the worst part of her character. The injuries, however, were seldom to herself. Our

mother had evidently been the strong centre of all her love, and the ills done had been generally done to her. I remember one very striking case—it must have happened fifty years before I heard her mention it. It was simply this, that one of my mother's sisters had objected to lend my mother a pocket-handkerchief. This small injury had lasted half a century in the mind of a loving warm-hearted woman. Do we think enough of these little things?

I must say for her that she remembered benefits as long. Her affections were unchanging. She always took part with the weakest, whether they were right or wrong. If we indulged in a fight, which, I am sorry to say, we often did—in those days, fights were considered salutary—the victor always came off second-best, our old nurse's hard hand making up for any lack of blows from the adversary. And whenever punishment was inflicted by the ruling powers, they had to run the gantlet of her reproachful tongue.

I remember once my father coming in for a very unusual share of her maledictions. She had a great respect for him, almost amounting to fear; he was not one of the family, and so she felt differently towards him. I don't think she loved him; perhaps because he was undoubtedly the strongest. One day one of my sisters and I had agreed to go a journey with a pony we had, riding by turns, the other walking. We had not mentioned our intention to our father; we did not generally do so. But on this particular morning—parental authority, I suppose, being strong within him—finding the pony saddled and bridled at the front gate, he ordered it back to the stables, and stopped our ride. Upon this the old woman's wrath overcame her respect; she railed at him from the nursery in no measured terms. 'You ought to be ashamed,' she cried, 'to serve your own children so. I would not serve a dog so. Poor young ladies, all dressed and ready too.' My father took no notice. He never scolded or even reproved any of the servants. They served him faithfully notwithstanding, and treated him with unmeasured submission. I have sometimes wondered why.

But I must not ramble longer on; it is time that this paper was ended. Our faithful friend died about thirteen years ago, a few months before I married. Her mind gave way before her bodily strength did. Four years before her death, she was imbecile, and for a long time was carried up and down stairs. But we never parted from her in life; we nursed her age as she had nursed our childhood. I saw her die, and I made her ready for the grave. She was ninety years old when she died. Her beloved mistress followed not long after, and sleeps at the feet of her who was more than a mother to herself, and not less than a mother to all her children.

MIRK ABBEY.

CHAPTER XL—AND LAST.

If there had happened to be any one upon whom poor Ralph's wild talk, on the night of the Abbey festivities, had made any serious impression whatever, it was destined to be removed by the inquest that followed upon his death. The very words he had made use of in his fury, his calling my Lady his wife, and stigmatising Sir Richard as her natural son, would have been held to be no slight

evidence of his insanity, which, however, was abundantly proved by other testimony. The waiter at the *Royal Marine* at Cove-ton came in all good faith to take his solemn oath that, to the best of his judgment, the gent. with the beard, who had scandalised that respectable house by taking brandy for breakfast, was like no other man alive as he had ever served; or, in other words, was nothing short of a lunatic. The postboys whom he had commanded to stop and let him out before his chaise could be whirled over the first stage, pronounced him mad. The porter at the railway station, to whose civil inquiry as to whether he was going the angry man had returned so uncivil an answer, came to the same conclusion. No man nearer home, from the lord-lieutenant to the parish constable, and (even of his whilom companions) from Captain Walter Lisgard to landlord Steve, but gave it as his opinion that the man was mad. And the verdict of the coroner's jury being in accordance with the evidence, decided that the deceased had met with his death in the manner with which we are acquainted during an attack of temporary insanity, induced by Drink.

The nerves of Madame de Castellane had received much too great a shock, from recent occurrences, to permit her presence at the inquest; and, indeed, such an effect did they take upon her, that she left not only Belcomb but England itself almost immediately, declining with many thanks Sir Richard's offer—notwithstanding that Letty drove over in person to make it known to her—that she should take up her residence for the present at the Abbey itself. So Madame went back again to her native land as suddenly and almost as mysteriously as she had come; and after a while, wrote to inform her English friends that the domestic disagreements which had driven her from home were in a fair way to be healed, and that it was very unlikely that she should have to trespass upon their kindness any more.

The real history of that lady's coming to Belcomb was never absolutely known to more than two persons, and perhaps more or less rightly guessed at by a third. From the moment that my Lady recognised her first husband in Ralph Derrick, she never concealed from herself the possibility of her having to leave the Abbey, and become perhaps a lifelong exile from home and friends for her three children's sakes, but especially for that of Sir Richard. Perhaps she exaggerated the depth to which family pride had taken root in the heart of her eldest son; but she honestly believed that the knowledge of his being illegitimate would have killed him. Although she could never have possessed the strength of mind, even had she enjoyed the requisite want of principle, to deny in person Ralph's claim to her as her lawful husband, she justly argued that he would be utterly unable to establish his case in her absence. He could summons no Witness whose testimony would go half so far as her own tell-tale face; while his own character was such, that no credence would be given to his statement, unless supported by strong and direct evidence. Thus situated, my Lady turned over in her mind scheme after scheme of flight, without hitting upon anything that gave much promise, and all of which entailed a residence abroad, cruelly far from those dear ones from whom she was about, with such a heavy heart, to flee for their own good; but when she had, perforce, as we have seen, to take Mistress Forest

into her confidence, something arose out of a conversation between them concerning their old life together at Dijon, which suggested that ingenious artifice which she eventually put into effect. Madame de Castellan had been dead some years, though of that circumstance my Lady's children were unaware, albeit Sir Richard had heard a good deal of her when a boy, and had even some dim recollection of her personal appearance when she was a guest of his father and mother's at the Abbey.

Of this remembrance, my Lady took advantage. Mary and herself in that old school-time at Dijon had been used to act charades at Madame's house, and that circumstance no doubt put into Lady Lisgard's mind the idea of personating the old Frenchwoman herself. My Lady had learned from those amateur performances the secrets of 'green-room' metamorphosis;* she was naturally endowed with no small power of mimicry; and she could speak French like a native. Supposing that the desired transformation could be effected, what securer plan, and one more unlikely to be suspected, could be found than that secluded cottage of Belcomb, so close to the Abbey, and whither all news relating to her children could be brought to her at once through Mary, who, it was arranged, should be transferred to Madame's service in the manner that was afterwards actually adopted. The letter purporting to come from Dijon, and taken by Sir Richard's own hand from the post-bag, had been placed therein by Mary Forest, who had used her mistress's key at an earlier hour, and found that communication from Arthur Haldane concerning Ralph's departure for Coveton, which necessitated such immediate action on the part of my Lady. There was not one day to be lost in making her preparations, and indeed from that time she had been ready to start at a moment's notice, though, as it happened, there was no need for such urgent haste. The counterfeit visit in person to the Abbey was of course running a considerable risk, but the establishment of the fact of Madame de Castellan's arrival at Belcomb, my Lady had rightly judged to be of paramount importance; indeed, that being effected, it is doubtful even if the unhappy Ralph had not met with so sudden an end, whether any suspicion of Madame and my Lady being one and the same person would have ever existed. The most difficult matter connected with my Lady's flight was in truth, after all, to find a reason for it sufficient to satisfy the minds of those she left behind her. The children would have been slow to believe that she could bring herself to leave home and them, simply because her two boys did not get on well together, for in that case, absentee mothers should be considerably more common than they are. But, fortunately, not only did the flame of discord between Sir Richard and Master Walter continue to burn, but received plenty of unexpected fuel, such as at any other time would have caused my Lady unutterable woe, but which, under present circumstances, were almost welcome to her. Walter's clandestine marriage with the very girl to whom his brother had offered his own hand, was an incident so painful as to give my Lady an excuse for almost anything; but Walter had left the Abbey, and it

was important that he should return thither and make things unpleasant, as he could not fail to do by the mere fact of his presence there with Rose. Sir Richard, with his *fête* in view, was easily persuaded to ask the new-married couple down, and all things worked together for ill, which for once was my Lady's 'good.'

Then, again, Walter's debts—of the full extent of which, however, his mother was never informed—gave her an additional cause of serious dissatisfaction; and lastly, Sir Richard's opposition to Letty's marriage with Arthur Haldane, made up a very respectable bill of indictment. At all events, as we have seen, it was acknowledged so to be by the parties against whom it had been filed. The consciences of both Sir Richard and Walter were really pricked; and, besides, there was the painful fact of their mother's departure from her own roof, owing to their conduct, whether it justified such an extreme measure upon her part or not. Moreover, the delegate to whom my Lady had committed the disclosure of her motives, had been well chosen. It was necessary that a third person should be admitted to the knowledge of my Lady's secret, in order that her affairs might be transacted during an absence which might be prolonged for years, or even for her lifetime; and where could she find so tried and trustworthy a friend as Dr Haldane? The fact, too, of his visiting the Abbey in person, after an interval of so many years, and even after his so recent refusal to be present on the all-important occasion of Sir Richard's coming of age, gave additional weight to the mission upon which he came. It brought about, as has been shewn, a genuine reconciliation between the brothers, and even exacted from them a solemn promise that their disagreements should henceforth cease. Nor was it destined that the good doctor's friendly offices should cease with this. When the day came to lay Ralph Derrick's body in its coffin, the old philosopher—nay, cynic, as many held him to be—placed very reverently with his own hands that little locket around the dead man's neck, which he had treasured as the most precious thing he owned for more than half a lifetime. And on the morrow, when they buried him in Dalwynch churchyard, the doctor followed him to the grave, not only as the 'deceased's medical attendant,' but as his chief and only mourner, with a tender pity for the world-battered and passionful man, who had thus found rest at last. He stood beside the round black mound, when all had departed, with that wise, sad smile upon his face, which he always wore when he was thinking deepest; and though 'Poor fellow, poor fellow!' was all he said, it was a more pregnant epitaph than is often to be read on tombstones.

After a little, the good news came to Mirk from France, that my Lady, trusting to what she had heard from her old friend, was coming home again. The only stipulation she made was, that her withdrawal from the Abbey was not to be alluded to by any of her family, for which, indeed, added she, there would be the less necessity, since the principal cause of it—the ill-feeling between her sons—no longer, as she was delighted to understand, existed. Of course, Lady Lisgard could not prevent 'the county' from canvassing the matter, any more than she could have forbidden a general election; and, in truth, her affairs were almost as much talked about as politics after a dissolution of parliament.

* How a few strips of black plaster on the teeth can counterfeit age and toothlessness, let any of our fair readers experiment for themselves.

She and her sons had each their partisans, who argued for their respective clients often with great enthusiasm, and sometimes with an ingenuity worthy of better premises. But it was the general opinion that Master Walter's marriage was at the bottom of the whole business, and that that designing woman, Rose Aynton, had sown dissension in what had once been one of the best-conducted and most united families in Wexhamshire.

An account of the inquest in the local journals, a paragraph in the *Times* headed 'Curious Catastrophe,' and an allusion to Don Quixote's adventure *apropos* of the homicidal wind-mill, in a comic print, exhausted the subject of Ralph Derrick's death.

But my Lady returned to Mirk Abbey in deep mourning, it was understood in consequence of the sudden death of Madame de Castellon, which occurred, singularly enough, almost immediately after her leaving Belcomb.

It was thought very unfortunate that the two old friends should thus have never been permitted to meet. Madame's demise, however, of course left Mary Forest free to rejoin her former mistress, in whose company, indeed, she returned to Mirk.

We have said that besides the two persons in possession of my Lady's secret, there was a third who had his shrewd suspicions. But if Arthur Haldane's legal training had really enabled him to come to the right conclusion in the matter, it also judiciously restrained him from saying anything about it.

He had never cause to use that memorandum which we saw him set down in his pocket-book of Miss Letty's opinion. 'It seems to me that people should be taken for what they are, let their birth be what it will; but we believe that it was not without a reason that he committed it to paper. Although entirely without ancestral pride, and with a very hearty contempt for any such folly, as matters stood, Letty was just the sort of girl who, upon finding herself illegitimate, would have refused to carry out her engagement, from the apprehension of attaching disgrace to the man she loved; and therefore Arthur thought it well to record her own argument against herself, in case any such occasion should arise. Not many months elapsed, however, before this possible obstruction was removed, in the pleasantest manner, by the union of these two young people; and a happier or better assorted couple it is not my fortune to know.'

Sir Richard remains a bachelor, although as staid and decorous in his conduct as any married man; even more so than some, it is whispered—but then, who can seriously blame charming Master Walter? The cause of the young baronet's celibacy is strenuously held by many to be Miss Rose Aynton's rejection of him long ago, for that has oozed out, somehow or other, divulged perhaps by the young woman herself in some moment when her vanity for once overcame her prudence; but, at all events, Sir Richard has acted very generously towards his brother's wife (that's how these gossips put it), and her husband Captain Lisgard's debts have been settled, and he has been entirely 'set up' with respect to his pecuniary affairs; and, moreover, he runs no risk of being again embarrassed. If it is really true that he occasionally forgets that abrupt ceremony which took place between himself and Rose at the Register Office (and somehow the thing does not recur to the memory with such force

under those circumstances as when one is married in the usual way by the combined endeavours of several clergymen), and indulges in little flirtations, he has at least forsworn both the turf and the gaming-table. We do not say that he is given up entirely to his military duties, but he is in the enjoyment of an excellent staff appointment, and possesses the fullest confidence both of his commanding officer and of that functionary's wife; which latter, we all know, is essential to the position of an aide-de-camp. But the fact is, that almost everybody likes Master Walter, and will continue to do so (although perhaps somewhat less as he grows older) to his dying day. And why not?

Dieu l'a jugé. Silence, sings a true poet upon the death of the First Napoleon: *Que des faibles mortels la main n'y touche plus! Qui peut sonder, Seigneur, ta clémence infinie?* Et vous, FLEAU DE DIEU, QUI SAIT SI LE GÉNIE N'EST PAS UNE DE VOS VERTUS! And what has thus been greatly written of genius, may also surely be said in a less sense of what we call (for lack of a better word) Manner. England has lately followed to his grave with weeping eyes, a statesman—both honest, indeed, and able—but whose chief claim to her affection rested upon this comparatively humble gift, so precious because so rare. When combined with youth and personal graces, as in Walter Lisgard's case, it is well-nigh irresistible, and has always been so from the days of Plato and Xenophon. Too often worthless in themselves, or rendered so by being 'spoilt' by all who meet them; not seldom empty-headed, or with heads turned by conceit and flattery; and almost always destitute of reverence for sacred things, whether divine or human—natural or doctrinal—we yet prefer the company of those thus dowered to that of the Wise, the Witty, or the Good. Their smile is a pleasure; their very presence is a harmony; and prayerless themselves, they evoke the supplications of the pure in their behalf.

Even Rose herself continues to be to some extent infatuated with Master Walter—although he is her own husband—a feat surely far more difficult of accomplishment than for the *valet de chambre* of a hero to believe in his master's reputation. At all events, it is beyond question that she grows very jealous of the captain. Master Walter has never been jealous of *her*; not, indeed, that he has had any serious reason to be so, but because such a baleful sentiment is never allowed to enter his well-contented mind. He is thoroughly persuaded that if his wife loves anybody else in the world beside herself—that that person is her husband; and he is right. He, too, has a genuine affection for one other individual beside Captain Walter Lisgard; and this is for his mother. We all know that she returns it seventyfold.

My Lady lives a tranquil and not unhappy life in her old home with dutiful Sir Richard, very pleasantly diversified by frequent visits from dear Letty and her husband—their last advent being a particularly grateful one, since they brought with them a little stranger, aged six weeks, whom it was always a matter of difficulty to extricate from grandmamma's loving arms. But my Lady's whitest days are those rare ones which her darling Walter finds it possible—so pressing are his military duties—to spend at somewhat sombre Mirk. Then she is happy; then she is almost her old self as we first knew her, before those deep tones, speaking from the grave,

upon Mirk Abbey lawn at Christmas-time, broke in upon her calm harmonious days. Master Walter has no child. This troubles her sometimes; but at others she feels very thankful for it; for if he had a son, or should Sir Richard marry and beget one, would not a certain, however venial, imposition be perpetuated in the descent of the title? Even now, when no great harm seems done, my Lady's conscience is not altogether at ease; nay, once, so disturbed it grew, that she took secret counsel on the matter with Dr Haldane.

'Dear Lady,' said he, 'if any human being could be bettered by the disclosure you hint at, or any human being was wronged by your reticence, I should be the first to say: "Tell all;" but as things stand, it would, in my opinion, not only be Quixotic, but downright madness to disentomb that woeful secret, which lies buried in Ralph Gavestone's grave. Moreover, I understood it was his dying wish that his story should remain untold.'

This last observation, delivered with great simplicity, was the best remedy for my Lady's troubled mind that the good doctor could have prescribed. But when this moral patient of his had left his consulting-room quite cured, the radical philosopher permitted himself a congratulatory chuckle. 'Gad,' said he (he used the interjections of half a century ago), 'it is lucky my Lady questioned me no further. My difficulty lies in permitting a person of title more than there need be in this misgoverned country. If the Lisgards had a peerage in their family, I should think it my duty to explode the whole concern. But I don't suppose one baronet more than there is any necessity to suffer, *can do much harm*.'

So Sir Richard Lisgard, little dreaming upon how unsatisfactory a tenure it is held, keeps his title unmolested; and 'my Lady' (Heaven bless her!) is still the honoured mistress of MIRK ABBEY.

THE END.

THE INNER LIFE OF A BARRACK-ROOM.

THERE are few conditions of life about which the general public know as little as they do about those of the soldier. The barrack-room is to them an unknown land, and a soldier's private life a mystery; so much so, that we frequently find the most absurd statements put forward and received as truths, when a soldier's career is the subject of discussion. We hear, too, very often of the harsh treatment of the soldier by those who have command over him; such cases may occur, but they are very rare, and the soldier has always his remedy.

We will commence with the recruit, who, having enlisted, received a certain sum in cash, and also his kit, consisting of under-clothes, boots, brushes, razors, and uniform, is at once told off to a room, and commences his career as a soldier. During the summer hours, that is, between March and October, the recruit, in common with all soldiers, turns out as early as $\frac{1}{4}$ past or half-past 6, and drills for an hour before breakfast. This consists of either the elementary drill of marching, or manual and platoon exercise, or the more advanced of company or battalion drill. Usually, at a $\frac{1}{4}$ to 8 breakfast takes place, and at a $\frac{1}{4}$ to 9 parade for drill, which then lasts two hours; at a $\frac{1}{4}$ to 1 o'clock dinner, and at a $\frac{1}{4}$ to 2 parade for drill again, which is $1\frac{1}{2}$ or 2 hours in length. Tea

takes place in the evening at 6, or later, according to circumstances, and the soldier is then free until roll-call at 9 or 10 P.M., at which hour he must be in his barrack-room to answer his name. Half an hour after roll-call, the lights in each room must be extinguished, and the men are then supposed to retire for the night.

Here is a mere outline of the daily life of a soldier, but there are considerable variations to this, of which we will treat before entering into details.

When a man has completed his course of elementary drills, he is termed 'a duty-man,' which means that he is fitted to perform regular duties where a knowledge of drill is required, such as mounting guards, pickets, &c. According to the strength of the duty-men in a garrison, and the number of guards and sentries to be supplied, so the soldier mounts guard every second, third, fourth, or fifth night. It rarely happens that the duty is so severe as to require guard to be mounted by the same men on alternate nights: every third or fourth night is, however, not uncommon.

When a guard is made up, there are always three times as many men forming the guard as there are posts to be supplied with sentries; thus, as the duration of a sentry's tour is two hours, he is altogether eight hours on sentry when on guard. A man who mounts sentry at 11 o'clock is on from 11 to 1, from 5 to 7, 11 to 1 at night, and 5 to 7 in the morning. Thus he may lie down in the guard-room and sleep from 7 till 11, and from 1 to 5, making by no means a bad night's rest. Again, should he belong to the second relief, as it is termed, his tour of sentry would be as follows: 1 to 3 P.M., 7 to 9 P.M., 1 to 3 A.M., and 7 to 9 A.M. When on sentry, a soldier must be perpetually on the alert: he must watch who approaches his post; be ready to distinguish officers, and give them their proper salute; be on watch to turn the guard out when any armed parties approach; and must never close his eyes, or for a moment to relax his vigilance. The soldier is usually so crowded upon, being rarely if ever alone, sleeping in a room with twenty other men, marching shoulder to shoulder, &c., that it is rather an agreeable change to some men to have an opportunity for being alone, such as is afforded by mounting sentry for a few hours. The reflective man rarely finds this duty tiresome, whereas the unthinking consider sentry the most wearisome of all labour.

Another duty—namely, picket—is less onerous than mounting guard. A man on picket parades in the evening at about sundown, and is then broken off, unless there is some disturbance expected in or near the garrison. At roll-call at night, the picket parades, and if many men are absent, it is directed to march about the town or barracks, in order to take up any men who may be absent, or creating a disturbance; but at about 10 or 11 o'clock, the picket is dismissed, and the men retire to their rooms.

There are various duties a soldier is called upon to perform, which come under the head of fatigues. He has to cook the dinner in turn for the men of his room; to be one of a party to fetch coals and provisions; to scrub out the room on a particular day; and so on. All these duties come round in turn, and each soldier therefore has to try his hand at the various labours required of him.

Comparing the actual amount of hard work performed by a soldier and the average of the rural

population, we find the soldier's life one of comparative ease when he is in a garrison and during peace. He is always well protected from the weather; is well clothed; enjoys his fire, no matter what the price of coals; has meat once a day, and generally a pint of porter with his dinner; has his tea and breakfast; and also may have the use of a good library, where there are newspapers, as well as books, and where he can sit in a quiet warm room during his leisure hours. The anxiety felt by the labourer as regards his subsistence is of course unknown to the soldier.

The actual comfort and prosperity of a soldier depend very much upon the men into whose society he is forced. Living in the same room, dining at the same table, and being almost always together, the annoyance is great if one's companions are distasteful; and among so many as there are in the army, there are always men who will be obnoxious to the well-principled. If several men of a room are bad characters, drunkards, or grumblers, a man who separates himself from them is not unusually treated as an upstart, and finds it difficult to obtain either peace or quietness. When, however, the majority of the men are good soldiers, the bad characters, being in the minority, are kept down, and are not therefore able to annoy the others. A system used to be common in the army, but has lately fallen into disuse, we are inclined to think, with loss to the service: this was for the men of a company or room to form themselves into a judge and jury, and to punish any man who misbehaved himself. When this system was carried out, a drunkard who came home, and went to bed, thus avoiding being found out by the authorities, and who then shirked his proper work in consequence of pleading sickness, would be sure to meet with punishment from his comrades; whereas his commanding officer might have a difficulty in dealing with the case. There are several offences which, whilst they are very unsoldierlike, are still scarcely punishable by military law. For example, we were once aware of a soldier who invariably complained of illness, and deceived the medical officers by the statement of his pains, whenever he was detailed for guard, the man disliking sentry-duty. The men of his room did his work for a long time, but at length determined to try him by their own laws, the result of which was, that he received such punishment as prevented him from again repeating his deception.

A soldier is very much under the power of the non-commissioned officers with whom he serves, and his prospects in life may be ruined if he should meet with an unjust or severe man. Fortunately, the selection of men to be made non-commissioned officers depends upon the man's conduct and character, and it rarely happens that an unfit man is selected. Still, instances have occurred where there has been the most harsh conduct practised by non-commissioned officers, and where soldiers have been driven to desperation thereby. The evidence of a non-commissioned officer is and must be taken before that of a common soldier. This is the foundation of military discipline; and thus, if a private states one thing and a corporal the opposite, the corporal's evidence is taken, and the other man's rejected.

In order to maintain that strict discipline which is essential to the union of an army, it is necessary to have a code of crimes and punishments quite different from those which come under the head

of civil offences. A soldier when on duty is a most responsible agent, and upon him the fate of an army, or at least of several lives, might depend. Therefore, if a private soldier were either drunk when on duty, or asleep on his post when on sentry, he would be liable to the heaviest punishment, and, in time of war, would, if asleep on sentry, run a fair chance of being shot. The most common crimes in the British army are drunkenness and absence without leave; after this come losing or making away with regimental necessaries, desertion, insubordination, and malingering, or feigning disease. If a soldier is proved to have been drunk, and was not at the time on duty, he receives a punishment which varies according to his character and the nature of his offence. If drunk on duty, he must be sent to a court-martial for trial, except under very special circumstances. A commanding officer, before whom a prisoner is brought, can give the following punishments, or any part of them, according to the degree of the crimes committed: Stoppage of a day's pay for each day, or portion of a day, a man has been absent without leave; heavy marching-order drill to the amount of fourteen days with confinement to barracks; confinement to barracks to the amount of twenty-eight days; confinement in the dark room for one hundred and sixty-eight hours. If a soldier should believe that he is unjustly punished by his commanding officer, he may appeal to a court-martial for trial for his offence, and if this court consider his punishment too severe, they may allot another; but if the man's appeal is groundless, and his punishment merely adequate to the offence, then the man would receive an additional punishment, on account of his complaint against his commanding officer.

We remember a case where a man was ordered fourteen days' pack-drill with confinement to barracks for having been absent two hours from roll-call. The man's previous conduct had been good, and his last offence committed eight months previously. The man appealed, and was tried by a regimental court-martial at his own request, and the court allotted him seven days' simple drill, thus expressing an opinion against the commanding officer.

If a soldier is possessed of good-conduct badges, he obtains one penny a day for each. When a regimental punishment is given him—that is, anything beyond *simple* drill and confinement to barracks—he at once is deprived of one of these for a certain period. Very young or inexperienced officers, and sometimes also others whose sense of discrimination is not acute, are inclined to award very inadequate penalties to offences.

We will now give some idea of the scale of punishments that would be awarded for certain offences, supposing the man's character was not very bad. If very bad, then a slightly heavier punishment would be allotted:

Absent from roll-call one or two hours: three days' confinement to barracks, with drill. Absent two hours from roll-call, and returning drunk: one day's pay mulct, five days' pack-drill. Absent from roll-call, and not returning till brought back by picket at 1 A.M., drunk: two days' pay mulct, seven days' pack-drill. Absent from roll-call 9th, not returning till morning of 11th: three days' pay mulct, ten days' pack-drill. Absent, drunk, and riotous: forty-eight hours' cells, and seven days' pack-drill, pay mulct. Refusing to obey a non-commissioned officer when ordered: cells and

pack-drill, according to the offence, this being a *serious* military crime. Absent four days, and making away with regimental necessaries: a regimental court-martial—probable punishment, forty-two days' imprisonment, and stoppage of pay. Desertion, and making away with necessaries: a garrison court-martial—probably eighty-four days' imprisonment, and stoppages to supply the deficiencies. Habitual drunkenness, that is, four times drunk in twelve months, or twice drunk when on duty: a garrison court-martial—the same as above. Striking a non-commissioned officer, or threatening an officer or non-commissioned officer: a general court-martial—to be shot, transported, or to suffer penal servitude, and be dismissed the service.

It is not a very uncommon event for a soldier who is anxious to escape from the service, to attempt to maim himself, so that he cannot perform his duty. Should a man be found guilty of this crime by a court-martial, he would be liable to serious punishment, the offence being one that must be checked with a firm hand.

There is sometimes a very severe trial of skill between the sick pretender and the medical man; one or two instances will serve to illustrate this.

A private soldier having determined to escape from the service, made up his mind to sham deafness. He went to work systematically; first failed to hear those who spoke in a low tone of voice, and soon after became, to all outward appearance, stone deaf. The surgeons suspected, but could not prove that he was shamming; they tried every expedient to test the man, but none succeeded in doing more than shewing that he was very deaf. So well had the delinquent trained himself, that even when a pistol was snapped off in his room, when he was asleep, he did not seem alarmed or disturbed. At length he was brought before a medical board for discharge, but the doctor who suspected him of shamming, asked to be allowed to apply one more test, which was granted.

The man was, as he thought, fairly examined, was admitted to be deaf, and was given his discharge paper. Although he could not read, yet he knew the value of the paper he held, for all his schemes had succeeded, and his discharge was insured. He left the board-room, conscious merit beaming on his face, and walked along the hospital corridors. As he joyfully strode off, a door was gently opened, and a voice in a whisper inquired: 'Is it all right, Bob?'

'All right,' said the deaf man.

'Have you got your discharge, Bob?' whispered the same voice.

'Here it is, my boy,' said Bob, as he approached the door, expecting there to meet a confederate.

'Let me look at your discharge,' said a sergeant, as he opened the door. 'Oh, I see it is blank, not filled up, and not signed. You are my prisoner, on a charge of feigning deafness.'

Bob was at once as deaf again as a post, but it was too late. Two surgeons were in the room, and had been witnesses to how well Bob heard when he believed himself a free man. He was tried for his offence, received a heavy punishment, and came out of prison a wiser man.

A man was in the habit of feigning great pain in one of his legs; the treatment adopted produced no effect, and still the man returned to hospital. Suspecting a case of shamming, the doctor called the hospital assistant, and asked him for the

'searing-iron.' The man took the hint, and brought in a small iron.

'To-morrow,' said the doctor, 'we must fire this leg: we must first pass the heated iron down this side of the thigh, then make two cross burns, and then a diagonal. In three weeks or so, the leg will be well again.'

On the arrival of the doctor on the following morning, a rapid cure had been effected; the leg was well, and the man begged to go back to his duty.

This practice of shamming has caused the innocent often to suffer for the guilty; sometimes a young soldier, suffering only from change of diet and other causes, is unfit for duty for a short time; but upon visiting the hospital, is drenched with a bowlful of senna, or some such compound, and he is consequently unwell for days—it being found a useful expedient to make a large dose the fee for entrance into hospital.

A soldier's life is one free from many of the cares which trouble men in the same rank of civil life; the soldier need have no care for the morrow; he is provided for, and if he conduct himself well, may count on promotion, provided he can read and write, or has sufficient industry to learn; for there are always schools at which he may acquire knowledge. Many non-commissioned officers have brought up their sons to be soldiers, have trained and taught them, and at length have enlisted them. There are many appointments which deserving non-commissioned officers may obtain in the army, and even the commission is open to every soldier. There are, it is true, certain drawbacks. The herding together in the same room of twenty or thirty men, is not pleasant to most men. To be ordered about by a young non-commissioned officer, proud of his power, and injudicious in its use, often infuriates those who have not disciplined themselves; but, looking at the life of a soldier in all its aspects, and comparing it with that of the mechanic, considering also the amount of spare time of a soldier, his comforts, the care that is taken of him, the prospect there is for promotion, and the prizes within his grasp, England ought never to be in want of honest and courageous men to fill the ranks of her army.

DREAM-HAUNTED.

I had just come back from India with my family, after living there for several years; and my first occupation, after discussing my first breakfast in town, was to run carefully through the *Times*' supplement, and pick out whatever advertisements had reference to country residences for sale or occupation. The advertisement which took my fancy more than any other, was one relating to a house named 'Gledhills,' situate in one of the Midland shires, and in the heart of a good hunting country. Next day, I ran down by train to have a look at the place. I found it to be a roomy red-brick mansion, dating from the reign of the second George, and built after the mean and formal style of a period remarkable for its poverty of invention in other things besides architecture. It was, however, tolerably spacious within doors, and in excellent repair; moreover, as it stood within a

small demesne of its own, and had a capital walled garden, with good stables and other offices, I thought that it would suit me very well for a few years to come; and I decided to inquire more fully respecting the terms of occupation, for the house was 'only to be let on lease, not sold. By the ancient man-servant who shewed me over the place, I was referred to a certain Mr Lomond, an inhabitant of the neighbouring town, whom I naturally set down in my own mind as the agent for a non-resident landlord.

The town was only a mile and a half away, and to every man, woman, and child in it, the name of Mr Lomond seemed familiar. I was directed to a pretty little cottage in the out-skirts, half-covered with honeysuckle and clematis; and just as I was about to knock at the door, Mr Lomond himself came up, equipped with rod and basket, and having the hearty sunburnt look of a genuine fisherman. 'No common house-agent this, but a thorough gentleman,' I said to myself.

After a few words of introduction, I stated the business that had brought me so far from home. 'I hope you find the old place to your liking?' said Mr Lomond. 'Of course,' he went on to say, 'many of my country friends deprecate the letting of Gledhills at all, and urge upon me the propriety of living there myself. But what would you have? My income, thanks to the roguery of a person who shall be nameless, is far too limited to allow of my keeping up the old place as it was kept up by my father and grandfather, and by a dozen Lomonds before them. I could neither afford to visit nor to receive company, as the Lomonds of Gledhills have been used to do; and being a bachelor, and a poor man withal, it seems to me a more sensible plan to make a home for myself in this little cottage, which is my own property, and trusting to my gun and rod for sport and exercise, leave some one with a longer purse than mine to enjoy the grandeur of the big house, and pay for the privilege in the shape of a welcome addition to my income.'

I told him frankly, that from what I had seen of the house, I thought it would suit me very well; and then we entered upon the question of terms, which I found to be sufficiently reasonable; accordingly, I expressed my desire to have the preliminary arrangements concluded as quickly as possible, in order that I might be enabled to remove my family, and take possession of the house at an early date.

'You are not a bachelor, then, like myself?' said Mr Lomond, with an inquiring smile.

'I have been a Benedict these dozen years,' I replied; 'and as my wife's health is somewhat delicate, and as the air of London does not suit her, I am anxious to get her down into the country as soon as possible.'

Mr Lomond did not answer for a moment or two, but drummed absently on the table with his fingers, and was evidently revolving some knotty point in his own mind. 'Before this matter is finally settled between us,' he said at last, 'there

is one little favour that I must ask you to do for me: a very slight favour indeed.'

'You have but to name it, Mr Lomond,' said I. 'Don't go back home till to-morrow,' he said earnestly. 'Sleep to-night at Gledhills. Dobson and his wife, who have charge of the house, will find you a tolerable dinner, and make you up a comfortable bed. I will walk over in the morning and see you; and then, if you are still in the same mind that you are in now, I will have the agreement drawn up at once, and you can enter upon your occupancy the following day.'

'But my family will expect me home this evening,' I said; 'besides which, I cannot see in what way my sleeping a single night at Gledhills can affect my determination to become its tenant.'

'You can telegraph to your family that you will not be home till to-morrow,' said Mr Lomond; 'and as for the other point of your objection, all I can say is, that I have my reasons for wishing you to do as I ask you: my desire is based on no mere whim, and to-morrow I will tell you what those reasons are.'

After some further conversation, I agreed to accede to Mr Lomond's wish, which had an element of singularity about it that interested me in spite of myself. It was accordingly arranged that he should at once send off a special messenger to have dinner and a bed got ready for me at Gledhills, while I rambled about the town for an hour, and visited the ruins of the old abbey. Ten o'clock the following morning was named for our next meeting.

The autumn day was drawing to a close when I found myself walking up the avenue towards the old mansion. The same old man whom I had seen before answered my summons at the door. He bowed respectfully at sight of me, and informed me that Mr Lomond had sent word that I was about to dine and sleep at Gledhills, and that everything was prepared for my reception. As I crossed the threshold, the great door closed behind me with a dull, heavy crash, that vibrated through every corner of the house, and awoke a foreboding echo in my heart. Preceded by my ancient guide, whom age and rheumatism had bent almost double, I crossed the desolate-looking entrance-hall, passed up the grand staircase, and so through a pair of folding-doors into the drawing-room, beyond which was a suite of smaller rooms, of which two had now been set apart for my service. How chill and cheerless everything looked in the cold light of the dying day! Now that the glamour of sunshine rested no longer on the place, my fancy refused to invest any of those bare, desolate rooms with the pleasant attributes of home; and already, in my secret mind, I half repented my facile eagerness in being so willing to accept without further experience this worm-eaten old mansion, tenanted, doubtless, by the ghosts of a hundred dead-and-gone folks, as a shelter for my household gods, a home for all that I held dear on earth.

The two rooms set aside for me I found to be comfortably furnished, in a neat but inexpensive style; but when I understood from the old man that ever since the death of the last tenant, three years before, they had been furnished and set aside, ready for the reception of any chance visitors, like myself, who, either by their own wish, or that of Mr Lomond, might decide to pass a night at Gledhills, and that three or four would-be occupants

before me had so slept there a night each, and had gone on their several ways next morning, never to be seen under that roof again, I began to think that there might perhaps be something more in Mr Lomond's stipulation than was visible on the surface.

Having dined, and done ample justice to Mr Lomond's claret, and being possessed in some measure by the demon of unrest, I took my cigar, and strolled along the corridor, and so came presently into the great empty drawing-room, in which the moonbeams were now playing a ghostly game of hide-and-seek. It was uncarpeted, and destitute of furniture, and its oaken floor creaked and groaned beneath my tread, as though it were burdened with some dreadful secret which it would fain reveal, but could not. Outside each of the three long, narrow windows with which the room was lighted, was a small balcony, below which stretched a velvety expanse of lawn, set here and there with a gay basket of flowers, the whole being shut in by a clump of sombre firs. I have said that the room was destitute of furniture, but I found after a time that it still contained one relic of its more prosperous days, in the shape of a family portrait, which still hung over the mantel-piece, as it had hung for half a century or more. When I became aware of this fact, I fetched one of the candles out of my sitting-room, in order that I might examine the picture more closely. It was a full-length portrait of a man in the military costume that was in vogue towards the end of last century. The face was very handsome, with a proud, resolute beauty of its own, that would have been very attractive but for a vague, repellent something—a hint of something tiger-like and cruel lurking under the surface of that artificial smile, which the artist had caught with rare fidelity, and had fixed on the canvas for ever. It must have been something in the better traits of the countenance that taught me to see a likeness to my pleasant piscatorial friend, Mr Lomond; and I could only conclude that the portrait before me was that of some notable ancestor of the present master of Gledhills.

The fatigues of the day, and the solitude to which I was condemned, drove me to bed at an early hour; but there was something about the novelty of my position that precluded sleep for a long time after I had put out my light, and I remember hearing some clock strike twelve, while I was still desperately wide awake; but that is the last thing I do remember; and I suppose that I must have slid off to sleep a few minutes later, while still in the act of asseverating to myself that to sleep there was for me an impossibility. Whether I had slept for hours or for minutes only, when I woke up in the weird land of dreams, is a point on which I can offer no opinion. I awoke to that consciousness which is possessed by dreamers, and which, in many cases, is quite as vivid as the consciousness of real life; but throughout the strange wild drama that followed, I was without any individuality of my own; I had all the consciousness of a spectator, without the responsibility of one. I was nothing; I had no existence in my own dream; I was merely the witness of certain imaginary occurrences, which took place without any reference to me, and which I was powerless to prevent or influence in the slightest degree.

Before me was the drawing-room at Gledhills—I recognised it at once by the portrait of the soldier

over the fireplace. The walls, painted of a delicate sea-green, were hung with numerous pictures and engravings in rich frames. A thick Aubusson carpet covered the floor; and in the huge fireplace, a wood-fire that had nearly burned itself down to ashes, was slowly expiring. The furniture was chintz-covered, and curtains of chintz draped the three high narrow windows. Standing in one corner, between the quaintly-carved legs of a mahogany chiffonier, was a tall Mandarin jar, with an open-work lid, from which was exhaled a faint indescribable perfume, as of the bruised sweetness of a hundred flowers; in the opposite corner stood a harp; books richly bound were scattered about the room, which was lighted by a number of wax-candles fixed in lustres over the mantel-piece.

Seated at a little fancy table, was a girl, eighteen or twenty years old, making-believe to be busy with her embroidery, but with a mind evidently pre-occupied by some more important subject. She had on a short-waisted white dress, after the fashion of those days, from which her long narrow skirts fell away in sedate folds, utterly guiltless of all modern modes of extension of circumference. Her face was beautiful, and she had the air of a person quite conscious of that fact; but underlying this charm of regular features, there was something resolute and proud, that carried the mind back, as by an instinct, to the portrait over the fireplace. She had loosened the thick masses of her chestnut hair, and they now fell low down over her shoulders, confined only by a narrow band of blue velvet. Round her neck was a thin chain of gold, from which hung a locket, which she drew every now and then from the bosom of her dress, and pressed with feverish eagerness to her lips. The same impatience was visible in the way in which she would put a few quick stitches into her embroidery, and then pause, with the needle in her fingers, to listen intently, and so lapse into a dreamy absent mood, out of which she would wake up in a minute or two with a start, and begin to ply her needle again as restlessly as before.

That something for which she was so impatiently waiting came at last—a low, clear, peculiar whistle, heard by me so distinctly through the midst of my dream, and remembered so well when I awoke, that I could afterwards reproduce it exactly. The young lady started to her feet the moment the signal fell on her ear. Her eyes flashed with a newer radiance; her soft lips pouted into a smile; while from her bosom upward a lovely flush spread swiftly, as though Eros had touched her that instant with his torch, and already the celestial flame were coursing through her veins. A brief minute she stood thus, like a lovely statue of Expectancy; then she hurried to one of the windows, and drawing aside the long chintz curtain, she placed a lighted candle close to the window as an answering signal. Then, having withdrawn the candle, and replaced the curtain, so that the window from the outside would seem quite dark again, she left the room, to return presently with a ladder of thin rope, to which were affixed two hooks of steel. Her next proceeding was to lock the three doors which opened into the drawing-room, and having thus secured herself from intrusion, she passed out of sight, behind one of the curtains; and then I heard the faint sound of a window being cautiously lifted, and I knew, as well as though the whole scene was visible to me, that she was fixing the

rope-ladder to the balcony by means of its hooks, and that presently her lover would be with her.

And so it fell out. A little while, and the curtain was lifted; the lady came back into the room; and following close upon her steps came a tall stranger, dark and handsome, like a true hero of romance.

'My darling Lenore!'

'My dearest Varrel!'

He took her in his arms, and stooped, and kissed her fondly; and then he drew her to the light, and gazed down into her eyes, in which nothing but love for him was then visible, and then he stooped again and kissed her not less tenderly than before. His roquelaure and hat had fallen to the ground, and he now stood revealed, a man of fashion of the period. As before stated, he was eminently good-looking, with languishing black eyes, and a pensive smile, such as one usually endows Romeo with in imagination. He wore his hair without parting of any kind, in a profusion of short, black, glossy curls, in which there was no trace of the elaboration of art, and he was clean-shaven, except for a short whisker that terminated half-way down his cheek. He wore a blue coat with gilt buttons, swallow-tailed, short in the waist, and high-collared. His waistcoat was bright yellow as to colour, crossed with a small black stripe; a huge seal depended from the fob of his black small-clothes; and the Hessian boots in which his lower extremities were encased, were polished to a marvellous degree of brilliancy. His cravat, white and unstarched, and tied with a large bow, was made of fine soft muslin; and the frilled bosom of his shirt had been carefully crimped by conscientious feminine fingers. In this frill he wore a small cluster of brilliants; while a large signet-ring, a genuine antique, decorated the first finger of his right hand.

Such was the appearance of Sir Derwent Varrel; and absurd as a costume like his would now seem on the classic flags of Bond Street or St James's, it yet became the baronet admirably, while he in return lent it a grace and distinction which made it seem the only attire proper for a gentleman.

'Why did you not come last night?' said Lenore.

'Hour after hour, I waited for you in vain.'

'Twas not my fault, dearest, that I did not; of that rest well assured,' answered Varrel. 'Business that brooked not delay kept me from your side. I was hugely chagrined.'

'That weary, weary business!' sighed Lenore. 'Tis ever men's excuse. But now that you are here, I will not be melancholy. Ah, that I could be for ever by your side!'

She nestled her head shyly on his bosom. He stroked her chestnut hair softly with his white hand, and looked down on her with a crafty and sinister smile—such a smile as might light up the face of a Fowler when he sees the fluttering innocent which he has been doing his best to entice, begin to turn longingly towards the snare.

'Little simpleton!' he replied, pulling her ear. 'You speak as if what you long for were impossible of attainment; whereas one word from you would make it a blissful certainty, and render two loving hearts happy for ever.'

'I cannot, Varrel—I cannot say that word. Ah, why does my father dislike you so much?'

'My faith! how should I know? But dislike is not the word, little one. You should ask, why does he hate me so intensely? There are those

who gladly calumniate me, and for such he has ever a ready ear; for I am unfortunate enough to have many enemies, and doubtless twice as many faults.'

'No, no, I will not hear such language,' exclaimed Lenore. 'In time my father will relent, and then'

'Never, girl!' said Varrel fiercely. 'Colonel Lomond is not made of melting stuff. His hatred of me he will carry with him to the grave. Never look for change in him.—Sweet one,' he added, changing his tone in a moment to one of low-breathing imploring tenderness—'sweet one, as I have told thee before, both thy fate and mine are dependent on a single word from those rosy lips. Be mine, in spite of every one! I am rich, and can supply thy every want. We will go abroad; and in some lovely Italian valley, or fair isle of the eastern seas, we will forget our bygone troubles, and watch the happy days glide softly past, while rounding our lives to that perfect love which alone can bring back Eden to this weary earth. O Lenore, dearest and best-loved, flee with me at once and for ever!'

She was standing by the little table, smiling, trembling, and yet with tears half starting from her lids, while he, kneeling on one knee, was covering her hand with passionate kisses.

'O Varrel, you try me almost beyond my strength,' she murmured. 'But I cannot, I dare not do as you wish. You know not my father as well as I do. He would seek me out and kill me—and you too, and you too, Derwent! wherever we might be. His vengeance would be terrible and pitiless.'

'Timid little puss!' he said, half scornfully, as he rose and encircled her waist with his arm. 'Am I not competent to protect thee against the world? Fear nothing. For this house of bondage, for this stagnation of heart and soul, I will give thee life, and light, and love. Thou shalt exchange this'

'Hush!' exclaimed Lenore suddenly with a smothered shriek. 'I hear my father's footfall on the stairs. To the window, Varrel, or you are lost!'

One hasty kiss, and then Varrel dashed aside the chintz curtain, and sprang to the window, only to fall back next moment into the room like a man stricken in the dark. 'A thousand devils! I have been betrayed,' he exclaimed. 'The rope-ladder is gone, and I see the figures of men moving about the lawn. Lenore, you must hide me!'

'Too late—too late!' she sobbed.

They both stood for a moment as though changed to stone, while the footsteps came with a heavy tramp along the echoing corridor, and halted outside the door. The eyes of Lenore and Varrel turned instinctively to the door-handle, and they saw it move as it was tried from the other side, but the door was still locked.

'Open, Lenore—it is I,' said a stern voice from without; and the summons was emphasised by a heavy blow on the panel of the door.

'O Varrel, I dare not disobey!' said Lenore in an agonised whisper. 'Hide yourself behind the curtains; perhaps he may not know of your presence here; and when he shall have gone to his own room, we must plan your escape. Hush! not a word. Hide! hide!'

'Why this foolery of locked doors?' said he who

now came in. 'Am I to be barred out of my own rooms by a child like you?'

'The night was so dark, and—and I felt so lonely, and—and—'

'And—and you did not expect your father back so soon,' he said, mimicking her tone with a sneer. 'Is it not so, you white-faced jade?'

'Indeed, papa, I'—pleaded the trembling Lenore.

'Don't prevaricate, girl!' he said with a savage stamp of the foot. 'Come, now, you will tell me next that you have had no visitors—eh?'

'Indeed, no, papa,' said Lenore with painful eagerness.

'Been quite alone ever since I left home this afternoon?'

'Quite alone, papa.'

A faint dash of colour was coming back into her cheeks by this time; she began, perhaps, to hope that after all this questioning his suspicions would be allayed, and he would go to his own room. If such were the case, his next words must have undeceived her terribly.

'You lie, girl—you lie!' he said, in a voice whose sternness was not without a tremble in it; and as he spoke he touched Varrel's hat contemptuously with his foot, which up to that moment had lain unheeded on the floor. 'Oh, that child of mine should ever live to deceive me thus!' His clasped hands and upturned face seemed to appeal to Heaven against the falsehood that had just been told him; but next instant the look of anguish died from off his face, and his features settled back into more than their former harshness as he strode across the floor and flung back the curtain, behind whose folds Varrel was concealed. 'Behold the proof!' he cried. 'Behold the damning proof! O Lenore!'

For a moment the two men stood eyeing each other in silence. Lenore, with a pitiful cry, fell at her father's feet, but he heeded her no more than if she had been a stone.

In the father of Lenore I beheld the original of the picture over the drawing-room mantel-piece; only he seemed older and more grizzled, and his features more deeply marked with the carving of Time's chisel than in his portrait. He had on a sort of military undress suit, with a pair of heavy riding-boots and spurs, and a short heavy whip in his hand.

'This, Sir Derwent Varrel, is an unexpected honour,' said Colonel Lomond, in a tone of unconcealed irony, as he made the baronet a sweeping and ceremonious bow. 'Pray—pray let me beg of you to emerge from an obscurity so ungenial to one of your enterprising disposition.—That is better, Lenore, child; let us have a little more light on the scene—it is a pleasure to look on the face of an honest man—and we may, perchance, need it all before we have done. More light, girl, do you hear!—And now, perhaps, Sir Derwent Varrel will favour us with some explanation—any, the most simple, will of course do for me—of how he came to be hidden, like a common thief, behind the curtains of my drawing-room.'

Varrel's pale olive cheek flushed deeply at this little speech, and a dangerous light began to glitter in his eyes as he stepped out of his hiding-place, and advanced into the room.

'Colonel Lomond shall have an explanation as simple as he desires,' he said. Then he stopped to refresh his nerves with a pinch of snuff.

'You are aware, sir,' he resumed, 'that I love your daughter; that several months ago I would fain have made her my wife; and that your consent alone was wanting to such a union.'

'Precisely so,' said Colonel Lomond in the iciest of tones, as he balanced the handle of his riding-whip between his thumb and finger.

'You might prevent our marriage, sir, but you could not keep us from loving one another,' said Sir Derwent proudly.

'In other words, my daughter had still sufficient respect left for me to refuse to wed you without my consent; but you had not sufficient respect for her to refrain from using your influence over her weak girl's will to induce her to deceive her father, and to consent to nocturnal assignations with a libertine like yourself. Love! The word is sullied in coming from such lips as yours. You and I, Sir Derwent Varrel, had high words together six months ago, and I told you then that I would rather see my daughter lying in her coffin than wedded to such a one as you; and those words I repeat again to-night.—Come hither, girl,' he added, seizing Lenore roughly by the wrist, 'come hither, and choose at once and for ever between me and this man, who has taught thee to lie to thy father. What do I say? Nay, there can be no choice between such as this man and me. I tell thee, girl, that thy ignorance cannot fathom the depths of such iniquity as his. A gambler so deeply tainted that in no society of gentlemen is he allowed to play; a libertine so vile, that to couple a woman's name with his is a passport to dishonour; a sharper and blackleg, who has been twice hooted off the Newmarket course; a bankrupt so desperately involved that only by a wealthy marriage—with such a one, for example, as the heiress of Gledhills—can he hope even partially to retrieve his fortunes. Bah! what can thy country-bred ignorance know of these things!'

'Hard words, Colonel Lomond, very hard words,' said Sir Derwent disdainfully; 'but I am happy to think, utterly incapable of proof.'

'Hard words! ay, hard enough to have moved an innocent man to righteous anger, but not, as it seems, to flutter thy slow-beating pulses ever so faintly; and that because thou knowest them to be true. Proof! Here's one out of a dozen. Who lured sweet Mary Doris from her home in yonder valley, and hid her away in London past the finding of her friends? Who held the simple village beauty lightly for a month or two, and then discarded her to starve or die as she might think best? Who but you, Sir Derwent Varrel, unless this letter also lies—a letter signed with your name, and found in the poor child's pocket when she lay with white staring face and dripping hair in the dead-house by the river. And now it is my daughter thou seekest to entrap!'

As Colonel Lomond drew from his pocket the letter of which he had been speaking, Lenore, with a low cry of anguish, sank fainting to the floor; and the horror-stricken Varrel reeled backward like one suddenly stabbed.

'Reptile! it is time the score between us were settled,' said Colonel Lomond with a venomous ferocity of tone. 'Only one of us two must leave this room alive.'

'I cannot—I dare not fight with you,' murmured Varrel.

'O ho! do not think to escape me thus. You refuse to fight. Then take the punishment of

cowards.' And with that the heavy thong of Colonel Lomond's riding-whip whistled through the air, and came down on Varrel's neck and shoulders twice, twisting round his face on the second occasion, and leaving a thin livid wheal across his cheek where it had cut into the flesh. Varrel's first impulse was to shrink backward with a mingled cry of rage and pain; but the next instant he closed with the colonel, and wrestling the whip from his hands, flung it to the other end of the room.

'Give me a sword—a pistol—a weapon of any kind!' he cried hoarsely. 'This vile treatment absolves me from all consequences. Colonel Lomond, your blood be upon your own head!'

The colonel smiled sweetly on him. 'Well spoken,' he said, 'only that you express yourself somewhat after the *Furioso* fashion. Your cry to arms is worthy of all praise, and I hasten to comply with it. In this cabinet, sir, are a couple of as pretty playthings as ever gladdened the eyes of a gentleman. *Voilà!* they are both alike in every particular. The choice is yours.'

Varrel's fingers closed over the hilt of one of the rapiers thus presented to him; and while he tried its edge and temper, by running his finger and thumb appreciatively along its length, and by bending its point back nearly to the hilt, Colonel Lomond disembarassed himself of the cumbersome overcoat in which he was enveloped; and next minute the two men fronted each other.

'Gardez-vous, monsieur!' cried Colonel Lomond as he made the first pass.

It was thoroughly understood by both of them that they were fighting for dear life—that neither of them must look for mercy from the other. Both of them were excellent swordsmen, but Sir Derwent had the advantages of youth and agility on his side, and he pressed the colonel hardly, who, while keeping up his defence warily, yet felt himself compelled to retreat step by step before the desperate lunges of his antagonist.

The clash of the swords seemed to rouse Lenore from the stupor into which she had fallen. With her hands pressed to her temples, and with glaring eyeballs, that followed every movement of the combatants, she staggered to her feet. Her lips moved, but no sound came from them. Perhaps she was asking herself whether it were not all a hideous nightmare, which the first breath of reality would dissipate for ever. With the same mingled look of horror and unbelief on her face, she watched the two men coming slowly down the room again, for Colonel Lomond was still slightly overborne by his more youthful antagonist. The rapiers clashed together; bright sparks flew from their polished blue-black surface, as they struck each other, and bent and quivered like things of life in the grasp of the sinewy hands that held them.

The combatants were just opposite the spot where the half-demented Lenore was standing like one incapable of motion, when suddenly, at a movement in tierce, the point of Colonel Lomond's rapier snapped off; an advantage which Varrel instantly followed up with a dexterous stroke, which sent the colonel's broken weapon flying across the room. Lenore, with the quick instinct of love, divined her father's danger; and the same moment that the rapier was twisted out of his hand, she sprang forward with a wild inarticulate cry to shield him with her body from what she knew must follow; and the sword of Varrel,

aimed at her father's heart with all the strength which hate and the desire of vengeance could lend to such a thrust, passed instead through the body of the hapless girl. Her father's arms caught her as she was falling. 'Papa—kiss—forgive,' she murmured in his ear; then a stream of blood burst from her lips; she shuddered slightly, and was dead.

Colonel Lomond pressed his quivering lips tenderly on her forehead; then lifting her in his arms, he carried her to a couch. 'Lie there for a little while, sweet foolish darling,' he said. 'Perhaps I may join thee on thy journey before long.'

Varrel, who was like a man half-crazed, would have rung for help, but Colonel Lomond, by a gesture, forbade him to do so. 'You and I, sir,' said the colonel, 'have still our little business to arrange.'

'Great Heaven! what would you more?' exclaimed Sir Derwent.

'Revenge my daughter's death!' said Lomond gloomily.

'Her death was a pure accident.'

'Granted. She died to save my life, and that life I now devote to avenging her memory. What I said before, I say again—only one of us two shall quit this room alive. Here are two pistols—one of them is loaded, the other is unloaded. Choose one of them. In three minutes, that clock on the chimney-piece will strike the hour. At the first stroke, we will fire across this table; and may Heaven have mercy on the soul of one of us!'

'It would be murder!' said Varrel in a low voice, while a cold sweat broke out on his ashen face.

'Call it by what name you will,' said Lomond 'but as I have said, so it shall be. Dare to refuse, and by the great Fiend of Darkness, whose true son you are, I will thrash you with yonder whip within an inch of your life, and send you forth into the world branded for ever as a coward and a rogue!'

Sir Derwent wiped the perspiration off his forehead with his lace-bordered handkerchief, and his dry lips moved in faint protest. His courage was beginning to waver. The slow patient ferocity of his enemy was not without its effect upon him.

'Choose!' said Colonel Lomond as he laid a brace of pistols on the table. Varrel hesitated for an instant which to pick, and Lomond smiled grimly. No fresh arrangement of position was necessary, they being already on opposite sides of the table, on which poor Lenore's embroidery was still lying, as she had cast it aside in the first flutter of hearing her lover's signal.

'Colonel Lomond, I must make a last protest against this bloody business,' said Varrel.

Again the colonel smiled. 'In ten seconds,' he said, 'the clock will strike. Be ready.'

There was a great contrast between the two men as they stood thus, fronting what for one of them must be inevitable death. Colonel Lomond's bronzed cheek looked even darker than usual, and his eyes seemed to burn with intense hate as he stood gazing at his antagonist from under his lowering brows; but his extended arm was firm as a bar of steel. Varrel was evidently nervous. His lips had faded to a dull bluish white; he pressed one hand to his chest occasionally, as if to still the throbbing heart beneath; while the other, which held the pistol, trembled slightly in spite of him.

Four seconds—three seconds—two seconds. The

deathly brooding stillness that pervaded the room was something awful. One second. The silvery bell of the little French clock had not completed its first stroke before the two triggers were pulled. A flash, a report, and a gush of smoke from one of the weapons, and Sir Derwent Varrel, shot through the heart, fell back dead.

'So perishes a thorough scoundrel,' said Colonel Lomond as he gazed into the face of his dead enemy.

Suddenly a door opened, and shewed a very old lady, with white hair, and clad in a white dressing-robe, standing in the entrance. From the movements of her hands, you understood at once that she was blind, or nearly so.

'Henry! Henry! where are you?' she cried. 'Some one fired a pistol just now. Oh, tell me that you are not hurt!' and she advanced a step or two into the room.

A spasm of anguish passed over the face of Colonel Lomond. 'I am here and well, mother,' he said. 'Pray, return to your own room. I am sorry to have disturbed you.'

'And Lenore,' said the old lady plaintively, 'why has not Lenore been to kiss me, and say good-night? Has the child gone to bed?'

'Lenore is asleep, mother,' said the colonel in a whisper. 'We must not disturb her. She shall come to you in the morning.'

'Strange—strange,' murmured the old lady; 'she never forgot me before;' and with that she turned and went slowly away, groping with her hands before her; and the colonel falling on his knees, buried his face in the white dress of his dead daughter. At which point the whole machinery of my dream dissolved away, and I awoke.

There was no more sleep for me that night. So lifelike and vivid was my extraordinary dream, so much did it seem like a part of my own personal experience, that the effect left by it on my mind was not lightly to be shaken off. Lenore's wild cry as she flung herself into her father's arms, the voices of Varrel and Lomond in angry dispute, seemed still to echo in my brain; and I felt that every minute incident of that terrible tragedy must henceforth be, as it were, a part of my own life. Impelled by some vague feeling which I could not resist, I quitted my bedroom, and wandered, half dressed, into the great desolate drawing-room, the scene of all the strange incidents of my dream. The ghostly splendour of the moonlight filled it no longer; it was as cold, dark, and silent as some vast tomb. As I stood in the doorway, longing, and yet afraid to enter, a gust of night-wind sweeping up the valley, rattled the windows of the old mansion; and what seemed like a low responsive sigh came to me out of the gloom, a sigh so human, so unutterably sad, that with a thrill and a shudder, I stepped backward, and shut the door.

I was very glad when ten o'clock came, and brought Mr Lomond, punctual to the minute.—'It is only what I expected,' he said, when I had given him an outline of my singular dream; 'and I may now tell you, sir, that precisely the same dream which impressed you so strongly last night is dreamed by every one, no matter who they may be, the first time they sleep at Gledhills, and never afterwards; and this Curse—for I may truly call it by that name—has hung over the house from the night on which the tragedy, which you witnessed only in imagination, was worked out in all its diabolical reality within these walls. You will now

understand why I requested you to sleep one night at Gledhills before finally deciding that you would take the house; and it remains for you to consider whether your wife, whose health you say is delicate, could undergo such an ordeal as she would assuredly have to pass through the first night of her sojourn under this roof.'

I thanked Mr Lomond warmly for his conscientiousness in the matter, but decided that it would be unwise to subject my wife to such a trial.

'Nevertheless,' said Mr Lomond with a smile as I parted from him at the door, 'I do not despair of finding a tenant for the house, one of these fine days, whose nervous system bids defiance to ghostly company.'

Indeed, last summer, travelling down that way, I made inquiry of the station-master, and was glad to learn that Gledhills had at last found an occupant in the person of a wealthy but eccentric bachelor of botanical pursuits; and further, that Mr Lomond himself was as hale and hearty as ever.

THE MONTH:

SCIENCE AND ARTS.

SUNDAY prophets have risen up of late to warn England of her downfall. In about three generations more, they declare, we shall have burned up all our coal; and with the coal, away go all our trade and all our greatness. Of course, all the energetic part of the population will emigrate to America, where there is coal enough for thousands of years, and this busy island of ours will become a thinly-peopled agricultural country, which any one may seize who thinks it worth the trouble. That the question thus raised is important, must be allowed. It has excited discussion. But no one need despair as yet; nor should certain facts be left out of view—namely, that England was great and powerful before she began to dig her coal; and that her inhabitants regard difficulty as a stimulus to exertion, and do not know when they are beaten.

Some of the Friday evening lectures at the Royal Institution have presented subjects which can hardly fail to be interesting beyond the audience to whom they were delivered. In one of these lectures, Sir Henry James, of the Royal Engineers, gave an account of the Ordnance Survey of Jerusalem. We are familiar enough with this kind of topographical work in our own country; but to hear of an Ordnance Survey of the Holy Land—to find modern science mixing itself up with traditions of the earliest times, with our Scriptural associations, and with the Crusaders and Saracens, inspires a notion of incongruity. It is true, nevertheless, that a party of red-coated English Sappers have taken an accurate plan of the City of David, and carried a line of levelling all across the country from the Mediterranean at Jaffa to the Dead Sea, the object being to settle a long-debated question—the difference of level between the two seas; and we now learn from Sir H. James that it is settled. The difference is great; for the level of the Dead Sea is 1292 feet below that of the Mediterranean; and the highest ground passed

over in the line of the survey (Mount Scopus) is 2724 feet above the level of the Mediterranean. The Mount of Olives is 2665 feet, Mount Zion 2550 feet, and Mount Moriah 2440 feet above the same level. Due precautions were taken, by cutting marks in the solid rock on the route, to preserve a means of testing the survey at some future time, and of rendering it meanwhile useful to travellers, or to the party now engaged in the exploration of Palestine.

In describing Jerusalem, Sir H. James states that the city 'occupies a space exactly equal to the area included between Oxford Street and Piccadilly, and between Bond Street and Park Lane:' about three-quarters of a mile in length, and half a mile in width; from which description ordinary readers may form a familiar notion of the size of a city which figures so largely in the world's history. One other particular will interest those who are taking pains to improve the water-supply in London and elsewhere, and who regard civil engineering as a modern art. Jerusalem was supplied even in ancient days from two sources, high-level and low-level: the water flowed through tunnels, and crossed a deep valley by means of a syphon made of stone in lengths of about five feet, connected by collar and socket joints.

Dr Bence Jones lectured on a remarkable physiological discovery which he has recently made—namely, that there exists in the bodies of animals a fluorescent substance closely resembling quinine. We gave an account some time ago of the doctor's experiments to ascertain the time in which a dose of lithium would find its way into different parts of the body; he was trying similar experiments with quinine when he made the discovery above mentioned, for it appears that on applying the test in cases where no quinine had been administered, he found that man and all animals possess, in every part of the body, the most characteristic peculiarity of the bark of the cinchona-trees of Peru. It is not a mere optical resemblance, for on testing chemically the animal quinine, as we may call it, proof was obtained of its being an alkaloid, and closely related to the vegetable quinine. Dr Bence Jones, not having yet been able to crystallise the newly-discovered substance, proposes to name it *animal quinoidine*. He suggests that the injurious effects which sometimes follow the taking of a dose of quinine may arise from its doubling the quantity already in the body; and he thinks that in the new facts here noticed, there is a hopeful prospect of an explanation as to the cause and cure of ague, and as to the treatment of diseases in parts of the body external to the blood-vessels. 'May we not expect,' he asks, 'that among the multitude of new substances which synthetical chemistry is now constantly forming, some medicines may be discovered which may not only have power to control the excessive chemical changes of the textures in fevers and inflammations, but may be able to remove the products of insufficient chemical action even in those diseases which affect the non-vascular

textures, as, for example, in cataract and in gout?' This is a most important question. It seems to open a new field for the practical application of medicine, and to extend the limits of physiological research. Besides being lectured on at the Royal Institution, it has been made the subject of a paper at the Royal Society, and published in the *Proceedings*. The more widely it becomes known the better.

Dr Percy, who may be called Ventilator-general to the Houses of Parliament, has just presented to the First Commissioner of the Office of Works his first Report on the warming, ventilating, and lighting of the Houses. It is satisfactory to learn that the ventilation is very good, notwithstanding the complaints made at times by members who judge of the state of the atmosphere solely by their own personal feelings; and in one essential particular it is perfect, for an unlimited quantity of air can be supplied. On the night that leave was asked to bring in the Electoral Franchise Bill, about 1,500,000 cubic feet, or from nine to ten million gallons of air, passed through the House of Commons every hour. The system adopted is exhaustion—that is, the vitiated air is drawn off through upcast shafts, in which an ascending current is produced by coke-fires. But some parts of the building, including some of the Committee Rooms, are not connected with the system; so that when crowded, as the rooms occasionally are, Dr Percy says it would be as hopeless to attempt to ventilate them properly as to try to ventilate a cask of red herrings. The quantity of gas burnt throughout the building in a year is nearly 12,000,000 cubic feet, at a cost of £3500. The air-courses are hundreds in number, with air-valves in all parts of the building, and enormous horizontal smoke-flues, with hundreds of chimneys, besides fifteen miles of steam-pipes, with about twelve hundred stop-cocks and valves. In addition to which, 'there is a multitude of holes and crannies, as intricate and tortuous as the windings of a rabbit warren.' These are remarkable particulars, and they enable us to judge, from an unusual point of view, of the magnitude of the house in which parliament carries on the business of the nation.

Mr C. O. Cator, in a paper published in the *Proceedings* of the Meteorological Society, compares all the elements of the weather with each other, and for each month of 1865, and makes a statement concerning the price of wheat and mortality, which will perhaps surprise those who think that cheap bread and good health always run together. During the first three months of the year, he says, while the price of wheat remained steadily low, the mortality remained steadily high. Then, while the price of wheat rose to the end of May, the mortality fell during the same time. In June, there was a fall in the price of wheat, and the mortality rose; and after that, wheat rose again, almost to the maximum of the year, at the end of August, and the mortality fell to the minimum of the year. Of course, some explanation of these results could be found in a comparison of the price of wheat with the temperature, but they are sufficiently remarkable to command attention nevertheless.

We gather from a paper read before the Institute of British Architects, on the Water-supply of Rome, Ancient and Modern, that a company is about to use one of the old aqueducts for a high-service supply to Rome of the coldest water the inhabitants ever had to drink. To which we may add, that at the last conversazione of the President of the Royal Society, Mr J. F. Bateman gave an exposition of his project for supplying London with water from the sources of the Severn.

News of the discovery of a mammoth in the frozen soil of arctic Siberia has just been received from the Imperial Academy of Sciences at St Petersburg, to the satisfaction of palæontologists, who are hopeful that it will afford an opportunity for a complete and trustworthy description of the ancient creature. It was discovered in 1864 by a Samoyed, near the bay of Tas, the eastern arm of the Gulf of Obi, imbedded in the earth, covered with hair, and the skin apparently entire. This state of preservation is due to the almost perennial frost which prevails on the northernmost coast of Asia, and it is to be hoped that partial exposure to the air will not, as in a former instance, have occasioned a sudden decomposition. In February of the present year, the Academy above referred to commissioned a well-known palæontologist, one of their body, to visit the spot, and note its geology, together with every possible particular concerning the mammoth. We may therefore hope to have, in due time, a detailed report of the discovery, as well as of the appearance of the animal, and should circumstances prove favourable, of the contents of its stomach. The subject is the more interesting, inasmuch as it involves the question of a change of climate since the age when the mammoth roamed along the shores of what is now a frozen sea.

The Geographical Society's *Proceedings* contains a paper on the Rovuma, a river of Eastern Africa, which has some interest for general readers, as it is by the Rovuma that Dr Livingstone hopes to enter the country and renew his explorations. Its mouth lies north of Cape Delgado, within the jurisdiction of the Sultan of Zanzibar, and opens to the sea without bar or surf, in a spacious bay. Being thus easy of access, the river offers unusual facilities for access to the interior. In his last expedition, Dr Livingstone, accompanied by Dr Kirk, ascended it a hundred miles, until stopped by a barrier of rocks, from which, on the next attempt, he will probably pursue his journey by land. He will then be not far from the region of the great lakes, and the head-waters of the Zambesi, Congo, and Nile, which he is likely to regard as a promising scene of exploration. The lower part of the river is lined by mangroves; but, as Dr Kirk writes, 'when this unhealthy region is passed, we enter a plain covered with heavy timber, thick bush, and gigantic grass, bound together and festooned by brilliant-flowered tropical plants, teeming with animal life. In the water, there are herds of hippopotami, easy of approach, not having been hunted with firearms, but sufficiently bold to attack a boat with their formidable tusks.' Should Dr Livingstone succeed in solving the problem of the water-shed of Central Africa, and the ultimate source of the Nile, he will achieve the crowning exploit of his travels.—We may add to this, that Dr Kirk has sailed to undertake fresh explorations in Eastern Africa, of which we may hope to hear in the course of a few months.

To those foreign and domestic savans who have been accustomed to attend the meetings of the

Institution of Civil Engineers in Great George Street, it will be pleasant to learn that the untiring civility and kindness of the honorary secretary, Mr Charles Manby, have received a fresh acknowledgment from one of the sovereigns of Europe, in his nomination by the king of Sweden as a Knight Commander of the order of Wasa, a decoration not before conferred on any Englishman in the present century, besides Telford and Rennie.

MY CHOICE.

You ask me if the face is fair
Whose image sweet has power
To brace me for the daily care,
To cheer the lonely hour.

Full many a face less fair than hers
Has won in rout and ball
The hearts of ardent worshippers,
The heart-felt praise of all.

But not for giddy festal nights
Keeps she her charms in store;
Her face with bounteous sunshine lights
The dwellings of the poor.

The simple smiles of children brought
From haunts of hate and sin
To learn of Love that passes thought,
Are those she seeks to win.

O happy infant ears that catch
Her sweet and earnest calls!
O happy doors within whose latch
Her welcome shadow falls!

Would that her smile my lot might bless,
And in my hamlet be
Heaven's light amid the cottages,
The light of home to me!

In the present Number is completed the Tale of

MIRK ABBEY,

to be followed on 7th July by an Original
Serial Story, by THOMAS SPEIGHT,
entitled

BROUGHT TO LIGHT.

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IN OCCUPATION.

IN TWO PARTS.—PART I.

IF the reader of 'The Boy's First Fight' * has any kindly feeling towards 'the boy,' I will ask him just to return and glance at the battle-field of Waterloo, and then to take a walk with me to Paris.

It is nearly dark—just light enough to shew the Duke himself, smiling (how rarely the hard and sharp old soldier *could* smile!), and giving a kindly word, and a never-forgotten shake of the hand, to a subaltern unknown alike to fame and to him. Here come the Prussians! Their line of march crosses us just at this point. They pause not, but carry on the pursuit—which we leave to them, nothing loath. Late, late into that night was I roused from sleep by the braying of their horrid trumpets, as regiment after regiment saluted us in passing with *God Save the King*.

And now we held a *soirée*—a sort of conversatione. The gossip was far more interesting than usual in such assemblies. Of the refreshments, the less said the better. As to solids, I fared like 'Maister Michael Scot's man—sought meat, and gat none.' Liquids were worse. In the dark, I rashly adventured on a drink of what was said to be water. Its real composition I never knew, but have thought of it in after-days, when reading of the stuff which Mohammed, in contrast to the iced sherbet of the Faithful, describes as the potion of the damned. I had swallowed not a little before I was able to stop and fling away the rest with a shudder. Well I might, if the tales were true about the sort of things that were flung down the wells that day. There was trade going on: the men had crosses and orders to sell. I bought none, for which omission I was soundly rated afterwards by my female relatives. A good deal was doing, too, in horseflesh: two were offered me at fabulously low prices, so low that I would have nothing to say to them, and I was right: they proved to be useless from wounds. Now for rest! Last night, the French had slept on this spot.

There lay, arranged by experienced hands, the top of the ridge of what had been a farmhouse roof—stuffed it was with wealth of hay, and unoccupied. In I crawled, and in spite of Prussian trumpets, that night was to me as peaceful as the day had been wild.

Up rose the sun, and so did we. 'It was idlesse all.'

'Where's my servant?'

'Shot through the knee, sir. But you can have —. His master's killed.'

My new valet made his appearance, and not empty-handed. Whence it came, Heaven knows, but he produced a fowl, and offered it for breakfast. All I could contribute was some rice I had got out of a wagon bearing the address of the Imperial Guard; and so we made a joyous picnic. After which he had more good in store for me.

'Would you like a clean shirt, sir?'

'Of all things.'

'Well, sir, I can't say it is quite clean, but it's almost as good: master only wore it once.'

And on inspection, it looked so little the worse for wear, in comparison of my own, that I was glad to put on the dead man's garment.

So, fed and clothed, I strolled out for a little walk, to spy, not the nakedness, but the curiosities of the land. It was strewn with a medley of all imaginable military equipments and stores. So far to the front, there were few ugly sights; there had been no fighting here. The worst were the horses—standing in helpless suffering, or lying about, many of them unhurt, only from exhaustion incapable of standing. I put some corn to the lips of one; they opened and took it in. Another handful, and he got upon his legs, shook himself, and stared at me wofully. Poor fellow! I had better have left him to his insensibility.

A flash, a crackling, a rush of the men to the piles of arms! What is it? Some thoughtless fellow had picked up a bundle of quick-match (used by the French artillery, like reed pens, dipped in some yellow devilry), and stupidly flung them into one of the fires that were burning about. The explosion sent the fire flying in all directions.

* See *Chambers's Journal*, No. 110.

Close by were the arms with the cartridge-boxes hanging to them. Fortunately, no mischief ensued. Only two days before, when the fighting was just over at Quatre Bras, an officer of the 30th, walking hastily by the piles of arms, knocked one down; a musket went off, and killed him on the spot.

A roar and a clatter just behind me. I turned, and saw a black cloud and a wheel sailing into the air. A French ammunition-wagon had blown up. (A spare wheel was carried at the tail of them.) It turned out that two British soldiers, never stopping to think what was in the wagon, had been chopping up the wood-work to light their fire. They had escaped all that fighting, and now a spark had torn them to pieces—so completely, that the only remains found were part of a gaiter (the button shewing the number of their regiment) and a lump of something that looked like ill-cured bacon, such as the Maories make in New Zealand.

'Fall in!' I found myself in command of my company, and got orders to see that the muskets were unloaded, for fear of accident; so I marched them to the nearest bank, and fired into it. The earth shook, and we had done with destruction.

And now the regiment was formed for a march. At the last moment, came a message to me from a brother-officer. 'If you please, sir, Mr ——— begs you'll bring this horse [a French trooper] on for him till he comes up. He's away on duty.' Just then the word was given to move, so I mounted; but the brute would only retreat. Twice he drove me through the ranks, stern foremost; then I jumped off, and left him to his fate.

Going off the field, we passed the last trace of war—a large farmhouse in flames, adjoining the road, which was very narrow, so that we had to pass unpleasantly close. The folding-gates were open; the immense farm-yard, seen through them, was one furnace. The heat was almost painful.

It is well known how apt a young gentleman of good expectations is to come to grief; and more than once such has been my lot, as it was now. The custom on service was, that the officers of each company messed together, and the captain provided the canteen—a box containing the equivalents for plate, glass, china, and cutlery, with a lot of campaigning knickknacks of approved utility. Simple enough they were in general. But my captain was a luxurious one, and had bought a pair of canteens, the admiration of the regiment—of all, at least, except perhaps a few hardened veterans, who might call them effeminate. His subalterns were objects of envy to all the rest. But, alas, he was wounded, and left in the rear; his baggage would follow him. The company's mess was broken up. The other members of it joined old friends in other companies. I was a raw recruit, a stranger to them all, and at first felt lonely enough; though I soon found some to take compassion on me. What was worse, when the regimental baggage came up, mine was not among it. Great destruction was known to have taken place in the retreat, or rather flight to Brussels. In all probability, my kit was gone. I was worse off than the men in the ranks, for they had their knapsacks. I had absolutely nothing but the clothes I wore. As to the ornamental details of the toilet, I will only say that I always contrived to appear on parade clean enough to pass muster, and, under the circumstances, I venture to think that was rather creditable to the handiness of a beginner. At night, I had not even a greatcoat. I lay down as I marched; but I could always get

straw, or some substitute for it. It was summer-time, and I did perfectly well.

The magnitude of our success now began to be evident; we learned that the enemy was utterly broken and dispersed, and that we were marching on Paris. No one now can tell what a magical sound that was. As we had finished in the forefront of the battle, so were we now leading the advance. It was felt to be our proper place, and all were in high spirits.

The second or third night, we found ourselves between Maubeuge and Bavay, on the very spot where, a fortnight before, those one hundred thousand French had been massed. Now, but for us, all was as quiet as a cover after the hounds have gone away with their fox. Two or three marches more brought us to Le Cateau; here we squatted in some fine meadows. Turf, shady trees, and running water made a veritable gipsy paradise. We were promised, and got, three days' rest in it, to get ourselves to rights. Such had been the scramble of the Waterloo gathering, that regiments were marching into action up to the very end, and some did not arrive till all was over. Chiefly from these new-comers, two detachments were now selected, and sent to attack Cambrai and Peronne. The latter bore the name of a virgin fortress. But there was universal dismay among the enemy, and very little resistance was made. We heard the firing, as we were enjoying ourselves by the waters of ——— I never heard the name of the little stream.

On one of these sunny afternoons, I was lying on my face in the soft grass, cozily basking, and chatting with a veteran boy by my side. A sort of Scotch Achilles he was indeed, though, for Achilles, he made rather a startling confession.

'The first time I went into action,' he said, 'I was in a regular funk. I couldn't help it. But I felt sure I had disgraced myself, and fully expected to be turned out of the regiment. To my surprise, nobody found fault with me—nobody shunned me. I took heart, and thought: Well, it's a very kind of them; I'll try and do better next time; and I did. But still it was bad; oh! shocking bad; and still no notice was taken. Practice became frequent. Most days we were under fire, more or less; till I got broken in, and gradually came to behave pretty much like the others. But I can't say I ever really enjoyed any fighting till the other day.'

Our three days' grace came to an end, and away we walked. One evening, the word was passed: 'We are to surprise St Quentin. By two in the morning, the regiment will be under arms. No signals to be made. The most absolute silence necessary.' Tents we had none: ours were at the bottom of the Brussels' canal. So all that was to be done was to rise up, as a wild beast does from his lair. Excellently it was done. I was awaked by a tap on the shoulder, and a whisper in my ear: 'Up with you!' and up I stood. The men had a little more to do; but the doing of it was inaudible and invisible, for the night was a pitch-dark one. Napier gives the number of minutes in which, from their awakening, the old Light Division could get under arms. These men had belonged to it, and made good what Napier says. There they stood, eight hundred men, ready for anything, and would be felt before they were heard or seen. There they stood, and got no word to move. What's amiss? The defenders of St Quentin had given it up, and we lay down to finish our nap.

A few days after, on the march, we fell in with a battery of artillery which had formerly served with the regiment. The men were mostly old acquaintances; there was a hearty recognition and mutual inquiries. I heard a rapid fire of question and answer, in which there seemed no variety. 'How's So-and-so?'—'Dead.' That was the burden of the funeral-song. It seemed to shock both sides. We had met gaily and parted sadly. Very different—very extraordinary were our next acquaintances. A queer troop it was! We were fairly puzzled, and but slowly arrived at the conclusion that the work of our own hands was before us—the sovereign and the court we had helped to restore! Louis XVIII. and his tail, travelling to take possession! Not Frankenstein himself could have been more disgusted at the thing that he had raised up. A most undignified appearance they made indeed; and our men were not commonly civil—truth to tell, I heard hisses.

We had now settled down to a very regular mode of life. At three in the morning, we jumped up; it would be so cold then that I did not like to touch the hilt of my sword, and the heat would be as excessive before the day was over. Our invaluable servants had a cup of hot chocolate ready—that, with hard biscuit, made our breakfast. They got their own, and had everything packed in time to join the battalion, which moved off immediately. One morning, as we were waiting for the bugle, and warming our hands over the fire, a peasant forced his way rudely enough among us, laughing grimly at our effeminacy, which needed fire on a summer morning. 'Look there!' he said, holding out two frightful stumps. 'I left my fingers in Russia. That was something like cold.'

The march, twelve or fifteen miles, was mere play, and the rest of the day was our own. Rations were regular; field-peas abundant and just ripe; they made a capital addition to our stew. Officers would make foraging excursions to pick up fowls, or any other provisions to be had for money, and we paid for all, like Englishmen. But we could not go far, and very little was offered, though we, in advance of the whole army, always came upon fresh ground. The orders against plunder were most rigid. Not a man might leave the bivouac for water, unless regularly marched by a corporal. The fact was, some of our precious allies had taken to pillaging, and the Duke was determined to put it down. Our own men were really very well conducted, and indignant at suffering for the misconduct of fellows whom they thoroughly despised. And this feeling was shared by the officers. Such restrictions were felt as an insult to the regiment. Often, in the villages, we were pressed to stay the night, generally by the women. I heard afterwards that some Prussian officers had yielded to such temptation, and that there had been cases of murder; but there was between the French and Prussians a bitterness with which we had nothing to do.

I was one of a party of three—one mounted—who were foraging in a village, when some of the people came in crying for help; some Germans had broken in, and were plundering. Off we set; soon got sight of the offenders; sent our cavalry to cut off their retreat, and then we two charged into a lot of some twenty foreigners, who were helping themselves. They ran for it, forded a river, and took to a wood; but our active little dragoon made one prisoner. Him we marched into the centre of the village, cut some sticks, made him strip, tied

him to a tree, and told the Frenchmen to lay on. But they were afraid: nothing could induce them to touch him, and he evidently thought he was going to get off. I felt a sensation of rage, and the next moment felt myself flogging, and my two companions helping me. He got a right good thrashing, and was then turned into the river, to follow his comrades.

But I had another adventure of that sort, which might have proved more serious. There was with us a battalion of the German Legion; capital old soldiers, but infamous plunderers. I fell in with two of them—powerful grenadiers—behaving very ill. They had their muskets—I nothing but a sword, and I was but a baby in their hands. Without a thought, or I should hardly have ventured it, I collared them both, and have often since wondered why they did not finish me. It was more than a mile from camp, and they might have done it with perfect safety. Perhaps it was the habit of discipline—perhaps contempt of the boy. But I marched them gravely to their own regiment, and gave them up to their adjutant, making him take down the charge. He smiled as he did so, and pretended to put them in arrest. I saw how the matter was, and thought I had done enough.

The country through which we were passing was one of gentle slopes, and quite open; the general crop, tall rye. I have lost my way in it so completely, that it was only by the sound of the bands I have been able to steer for the camp.

I one day met a Prussian cavalry regiment surging right through it, like a fleet at sea. They were marching in column of sections, twelve or fifteen abreast. The trumpets would give a flourish. The leading section struck up a verse of some soldiers' song, and sung—as trained Germans do—beautifully. The whole regiment took up the chorus. Then another flourish of trumpets. The second section sung a second verse; and so on. And all the time, the harvest was being trampled under their horses' feet!

If, as I would fain hope, the reader has by this time learned to take something like an interest in my comfort and respectability, he will be glad to hear of my getting a good wash; all the more desirable, as we were now really drawing near to that centre of civilisation and elegance, Paris. Comes, then, to me a brother-rough, and says: 'Here's a nice old chateau. The people have run away—only an old woman in the house. Let's make ourselves comfortable.' We entered; about half-a-dozen—mere boys, and very innocent. The dame was discreet, and left us to ourselves. Such a pond in the garden! and such a hot day! Here goes! In five minutes we were in the water—rinsing our garments, and spreading them on the banks to dry. Then we well and truly washed ourselves, and dried ourselves in the same blessed sun; then stepped into our clean clothes—and emerged perfect puritans. The old woman was very friendly and compassionate. 'You're going up to Paris?' she asked.

'Yes!'—slightly triumphant.

'Ah, poor children! you don't know the men of the faubourg. I do.' (The old wretch had no doubt witnessed the Reign of Terror.) 'They'll cut all your throats, they will!'

At length, to-day we were to see Paris. All went on like other days, till we halted, as usual, for five minutes' rest in a lane. There was a rising-

ground in front; a few officers strolled up it, came back rather hastily, and proclaimed—Paris! The column moved on—topped the rise. Before us was a large dome, glittering in the sun; we had heard of the gilt roof of the 'Invalides' (the French Chelsea), and knew it at once. The city of our dreams lay full in view. Every tower, every building, had a historical name—but we thought not of them; we had eyes for only one object—Montmartre. Rumour had told us that the French were by this time very formidably intrenched before Paris, and that the stronghold of all was Montmartre. There was no mistaking it. Wicked and dangerous it looked—rising sheer out of the plain—one mound of newly turned earth—one vast battery. Our oldest hands looked grave. 'If we are to go at that, it will be no joke.'

Blücher, with his Prussians, had been before Paris for some days; Wellington was known to have gone up and held council with him. 'Marshal Forwards', as his men delighted to call him, wanted now to go straight forward. The fleeing foe had turned to bay—he would finish him at a blow. But the Duke, an economist in everything, was habitually sparing of the lives of his men—feeling always how few they were, and how matchless. There was no occasion to engage at disadvantage, so he confronted his enemy, ready to strike, when and where his quick eye might catch opportunity. Meanwhile, he sent the gluttonous fighter to do what little fighting remained—to turn the French flank—and we sat down on the heights above Montjuorency. Below us a plain, cultivated like a garden; Montmartre rising out of it, as I have said. Almost at our feet, the town of St Denis, where, as I afterwards saw, a deadly trap was set, well and skillfully concealed. Over the background spread the capital of Europe—looking as peaceful as it might do to-day. Across the plain ran a high-road, bordered with avenues of tall trees. The only living object in this plain was a *redette* (mounted sentry) of our German Legion. For what purpose he was there, none of us could guess; but a parcel of cowardly fellows came out of St Denis, hiding behind the trees of the avenue, and popping at him in pure wantonness. Our hill was covered with anxious and indignant spectators. The steady German kept walking his horse backwards and forwards, impassive as a target. 'Ah! they've hit him! See! his cap's off!' He coolly dismounted to pick it up, and coolly resumed his walk. It seemed an age while this cruel work was going on; at length, to our exceeding joy, he was withdrawn. The clumsy blackguards never hit him, after all.

There was a bustle. What now? The Prussian army defiling past us for the second time, on their way to turn the French. Of their infantry, perhaps every third man carried a chair—plunder. Checks on the march were constant, and whenever one occurred, the chair-men sat down to rest. Numbers of the cavalry were leading their horses, and carrying the saddles on their own backs. On inquiry, I found this was the punishment for neglecting their horses.

Already we were beginning to taste the good things of Paris. Our knowing old campaigners had somehow supplied themselves with wine, in buckets and all kind of vessels. Yet they did not get drunk. I wondered to see it allowed. But there seemed a tacit understanding between officers and men that the indulgence should not be abused.

There came a sudden order to march. O the swearing! It seemed to act as a sort of safety-valve. The buckets were spitefully kicked over—the ground was literally drenched with wine—and we moved as steady as if wine had been water.

This night I made myself exceptionally comfortable. Almost the only point I cared about in my sleeping arrangements was, that my head should be raised. Now I had found a beautiful sloping bank. Willows were there, and rushes; and I 'biggit a bower' which Bessie Bell and Mary Gray might have envied. Above all, I got plenty of clean, smooth, wheaten straw, out of which I manufactured something almost like a mattress. Down I lay. To go to sleep at once was waste of enjoyment. I was, not positively, but superlatively luxurious; ay, and comparatively too, as I listened to heavy firing on the right, and knew how the Prussians were passing that night. Next morning, we all knew that Vandamme had repulsed them, with the loss of two thousand men. (This was looked on as a flea-bite, and amidst the general success, absolutely forgotten; but I dare say the French remember it.)

My sleep was profound. I woke staring: nothing over me but the sky, or under me but the earth. I had gone to sleep on a bed of straw, beneath a canopy of boughs. I rubbed my eyes, looked up, and the mystery was explained—there, on the bank above, stood my hut. I had slidden off my smooth and sloping couch, down to the flat below, without ever waking.

That morning, I was sent on picket to a wind-mill on a rising-ground, with orders to watch and report any movements of the enemy. A mere post of observation. The miller's house was plundered and deserted; a scientific rummage produced only a little flour, with which my men proceeded to make damper (unleavened cakes). The oven was found to be full of something; they pulled out the poor house-dog, with a bayonet-wound through his heart—dead in defence of his master's property. My sentries had nothing to tell—all was hushed. Around were vineyards and fruit plantations; the men were busy baking; I quietly on the watch. Presently, I heard 'Peep! peep!' and out came a fowl from the vines. I kept still; another answered the signal. All quiet; so temptingly quiet, that, one by one, the whole stock of poultry, which must have fled from the Prussians, came out, and put themselves into my hands. It sounds like taking an ungenerous advantage of such touching confidence, but I confess to chicken-pie.

While it was preparing, I had decided to attempt sealing the mill, which, at first, had looked too ruinous. Up I got, and swept the horizon with my glass. Here and there, a cloud of dust—no more. What is that flag about, on yonder tower—lowered, raised, three times in succession? I was too far off to make out the colours; but I know, since, that the towers were those of Notre Dame; and I conjecture that what I saw was the lowering of the tri-colour, and the hoisting of the white flag. All of a sudden, the mill began to shake so fearfully that I ran to the ladder by instinct; it was only a brother-officer coming to relieve me.

On my way back to the regiment, I met the pontoon-train going to throw a bridge over the Seine. At the risk of affronting Volunteers, I will describe what pontoons then were, and how used (probably modern science has improved them). Light, flat-bottomed, metal boats, which accompany

the army on carriages. You draw a line across your river—float a pontoon—make it fast to the line—anchor it, head and stern; then another, and another, at proper intervals, all across the stream; lay planks from boat to boat—and there is your bridge. Safe enough, if you do not overload it; but it waves up and down under any passing weight, and ignorant horses are apt to disapprove of it. Before it was ready, there was the Duke waiting, and there also was a party of cavalry. The first horses pawed the planks, and shied; the men dismounted to lead them. The Duke laughed. 'Oh, for shame!' he said; 'ride!' He sent them over, and rode after them. In a short time, we got an ugly report that he had been made prisoner. I never heard what foundation there was for it; but certainly that handful of cavalry was the only force across the river with him, until we followed, to attack, as we were told, the bridge of Neuilly, over another winding of the Seine. As we followed the bank, the bridge came in sight. On we went, steadily, in column of companies; mine was one of the last. I saw the leading company, nearer and nearer; saw them wheel to the left, close up to the bridge—looked for the smoke, listened for the rattle; there was neither, and they were quietly crossing. The bridge had been abandoned. It was mined; I saw the places as we passed. No troops shewed; but Lord! (as Pepps would say) Lord! how the women did abuse us! And for a mile or more, there was not a whole pane of glass to be seen; who broke them, or why, I cannot tell. The Prussians had not been here. Probably the retreating French. Once more I was in luck. We took up our quarters in a suburban village—Argenteuil, I think. No billeting. I picked out for myself a snug-looking villa, and walked in. An old respectable servant met me, and explained that he was left in charge, with orders to make any British officer comfortable, and with a gentlemanly request that I would not waste or destroy anything. I assured him I had not such a thought, and we were friends at once. He shewed me over the place. Delicious it was! Such a pavilion, in such a garden! 'Where would I sleep? What would I like for dinner?' To keep all this to myself would be too sulky and greedy. At the same time, I must not trespass too far on the old butler's good-will. First, I fixed on my bedroom. How I did glide that bed! Remember, I had not slept in one for three weeks. I would have turned in at once, but it was broad day. So I thought mightily of dinner, named an hour, said I would bring two friends, and left the rest to him. He seemed delighted to be so treated, and promised I should be well satisfied. I was now going out, but he pressed me so hard to take something first, that I consented, and he brought me a bottle of wine. My years have been many, so have my wanderings—in the course of which I have seen worshipful society in many lands, and tasted, God be thanked, a very fair quantity of very good wine, but never any to equal that bottle of dry champagne.

I picked up two comrades, and invited them to dinner. 'Come with me at once,' I said; 'we can amuse ourselves till it is ready.' On the way, one of them pricked up his ears. 'Do you hear that bugle?' The assembly! There was no denying it. We had to make the best of our way to the regiment—which was just marching—were kept moving till dark. I got no dinner at all, or supper either, and I slept in a burying-ground, with

my head on a grave. O sublunary hopes, what are ye!

Next morning, I found we were in a large walled enclosure (I have searched for it since, but it does not exist). I strolled out into the high-road, which ran by it. Twenty yards from me were two English *védettes*, carbine in hand; ten yards in front of them sat two French ones, in like attitudes—the first French soldiers I had seen since Waterloo. Presently, I saw a small party of cavalry coming across the fields: it was a French corporal with the relief. He posted fresh sentries (ours sitting like statues). Then he touched his horse's side, and walked up to one of the Britons, pulled out a case-bottle, and tendered it with a bow. It was accepted, with another, and justice done to it. Like hospitality was shewn to the other Englishman; and then the corporal, rejoining his party, went off as he had come. Such are the courtesies of war.

But the war was over—further resistance hopeless; and no one was surprised to hear that the French army was to retire behind the Loire, and we were to enter Paris. Where was Bonaparte? Gone, no one knew where—no one seemed to care. Paris ours! That was enough, and we prepared to make our entry. The colours were not taken out of their cases, for there was hardly anything to take: they were mere rags; and one of the poles was a lancer's, the original one having been snapped in two by the shot which killed the ensign. So the colours were represented by their oilskin bags. As we passed the *Barrière de l'Etoile*, there was a wondering and constantly increasing crowd of spectators, as at a review, but not a soldier. We were the first English.

STOCKINGS.

WE have always held that a writer is morally bound to begin at the beginning, but are nonplussed how to follow that excellent rule on the present occasion, by reason of our subject having no beginning to it. We are nowhere told that Adam or Eve were ashamed of their nether limbs, nor is it recorded when their descendants first awoke to the impropriety and inconvenience of parading earth bare-legged; in fact, we are utterly in the dark as to when, where, or by whom stockings were first introduced to an appreciative world.

The Anglo-Saxons were accustomed to swathe their legs in garters, tied in a knot just below the knee; and if illuminators may be accepted as trustworthy authorities, King Canute wore a pair of veritable stockings. The Normans wore long drawers called *chaussés*, sometimes bandaged and crossed with garters. How their wives and daughters clad their lower limbs, we do not know. Henry III. made his sister a present of a pair of gold-embroidered cloth stockings, and we are inclined to infer therefrom that stockings were familiar articles of feminine attire before they became common to the apparel of both sexes.

In an account-book kept by one of the servants of the first Duke of Norfolk, bearing date 1463, there is an entry of the payment of three shillings and fourpence for 'hosyn,' fourteen shillings for two pair of 'morrey hosyn,' and ten shillings for

'a pair of black and a pair of white for my master.' Henry VIII. is said to have worn taffeta or cloth hose, except when, by lucky chance, he could procure a pair of silken hose from Spain. From an inventory of his apparel, however, it is evident that King Hal's hose were made of various materials—of coloured cloths, of silk, satin, and velvet. But these 'hose' were rather breeches than stockings, for in the same inventory we find entered, 'a yard and a quarter of green velvet for stocks to a pair of hose for the king's grace—a yard and a quarter of purple satin to cover the stocks of a pair of hose of purple cloth tissue,' besides several entries of similar character respecting 'stockyng of hose.' After a time, the component parts of the hose became separated, the upper part retaining the old name, and the lower portion receiving the names of stocks, nether-stocks, and stockings. Unfortunately, our old writers apply the term 'hose' indifferently to either garment; and we are often puzzled (as when Skelton describes the poor women of his time hobbling about in blanket hose) to tell which they really mean.

The introduction of silk stockings must have been welcomed heartily by all who could afford to buy them. Mezerai asserts they were first worn by Henry II. of France, at the marriage of his sister in 1559; but before that, Edward VI. had graciously accepted a pair from the merchant-prince, Sir Thomas Gresham, who imported them from Spain, the land where they were first manufactured. The story goes, that a loyal-minded grandee, the happy possessor of one of the first pairs of silk stockings made in Spain, thought he could not do better than present the novel utilities to his queen, and to that end placed them in the hands of the first minister of the crown, greatly to the discomposure of that modest man, who astonished the innocent-meaning noble by returning him his stockings, and bidding him remember that 'the queen of Spain had no legs!' Our own Elizabeth, not ashamed to own that she had legs, received a similar gift in a very different manner. Soon after her accession, her majesty's silkwoman, Mistress Montague, tendered as her New-year's gift a pair of knitted black silk stockings—the first of the kind made in England. Elizabeth lost no time in putting the gift to its proper use, and was so pleased with the result, that she sent for Mrs Montague, and inquired where she procured such comfortable foot-gear, and if she could get any more like them. 'I made them very carefully, of purpose only for your majesty,' replied the silkwoman; 'and seeing these please you so well, I will presently set more in hand.' 'Do so,' quoth the queen; 'for indeed I like silk stockings so well, because they are pleasant, fine, and delicate, that henceforth I will wear no more cloth stockings.' And she kept her royal word, and would have laughed at the economy of the Margrave John of Custrin, who, seeing one of his councillors wearing silk stockings on a weekday, said to him: 'Barthold, I have silk stockings too, but I wear them only on Sundays and holidays.'

Shakspeare seemingly perpetrates an anachronism when he makes Prince Henry tell Poinc he knows he owns but two pair of silk stockings, the pair on his legs, and those that were the peach-coloured ones. The many allusions made by

Shakspeare, prove that the stocking was worn by all classes of people when he wrote his plays. Sir Andrew Aguecheek flatters himself that his leg does indifferent well in a flame-coloured stock. Mad Petruchio claims Kate the curst as his bride 'with a linen stock on one leg, and a kersey boot-hose on the other, gartered with a red and blue list;' and when he arrives at his home, expects his servants to honour the occasion by welcoming their mistress in their new fustian and their white stockings. Socks and foul stockings contributed towards making Falstaff's buck-basket journey disagreeable; Kit Sly, the drunken cobbler, exclaims: 'Never ask me what raiment I'll wear; for I have no more doublets than backs, no more stockings than legs, nor no more shoes than feet;' and Malvolio has immortalised yellow stockings, even should Blue-coat boys forswear them.

According to Stow, the Earl of Pembroke was the first Englishman to encase his legs in home-made knitted worsted stockings. He says, that in the year 1564, one Rider, a London 'prentice, taken with the appearance of a pair of woollen stockings he had seen at an Italian merchant's, managed to borrow them for a few days, made a pair exactly like them, and presented them to the earl. There may have been something peculiar enough in the Mantuan hose for Rider to think them worth imitating, but there are strong reasons for believing knitted stockings were by no means such unfamiliar things to English eyes as Stow insinuates. 'What need a man care for a stock with a wench, when she can knit him a stock?' asks Launce, in one of Shakspeare's earliest plays. Knitted hose are mentioned in an act of parliament passed in the reign of Edward VI.; and from the Household Book of Sir Thomas l'Estrange, we find that a pair of knitted hose could be bought, in 1533, for a couple of shillings, while children's stockings of the same sort only cost sixpence a pair—too low a price, it seems to us, for anything from beyond the seas. Boethius, in 1497, says of the Scotch, 'their hosen were shapen of linen or woollen, and never came higher than their knee;' and Savary does not hesitate to credit the Scots with the invention, upon the rather insufficient ground that the French stocking-knitters chose St Fiacre as the patron of their guild. Holinshed, describing a pageant at Norwich in 1573, tells us: 'Upon a stage stood at the one end eight small women children spinning worsted yarn, and at the other, as many knitting of worsted yarn hose;' and in another place says the bark of the alder was used by country wives for dyeing their knit hosen black.

Cloth stockings went completely out of favour in Elizabeth's reign; worsted, jamsey, thread, silk, and fine yarn being employed in its place. Stockings of yellow, white, red, russet, tawny, and green were not deemed sufficiently elegant unless they were interlaced with gold and silver thread, or had 'quirks and clocks' about the ankle. 'And to such impudent insolency and shameful outrage it is now grown,' complains the horrified Stubbs, 'that every one, almost, though otherwise very poor, having scarcely forty shillings of wages by the year, will not stick to have two or three pair of these silk nether-stocks, or else of the finest yarn that may be got, though the price of them be a royal, or twenty shillings, or more, as commonly it is, for how can they be less, when the very knitting of them is worth a noble or a royal, and some much more. The

time hath been when one might have clothed his body well from top to toe for less than a pair of these nether-stocks will cost.' With stockings in such demand, Lee might reasonably hope his stocking-loom would receive patronage and protection; but his hopes were grievously disappointed. Elizabeth refused to grant him a patent, and he took his loom to France. The ill-fortune so common to great inventors pursued him there, and he died poor and broken-hearted. After his death, some of his workmen succeeded in establishing themselves in England, and laid the foundations of the stocking-manufacture, the importance of which may be estimated by the fact, that twenty years ago, nearly fifty thousand looms were employed in the trade, a number that has no doubt been since largely increased.

Kings have often enough condescended to borrow of meaner creatures. James I. carried this species of condescension somewhat lower than usual, in borrowing a pair of scarlet stockings with gold clocks from one of his courtiers, when he desired to impress the French ambassador with an overpowering notion of his magnificence. Had all his subjects been as economical, the stocking-makers would have fared badly; luckily for them, the extravagances of the former reign still held their own; and the rage for leg-decoration took a new form, and expended some of its zeal upon broad garters, with gold fringes and point-lace ends, which were fastened below the knee with a large bow or rosette. Dekker, in his *Gull's Horn-book*, advises his supposed pupil, if he was ambitious, 'to fashion his legs to his silk stockings, and his proud gait to his broad garters;' to study his directions until he can walk, as others fight, by the book, and then Paul's may be proud of him, and all the Inns of Court rejoice to behold his most handsome leg. Another writer declares the fops wore spangled garters worth a cophold, filling the ladies, especially such as had good legs, with envy, because fashion would not allow them to make a similar display.

The Cavaliers affected gay stockings and long dangling garters; so, of course, the Puritans patronised the opposite fashion of sombre black stockings, and tied their garters up short. In Charles II.'s reign, England supplied the foreign markets with leathern, silken, woollen, and kersey stockings; but as regards the home consumption, Nat Lee grumbled that plain sense had grown

Despicable as plain clothes,
As English hats, bone-lace, or woollen hose.

The last were not likely to be in high favour at a time when an English ambassador thought it necessary to appear in white silk stockings over scarlet ones of the same material; and a lady's wardrobe was considered incomplete without at least four pair of silk stockings 'shot through with silver,' and diamond-buckled garters to keep them company. Mr Pepys 'made himself fine' with linen stockings from the Hague, and when he went into complimentary mourning for the Duke of Gloucester, donned a pair of short black stockings over his silk ones. That ladies did not demur at receiving gear for their nether limbs from their admirers, may be inferred from Pepys choosing a pair of silk stockings as his gift to pretty Mrs Pierce, when she was his valentine. At another time, he records in his Diary: 'To my cousin Turner's, where, having the last night been told by her that she had drawn me

for her valentine, I did this day call at the New Exchange, and bought her a pair of green silk stockings and garters and shoe-strings.' Mr Pepys was not singular in his fancy for green stockings. One day, Lord Chesterfield met King Charles and his brother at Miss Stewart's, when the conversation turning upon the Muscovite ambassadors, then the talk of the town, 'that fool Crofts' unluckily observed that all the ladies of the said Muscovites had handsome legs. Upon this his majesty gallantly swore no woman in the world owned such a leg as their beautiful hostess; and Miss Stewart, to confound any sceptics present, 'with the greatest imaginable ease' immediately afforded the company ocular demonstration of the fact. All the gentlemen, with one exception, endorsed the royal judgment. The exception was the Duke of York, who contended that the leg on view was too slender, avowed his preference for something shorter and thicker, and concluded his critical remarks by asserting that 'no leg was worth anything without green stockings!' This struck my Lord Chesterfield as irrefragable evidence that the royal duke had green stockings fresh in his recollection; and as it happened that Lady Chesterfield had short and thick legs, and was partial to green stockings, the jealous earl jumped to a jealous conclusion, and lost no time in carrying his wife into the country, to keep her out of mischief. Yellow stockings would seem to have been favoured by humbler folks, for when the queen and the duchesses of Richmond and Buckingham, bent on a graceless frolic, disguised themselves as country wenches, and mixed with the crowd at Audley End Fair, her majesty 'bought a pair of yellow stockings for her sweet-heart' at one of the booths, in order to keep up her assumed character.

In Dutch William's reign, the gentlemen wore their long stockings rolled up over the knee. With the square-cut coats and long flapped waistcoats of the days of Anne, it was the fashion to wear scarlet or blue silk stockings, ornamented with gold or silver stocks, drawn over the knee, but gartered below it. The beaux of the beginning of the Georgian era voted scarlet and blue vulgar, relegating such vivid colours to second-rate dancing-masters, and affected pearl-coloured stockings, the tops of which were hidden by their knee-breeches. From a memorandum of Lady Suffolk's, we learn that one dozen pair of thread stockings, at seven-and-sixpence per pair, was considered a sufficient supply to last a princess of England a couple of years. In 1753, the fair sex were reproached for making

Their petticoats short, that a hoop eight yards wide
Might decently shew how their garters were tied—

(a couplet not altogether inapplicable to the ladies of our own time); and for being generally too fond of displaying their white stockings. In 1778, Walpole's friend, Mrs Damer, brought black silk stockings in vogue for a while, white having hitherto been worn even for mourning. English cotton stockings were in great request abroad, so much so, indeed, that when all trade between England and France was prohibited, the Empress Josephine actually applied to parliament for permission to purchase half-a-dozen pair for her own use, a request that was of course at once complied with. When knee-breeches went out of use, the stocking went out of view, and ceased to become a noticeable item in male attire; and as to the leg-gear of the

ladies, we have no further changes to chronicle, except the marked revival, of late years, of coloured stockings.

OLIVER OAKLAND.

I CAN'T name the year just at this moment, but it was early in the twenties, when I matriculated at St John's College, Cambridge. The only man I knew there, except my tutor, was Oliver Oakland, afterwards known to the whole college as Noble Nol. We had come from the same quiet neighbourhood of Chelmsford, in Essex, where our families had been old and friendly neighbours from grandfather times. Mine, the Westwoods, were well to do, having a respectable property in house and land, which I, being the only boy out of seven olive plants, expected to inherit some day. His consisted of his mother and himself. Their entire income was the pension allowed to a lieutenant's widow, and their expectations were Oliver's wits. How he got first to school, and then to college, was the wonder of all their friends; but a small legacy left them by a maiden aunt had been eked out by all sorts of endeavours of their own: the mother gave private lessons to young ladies; the son gave private assistance to young gentlemen; and both made hard pulls—very hard they had to be—on the sympathies of their cousin, the rector, who kept no curate, and farmed his glebe to the best advantage. Moreover, the Oaklands had a beacon-light to guide their honest ambition: over the mantel-piece in their little parlour, side by side with the deceased lieutenant, who had fallen in a far East Indian field, too young for his son to remember him, there hung the portrait of a sour, wind-dried man, in university cap and gown, Zachary Oakland by name, a hard-headed scholar of some note in his generation, which was long past, for he was Oliver's grand-uncle, and had begun life a poor student, but died the Master of St John's College. That portrait, and the sour, wind-dried man it represented, were the glory and the guiding-star of the Oaklands, though it was traditionally said that the learned Zachary had never exchanged word or sign with one of his family from his twenty-first birthday, when his father refused to furnish funds for the only bet he ever made in his life—I believe it was on a cock-fight—and all his kindred approved of the denial.

The Master of St John's had been saving as well as learned, and was believed to have died rich, but how or where he had hidden his money, nobody could discover. A strict search had been made at the time of his death, which was rather sudden, though he had passed threescore and ten. The Oaklands and the college both expected to be his heirs, for Zachary had escaped the snares of matrimony; but no cheque-book, hoard, or will was found, nothing, in short, that could indicate what had become of his very considerable savings. At first, the Master's housekeeper was suspected; but time proved the fallacy of that opinion; the poor, honest woman, who had been neither overpaid nor over well kept by her late employer, remained poor and honest to the last; and having no other solution for the problem, people settled on the savings being sunk in some absurd speculation which the old man was too proud to acknowledge, and had therefore destroyed the vouchers. St

John's had got nothing by him, and neither had the Oaklands; but the notable Master was a feather in each of their caps; and now that other Masters had come and gone the same way, and his glory had faded from the memory of all but very old Fellows, he was a feather in the Oaklands' cap still, and an encouraging example to my friend Oliver.

Well, we began our college course together—I as a gentleman-commoner, he as a poor sizar. That was the work of fortune; but in all that nature had to do with, Oliver had far the advantage of me. I don't think anybody ever thought me handsome, except the eldest of Sir Jacob Short-common's eleven daughters, called Mrs Westwood this many a year; and when we quarrel, she says *she* never thought so. The highest compliment to my intellectual abilities that I remember was paid by my grandmother, the excellent old lady being in the habit of assuring myself and friends that I had more common sense than any soul would give me credit for. Young Oakland, on the contrary, was a fine handsome fellow, standing six feet in his slippers; he would have made a killing Guardsman, if anybody had bought him a commission and an outfit, but Oakland had far too much brains for that service. All who knew him said he could do anything if he only put his mind to it; and Oakland's mind was put to a good deal in his college-time. There was not an exhibition, not a prize within a sizar's reach that he did not carry off from scores of competitors; and the amount of grinding and coaching he did in a quiet way could never be guessed at. You will understand those familiar terms, I trust. Oakland was still giving private assistance to young gentlemen, especially at the approach of examination-days. I won't say he didn't assist myself. The old acquaintance between our families ripened with us into a regular students' friendship, the truest thing of the kind perhaps. I got many another companion as time went on, some that made me useful, some that led me into scrapes, some that snubbed, and some that flattered me, but I never had a college-friend except Oliver Oakland. We were differently situated, and differently disposed too. I, being pretty well supplied, and born heir of the Westwood property, paid as little attention to lectures and exercises as college rules would allow, and learned as little as was needful for a country gentleman; got into all the gaieties of the place, from boating upwards; was out and about at all possible hours; and something of what was then called a dandy. He was a laborious student, hard reading, and poor as Samuel Johnson might have been when he stood so much in need of shoes at the rival university; but unlike Johnson at any period of his life, Oakland was courteous, considerate, and agreeable. Oliver gave me the little time he could spare, occasionally good advice, always a good example, and all the help to learning that I wanted. I gave him my entire confidence, consisting chiefly of difficulties with tailors, &c., and the relieving officer at home, not to speak of heart-quakes regarding town or country belles, with some one of whom I was fathoms deep in love every season, and also took credit to myself for obliging him with a loan when his pocket was particularly light—I mean empty—and for dragging him out from his books and close room to the fresh air and open country round Cambridge.

It was on one of these expeditions, towards the end of our third year, that I stumbled on a secret

with which Oakland had not thought proper to intrust me. We were coming home one evening from a long ramble, and passing the Chapone Institution, an old-fashioned boarding-school of great strictness and high gentility, kept by the maiden daughters of a former Bishop of Ely, and named, I know not why, unless there was some connection in the case with the lady who wrote such instructive and unentertaining Letters to her Niece, when my eye was caught by a plainly-dressed but uncommonly pretty girl at the gate, who would have spoken to Oliver if I had not been there. It was a true-love business, I knew by my friend's eyes, which he could not keep from following her as she tripped up the lawn and into the house without once turning her head. They were very discreet about it; but I had told Oakland so many similar secrets of mine, that I thought myself entitled to ferret out the only one he had; and a fair opportunity occurred on the following Saturday, when I had him in my rooms at supper, a hamper of game having come from Westwood Manor. We were alone, and he was in rather low spirits, as I observed was often the case with him of late.

'You are in love, Oakland,' said I, determined to dash into my subject.

'How can that be?' he said. 'Falling in love is for such lucky fellows as you, who will have property to marry on if they please, not for such poor souls as myself, who must drudge their lives out at mathematics and dead languages to get a seat among those hard dry old bachelors at the Fellows' table.'

Oliver spoke with more bitterness than was usual to him; and I, knowing that his college-life was not an easy one, and guessing that he might be hard-up just now, pressed the good wine upon him, by way of consolation. Under its genial influence, my friend warmed, and I got assurance enough to quiz and question him concerning the plainly-dressed pretty girl. After a little beating about the bush, Oliver opened his heart to me: perhaps it was a relief to the solitary and struggling man to tell his tale. The pretty girl was Miss Russell, commonly called Bessy. She was an orphan, without relations or friends, except the maiden ladies of the Institution, of whom her father, a poor curate, had been a scarcely acknowledged connection, and to whom she had been junior assistant since the beginning of her fifteenth year. 'She is little over eighteen now,' said Oakland; 'but a wiser or a better woman does not exist. You're laughing in your sleeve, I dare say, but Bessy could advise the oldest man in the college for his good: women can do the like, if it be in them, without our books and universities. I understand the ladies of the Institution can't find a fault in Bessy; and it must be a small one that escapes them. I never could have got acquainted with her but for a savage dog I had the pleasure and good-luck to save her from one evening in the summer before last. She has a hard life there between the old maids and the young ladies they teach, but Bessy never complains. I know the girl loves me, Westwood, and I can't think of living without her; so, after I take my B. A., I am going to dig into divinity. My cousin the rector will want a curate some day, and I'll settle down to the work, and marry Bessy.'

'I never thought you had a turn for the church, Oakland,' said I; 'but if there was a living in the gift of my family, it should be at your service,

though it seems to me a downright burying of your talents, and I wonder what your mother will say.'

'I don't know,' said Oliver with almost a groan. 'She has set her heart and hopes on seeing me one of the college dons, and made many a sacrifice for it; but the best girl in Europe would not please her for a daughter-in-law, without some rank or fortune, and Bessy has neither. Westwood, it is hard to think of burying my talents, as you call them, and taking to clerical duties, when, between ourselves, I have no vocation for them; but it is far harder to think of crossing my poor good mother.'

I tried to dissuade my friend from his design; but he shewed me plainly that there was no other chance of a wedding for him and Bessy, and on that wedding Oliver had fixed his mind with all the resolute constancy that was in it. He had not my advantage of getting easily snared and easily free, and Bessy's face was one that might haunt a man at a solitary fireside. He had jealous fears, too: it would be wearing away the best part of her life to wait for good-fortune that might never come: to his certain knowledge, she had offers from a drawing-master and a well-to-do tradesman; but still the poor fellow would have made any sacrifice to Plutus, after the fashion of his friends the ancients, could it have availed him to escape the church and his mother's displeasure.

We parted sad and sober in spite of the good wine. But when I saw Oliver again, it was Monday morning, when he entered my room with a face full of fun and an open letter in his hand. 'Here is a pattern epistle in the sentimental line, and I want you, as a gentleman skilled in such matters, to tell me whence it comes: a hoax of course,' he said, handing me the letter, which to the best of my recollection ran as follows:

'Can the sensible, the accomplished, the fascinating Oakland respond to a sincere and heartfelt passion, not transitory and unprofitable, like the love of common minds, but steadfast, and sure to guide his steps to riches and prosperity? If he can, let him reply to Cynthia at the post-office; his letter will be waited for with anxious hope, received with delight, and answered with expedition.'

My friend and I laughed heartily over the effusion, and agreed that it was a hoax; but who was the perpetrator, I could guess as little as Oliver himself. Yet there was something in the writing, though evidently a disguised hand, familiar to my eyes. I thought and poured over it, but could fix on nobody; and the mystery seemed to work upon Oakland, studious and steady as he was, for he resolved to carry on the joke, and thereby find out his fair correspondent, as we both felt sure the hand was that of a woman. Cynthia was answered on the spot, in a strain as grandiloquent as her own. She replied by the very next post, and got another answer. Six or seven letters were thus exchanged, I being the only outsider in the secret; and the only point that either watching or bribery could ascertain for Oliver was, that Cynthia's letters were called for by a variety of ragged boys, who, when they could be got at and questioned, said sometimes an old woman had sent them to the post-office, and sometimes a young lady. The correspondence did not advance rapidly towards a solution. My friend was always declaring himself able and willing to respond to any amount of affection and confidence, while the lady, as I thought to lure him on, took up the strain of men being deceivers ever. But none of her epistles closed without the hint

growing plainer at every repetition of the riches and prosperity to which she could guide his steps; and at last—it was like a drowning man clutching at a straw—poor Oliver seemed to half believe that his good-fortune was somehow to come through Cynthia, when a curious accident enabled me to unveil the charmer.

At the end of Trumpington Street, next to St John's Lane, there was at the time of my story, and had been for many a year before, a shop of all-wares in the students' fancy line. Everything that college-men required in those days, from second-hand books to new boxing-gloves, might be bought there; steel spurs for game-cocks, white kids for evening-parties, pipes of every form, smoking-caps, with other goods too various to mention, made it the constant resort of students. The shop was kept by a Miss Josephs, and a woman whom she pleased to call her nurse, but whom popular tradition affirmed to be her mother. Miss Josephs was of an age not to be ascertained. Her face had a remarkable likeness to that of a parrot; her figure strikingly resembled an upright deal-board; she had a dark muddy complexion, a considerable squint, and stiff black hair, said to be daily thinned by plucking out the gray. Yet the prettiest woman in England could not have looked more certain of her triumph over the hearts of men, or put on more airs and graces for that purpose. It was a study of the ridiculous to see her behind the counter, dressed in the extreme of the fashion, and talking like a fainting duchess. The students one and all laughed at her; and throughout Cambridge (I think it was the boating-men who gave her the title), on account of a peculiar mode she had of moving her skinny arms, Miss Josephs was known as the Steerer.

They laughed at and paid her extravagant compliments; paid extravagant prices, too, for most of her wares; the shop was convenient, and the credit long; but the wildest or most mischievous student never cared to go further, great as the encouragement was for practical joking and burlesque romance. The Steerer's nurse—I never knew another name for her—was lucky in not living two centuries earlier, for she might have sat to any painter who wanted a perfect witch. It was said there were fierce quarrels between her and the fascinating lady, always about money-matters, in which their calculations seldom agreed; but they addressed each other in the most affectionate terms in public, bore strong testimony to each other's virtues, kept no servant, and admitted nobody within their walls except by special invitation, and such events were few and far between. The Steerer was chief-shopkeeper, and had the control of windows and counter: but the nurse had a back corner, screened by a half partition, out of which she sold at fitting times, and to confidential customers, cigars that had never paid duty, snuff of unrivalled excellence, and it was said, more questionable wares. The pair were not natives, and whence they came, nobody in Cambridge could certify; but there was a floating tradition that they were somehow descended from Portuguese Jews; and their powers of making out bills, and getting them paid, seemed to warrant its truth.

There was another tale concerning them, which probably contributed to make the students keep a safe distance. Some three years before Oliver and myself entered St John's, there had been

among its gownsmen one rather poor, rather clever, and not very wise. He happened to have got three affairs of some moment on his hands at once—namely, reading for a fellowship, making love to the Steerer, and a promise of marriage to his bed-maker's daughter. With such contradictory irons in the fire, success was scarcely possible, and so it proved with him. He lost the fellowship; he was called on to fulfil his promise; and he had to go and explain matters to the Steerer. What attraction he had found in that quarter, nobody could make out; but from casual hints, his college-friends supposed that he had been led to believe in some great fortune or legacy which she was to inherit. Well, the student went to her house by special arrangement one winter evening, to make his woful confession, and take a fond farewell. The neighbours knew there was a fine supper cooked, and wine brought in; but whether the conversation or the viands proved too much for him, the young man returned early to his rooms, and the same night was seized with an illness which the doctors, after a deal of uncertainty, found out to be brain fever, and of which he died on the ninth day.

I had heard that story many a time, and was thinking of it, it may be in malice, after glancing over a pretty heavy account from the shop in Trumpington Street, when all at once it occurred to me that the hand that set down the various items in good ledger style, was, in spite of its disguise, the very same which had written Cynthia's letters. There was a small repository of similar bills in my desk, and a survey of them left no doubt in my mind. I flew to acquaint Oliver with the discovery; and a comparison of documents satisfied us both that Cynthia was none other than the Steerer. I laughed, till Oliver's rooms rang, over the grandiloquent passages in her love-letters. Oakland laughed too, and agreed with me that it was a capital tale; but the more we talked over it, the less he seemed amused, and I could not help seeing that there was some part of the subject of which he did not speak, but was thinking seriously. Once more, the poor student's story occurred to me. Doubtless it was of it Oliver was thinking, and I hinted my recollections, with a hope that he would have nothing more to do with the fair unknown. Oakland made no reply, at least no direct one, but I understood he was of the same mind by his immediately pointing out the necessity of keeping all that concerned Cynthia between ourselves, if we did not mean to furnish the whole university with a jest at our own expense. I saw the wisdom of his counsel; for though not a principal in the affair, I at any rate should have felt bound to spare my friend the laughter and jokes it must occasion. I parted with Oliver on that understanding, and did not see him for some days after, as I got engaged with a boating-party. We had gone down the Cam, and came home rather tired. Though it was not very late, most of the shops in Trumpington Street were shut; the Steerer's door was, but her window remained open. Through it I remarked a man, not looking at goods, but at her, while he leaned on the counter in earnest conversation, and a movement of his head shewed me that it was my friend, Oliver Oakland.

I went home, not knowing what to think. Had his newly-discovered Cynthia really attracted my friend, and made him waver in his allegiance to

the pretty Bessy? If so, the promise to guide his steps to riches and prosperity must be the chief charm; yet how could Oliver, shrewd and sensible as he was, believe such a thing possible to a small shopkeeper in Trumpington Street? The Steerer's gatherings could not be a temptation to a man like him, yet I had seen Oliver earnestly engaged with her; it was not the best or cheapest of her goods that brought him there at such an hour, after warning me to keep the subject of her letters out of the students' ears. In my contempt and indignation at his deceit, I wished my word had not been given on that matter; but given it was, and nothing remained but to give Oliver the cold-shoulder. I tried it for some days; almost weeks, indeed; Oliver saw nothing of me, and I saw nothing of Oliver. He did not avoid me, so far as I could see, but he did not seek me out: conscious guilt, thought I; but somehow the man had become too heedful to my life and mind to be thus parted with. I went to his rooms at our usual meeting-time in the evening, but he was out. I guessed where, watched about Trumpington Street, and saw him come out of the Steerer's private door. Next day, we met by accident, and I took the opportunity to congratulate him on being admitted to Cynthia's bower. Oliver looked as if any other observation would have been more welcome, but he was by no means as much abashed as I expected; on the contrary, he made light of it, like one who was carrying on a jest, talked more gaily and carelessly than ever I had heard him, and in reply to my question, 'What will Bessy say?' he merely said: 'Oh, never mind Bessy; she is a prudent girl.'

Oliver was engaged with the Steerer; a pretty strict watch proved to me that he visited her every evening after shop-hours, and Oliver was changed in every particular. Of me, his only intimate friend, he had grown positively careless; his less familiar acquaintances remarked that something occupied him more than his usual studies; he was absent at lectures, and took no heed of what was said of him. Still, for our old friendship's sake, I would not make the cause of his altered conduct public, knowing that it must make Oliver ridiculous; and I had scarcely taken that resolution, when a new and strange light was thrown on the subject by Mrs Mops, my bed-maker.

All who chance to be acquainted with college-life will know what an indispensable functionary the bed-maker is to every student; for she who bears that humble title is, in fact, the sole manager of his domestic affairs. Mrs Mops was a jewel of the kind, honest, careful, and sober, of discreet age, for she had been forty years at the bed-making business, and it was her boast that she never did for nobody but steady gentlemen. Mrs Mops had a discreet tongue, too—a gift rather rare among the ladies of her calling—and as she officiated for Oliver as well as for me, I was somewhat startled by the good woman saying, with a peculiar look when lighting my fire one evening: 'May I ax, sir, if anything strange has happened to Mr Oakland?'

'Nothing that I know of. What makes you think there has?' said I, determined to hear all she had to say.

'Just because he has taken to such odd ways, nor like himself at all; there ain't nothing wrong nor unsteady, you know, but just uncommon strange'; and Mrs Mops dropped her voice to a

whisper. 'He's never at his books in the evenings, as he used to be, and I can't find out where he goes. He's always a-thinking and a-talking about something to himself; it ain't learning, sir, for he laughs and whistles over it. But the strangest thing of all is what the gardener's wife tells me, that he's going about the college-grounds at all hours of the night, ay, in the loneliest part of them, sir, where the old Dutch summer-house stands among the willows beside the river.'

I knew the spot to which Mrs Mops referred; it is doubtless improved or altered long ago; but at the time it was a neglected outlying wing of the college-grounds, deeply shaded by ancient willow-trees, in the midst of which stood a solitary summer-house made of wood, on the old Dutch pattern, with a pagoda roof and floor of coloured tiles. What could Oliver be doing there at all hours of the night? I questioned the good woman closely, got full details, and came to the conclusion that my poor friend's reason was dropping the reins. Overstudy and overanxiety were telling on his strong and active mind; here was the explanation of his visits to the Steerer, his coldness to myself, and all the change that had surprised his fellow-students. I dismissed Mrs Mops with a request for secrecy; she manifestly thought as I did concerning Oakland; had a great regard for him; and being no gossip, would probably keep her promise in that respect. Then I sat by the fire, pitying his poor mother, his poor Bessy, and wondering what I ought to do as a friend under the circumstances, till my brown-study was broken up by a knock at my door, and in walked Oliver himself.

He shook hands with me as warmly as if our friendship had never cooled, and took his accustomed seat beside me. There was nothing wild or disorderly in his look, but I knew he had something particular to say, and the next minute it came: 'Westwood, you are the best, the only friend I ever had; and I want you to help me through a business which few men have to do often. Bessy and I are going to get married quietly and quickly. You may stare, but it is true; I have got the means to keep her handsomely; and Oliver's eyes seemed to dance with joy. 'Don't be alarmed; I am in my right mind, Westwood; I have got my grand-uncle's long-lost money. Listen! The old fellow had hidden it under the floor of the Dutch summer-house, where he used to sit day and night, they say, in his latter years; and left a sort of will written in Greek, the purest Attic, I assure you, bequeathing the whole hoard to his next of kin, with particular directions where to find it. The will—I don't know how—got into the hands of a dealer in waste paper, who sold it in a bale of his goods to our friend Cynthia, many years ago. I am not sure that the old witch behind the partition yonder don't use the like in the choice Havanas she makes up; at any rate the bale was bought, and my grand-uncle's will in it. The Greek characters were beyond the Steerer's scrutiny, but the old master had written his name at full length, in English letters, on the back; and either the Fates, or the faculty for scenting out money, peculiar to her Jewish race, made her keep it out of the Havanas, and safe in a private drawer. It appears that unfortunate fellow who got into trouble between her and the bed-maker's daughter, and escaped them both by the brain fever, gave her an inkling of its value—by the by, he could not have been a good Grecian, or there should have been

little for me to find. So the Steerer took to promising riches and prosperity; you remember her letters, of course, Westwood; it must have been my good genius that prompted me to make out what she meant by that.'

'And you made it out,' said I, getting sure enough of Oliver's sanity; 'made love to the charming Cynthia over her shop-counter; got hold of the paper and thereby of the money.'

'That was exactly what I did, Westwood,' and Oliver winced as he spoke. 'It was not strictly honourable, I'll allow, but what else was to be done with the woman? However, I have bought Beechly Farm, which will keep Bessy and me comfortably, in my own county. My mother shall live with us; or, if she can't agree with Bessy, though I think anybody might, she'll have a cottage to herself at the end of the lane. You and I will be neighbours, and I hope friends, for the rest of our lives; but, Westwood, I must get married at once. If the thing were done, matters might be settled with the Steerer; I have kept a decent sum to pay her off. Will you help me to get the licence? will you give Bessy away? There will be nobody but yourself at our wedding; my mother must know nothing of the business till it's done. Westwood, can I reckon on you?'

'That you can,' said I, seeing that Oliver was in desperate haste, and in considerable fear of his charming Cynthia; and in those green days of mine, the course he proposed to take seemed the readiest, if not the most commendable. We talked over it till far in the night; got the licence next day; and on a cold, drizzly morning, the curate of St Peter's Church made Oliver and Bessy one, in presence of myself and the clerk. I can't say on what excuse the assistant-teacher got out so early; but directly after the ceremony, she went back to the Chapone Institution, till Oliver could get the Steerer paid off, and make the fact of his marriage respectably public.

How he went about the first part of the business, I never exactly learned, but it appeared to have been successfully managed; and when he called at my rooms in the evening, Oliver was perfectly enthusiastic in the Steerer's praise. 'She stood it like an angel,' said he. 'I never imagined she could be so sensible and considerate; never scolded, never cried—though, between ourselves, a fit was the least that I expected—but seemed to understand at once that the thing was done, and accepted it with uncommonly good grace. By the by, I paid her down two thousand pounds, in lieu of myself, you'll say. Well, Westwood, it clears one's conscience; and I must tell you the old woman was as friendly as Cynthia; she knew all about the affair, of course; and between them, they made me promise that Bessy and I should spend Saturday evening with them. A queer visiting-place for a young bride; but they brought it about so that I could not refuse, and Bessy is not like ordinary girls to stand on a trifle. I have taken apartments in town, and written to my mother. I couldn't take Bessy home without knowing how she would be received; but I won't have her staying any longer with those old prigs at the Institution.'

Oliver and I had a good deal of conversation regarding his prospects, which indeed seemed fair and pleasant. He did not tell me the exact sum he had found hidden under the coloured tiles in the summer-house floor, but it must have been a handsome one. He had bought Beechly Farm, a very

comfortable property; told me how he would enlarge the house, lay out the grounds, have done with college-life, and spend the rest of his days in the manner of Palemon, now that he had found his Lavinia. With these fair hopes, Oliver went from me that night, after exacting a promise that I would come to see him and Bessy at their new address on the following Sunday, for, till then, he knew I must be busy with certain reading that had to be done, and country cousins that were to be shewn over Cambridge.

Well, that Sunday came; the reading and the lionising had been got through, and I was dressing at an earlier hour than usual, when my room-door suddenly opened, and in rushed Oliver looking like a ghost. 'Westwood!' he cried, 'for God's sake, come with me and see Bessy; she awoke this morning out of her mind. I have sent for three doctors, and they can do nothing for her. O my friend, come and tell me what you think.' I went with him to a very respectable lodging, and there found poor Bessy stark mad. No other term could give an idea of her condition: she knew nobody, she recollected nothing—her husband, her marriage, her honeymoon, all were forgotten; and her incoherent ravings always recurred to something about two old women and wine. No cause could be assigned for the sudden visitation. She had been in good health and spirits on the preceding evening, which the new-married pair spent according to promise with Miss Josephs and her nurse; she retired to rest without any noticeable change, and woke at the break of day in frantic madness.

To make a sad tale short: all that medical skill and experience could suggest was tried for poor Bessy, but tried in vain; her insanity was hopeless, and without one lucid interval, nor could all the doctors engaged throw the smallest light on its cause. There was indeed a suspicion hinted at by one of our old professors, and firmly believed by Oliver, that some drug, of extraordinary and peculiar power, had been mixed with something which the unlucky bride had eaten or drunk in the house of her paid-off rival. Whether the suspicion were true or not, the Steerer and her nurse made a mighty show of regret and commiseration; but their shop got deserted, and they left Cambridge very quietly at the next quarter-day. My poor friend spent the rest of his days on the farm he had bought, and his mother lived with him; but his bride spent hers in a lunatic asylum, where she survived him many a year, for he died early, a man broken down and worn out before the time; and so must end my tale of Oliver Oakland.

THE ANNALS OF ETON.

If the boy is the father of the man, the history of a great School ought not to be without its moral. At all events, the author of *Etoniana** needs no apology for his interesting volume; whether its readers are Eton men or not, they cannot but find something to suit their taste in these Liliputian annals. All Englishmen, perhaps, feel some sort of pride in Eton (no matter how grievous its shortcomings may appear to them in some respects), the seminary of the noblest born amongst us for so many generations, and which contains at this moment more than seven hundred porcelain youth within its reverend walls, besides its seventy Col-

* Blackwood. Edinburgh.

legers of ordinary clay. For these last, however, as most people know, the place was founded (upon the model of Winchester) by King Henry VI., 'for the purpose of studying grammar.' The qualifications for scholars were, that they were to be in need of help, not less than eight, or more than ten years old, not of servile birth (*natives*), nor illegitimate. They were to be chosen: 1st, from families who resided on the college estates; 2d, from Buckinghamshire or Cambridgeshire; 3d, from elsewhere within the realm. The master was to be a Master of Arts, if such might conveniently be had, with an annual salary of L.16, and L.4, 6s. 8d. for his commons; and the usher to have L.6, 13s. 4d. *per annum*, with L.3, 0s. 3d. for commons; and both were to have gowns furnished them, which they were on no account to sell or pledge.

I seem to see in my mind's eye the fastidious Hawtrej of my own time pawing his raiment, and the magnificent master of the Lower School (still alive, I am glad to say, and very prosperous), receiving that extra threepence with an unnatural humility! But I cannot imagine either of them stealing, in conjunction with two of their scholars, the college plate, as Nicholas Udall (1536), 'the best schoolmaster and the greatest beater of our day' seems to have been charged with. Although he had to leave Eton for this offence, however, he seems to have been considered good enough to rule over Westminster School, which surely establishes the inferiority of that establishment even in those early days. This gentleman, with all his foibles, was a clergyman, which at that date, and even later, seems to have been by no means essential to the dignity of a head-master of Eton. Reuben Sherwood, a retired physician of Bath, held this office in 1571; and a little while after, Thomas Ridley, who was subsequently knighted, and made a Master in Chancery.

The first personal mention of oppidans—as distinct from the collegers—is met with in the Paston Letters (1467), where William Paston writes home from Eton, not only for raisins and figs, as a boy might be expected to do, but the astounding intelligence that he has fallen in love, and that with the most serious intentions.

'Her name is Margaret Alborow. The age of her is, by all likelihood, eighteen or nineteen years at the furthest; and as for the money and plate, it is ready whensoever she were wedded; but as for the livelihood, I trow not till after the mother's decease; but I cannot tell you for very certain, but you may know by inquiring. And as for her beauty, judge you that when you see her, if so be that you take the labour, and specially behold her hands; for an if it be as it is told me, she is disposed to be thick.'

What thinkest thou of that, O Paterfamilias, who art apt to imagine that it is only in these days that boys are precocious? It is certain, however, that the young gentlemen did not cost their fathers so much money in those good old times. Instead of something like L.250 apiece, which they would require now as oppidans at Eton, the two sons of Sir William Cavendish seem to have paid for the sum-total of their joint expenses for one year L.25, 11s. 5d. If all items were in proportion to their 'quarterage' for 'ink, brooms, and birch,' namely, 6d., this cheapness is not to be wondered at. For the last-named article alone (whether they required it or not), they would have been charged in my time a guinea a year. Even so late as 1725,

the expenses of an oppidan were very moderate—less than L.50 a year. Four guineas, at that time, were paid to the head-master, twenty to the dominie (master of the house) for board and study, and two to the writing-master. Among the tradesmen's bills there appears 15s. to the barber, which perhaps included blood-letting. The term 'oppidan,' applied to boys maintained at the cost of their friends, was used as early as Fuller's time. A letter of 1608 informs a friend that 'Phil Lytton' (a son of Sir Rowland Lytton of Knelworth) 'is in commons in hall,' which appears to have been a circuitous phrase for the same thing. At that time, the number of this class was about thirty; and many young noblemen seem to have been among them even then. Young Lord Willoughby and his page were in commons in the hall, according to the college books, for nearly five years; and there are also charges for 'Lord Dormer and his company.' In early times, Eton boys were very hard worked, which should be taken into consideration by those who complain of their present idleness. In 1560, they rose at five, said their Latin prayers antiphonally while dressing, then made their own beds, and swept their chambers. Their play-hours were lamentably small (although, as now, they had holidays upon church festivals); but on May 6 (St John *ante Port. Lat.*), 'they had the singular privilege of going to sleep in school after dinner for two or three hours.' The only real vacation, when they could go home to their friends, was from Ascension Day to the feast *Corpus Christi*—an interval of three weeks; and everybody who did not return in time for vespers on the evening before the last-mentioned festival, was flogged.

Eton was always famed for flogging, or, as it is now called, 'swishing;' while Queen Elizabeth is at Windsor, 'news comes to Mr Secretary Cecil that divers scholars of Eton be run away from school for fear of beating; and its reputation was such, that John Evelyn, author of the *Sylva*, besought his father not to send him thither. Severity of this sort is generally the resort of idle masters, and certainly does not augur well for the intellectual attainments of their pupils. Thus, of Malim's scholars, whose sceptre was a rod indeed, John Greenhall (elected to King's in 1576) seems to have been the only young gentleman of mark. He left his college, and took to the road, and was subsequently hanged, and dissected. This adventurous lad appears to have given the next head-master, Sir Henry Savile, a great horror of anything like a genius. 'Give me the plodding student,' said he; 'if I would look for wits, I would go to Newgate—there be the wits.' The archives of Eton are not rich in the sensational element; for besides Mr Greenhall, no one has distinguished himself in the criminal way since March 1730, when was buried in the college chapel 'Edward Cochran, murdered by his school-fellow, Thomas Dalton, with a penknife.' Such is the entry in the parish register; but even this tragic incident the tombstone endeavours to mitigate, since it bears the words, 'accidentally stabbed.'

As has been mentioned, Eton College was founded for the purpose of studying grammar: but in 1560, Terence and Ovid were used even in the lower forms; and in the upper, Virgil, Horace, Lucan, Martial, Catullus, Florus, Caesar, and the *Offices* and *Letters* of Cicero; but no Greek (O happy boys!) beyond the grammar, and that only in the two highest forms. Then, as now, and, indeed, as at all times, Latin verses were the great,

and almost the sole road to distinction at Eton. Queen Elizabeth seems to have been a very favourite subject of inspiration, and numberless elaborate and fulsome eulogies of her have been preserved in the manuscript of the scholars. Some of these are very curious, 'as exhibiting what sort of flattery was thought most likely to be agreeable to the Maiden Queen, and what the popular belief was as to her relations with Robert Dudley.' They are full of compliment to his personal beauty, which, the writers trust and believe, her Majesty will find irresistible. The hope of the nation, as one plain-spoken young gentleman expresses it, is *proles imago tui*; while others confine themselves to expressing their desire that she may escape the plague, or to praising her majesty's own scholarship. The toadyism, in short, is rampant, and would have charmed the author of the *Book of Snobs*; but the merit of the poems is small. In consequence of the preponderance given to this foolish knack of Latin verse-writing, however, Porson himself, who was, from deficiency in early training, inaccurate in his prosody, failed to win notice at Eton.

The plague, to which the Etonian poets referred in Elizabeth's time, returned again in 1662, and although it was never very fatal in the school, seems to have alarmed them greatly. 'Even children,' says old Thomas Hearne, speaking of the precautions against it, 'were obliged to smook. And I remember that I heard formerly Tom Rogers, who was yeoman beadle, say, that when he was that year a school-boy at Eton, all the boys of that school were obliged to smook in the school every morning, and that he was never whipped so much in his life as he was one morning for not smooking.' The reminiscences of later Etonians, adding our author slyly, connect whippings with smoking in a different way.

Although Oliver Cromwell treated the school with favour, and even liberality, it suffered considerably during the Rebellion and the Commonwealth; then rose to greater prosperity than ever under Provost Allestree and head-master Rosewill. 'Never man deserved his elevation better than Dr Richard Allestree. He had fought for the First Charles in the students' troop at Oxford—had risked his life for the Second in conducting his correspondence with loyal friends abroad—had been proscribed and all but hanged more than once—was a hearty Church-of-England man, and a sound divine. Yet the story went (and it is very possibly true) that all these merits might have been forgotten by his royal and thoughtless master, but for the accident of his remarkable ugliness—patent, to this day, to any one who sees his picture. Rochester is said to have made a bet with the king that he would find an uglier man than Lauderdale, and forthwith to have introduced Allestree, whom he had stumbled upon in the street, and whom Charles then remembered, and promoted.' In Rosewill's time, the numbers of the school (including both oppidan and collegier) reached to two hundred and seven; at the beginning of the eighteenth century, they attained to nearly four hundred; and in the year of the Great South-Sea Bubble, were even floated up to four hundred and twenty-five; next year, however, they fell to three hundred and seventy-five, and continued at that level until Dr Barnard's time, who, when promoted to the provostship in 1756, left five hundred and twenty-two boys upon the Eton list. To this limit the numbers did not afterwards attain for fifty

years, and under the next head-master (Foster), even sank to two hundred and thirty; from which they gradually rose to the present high figures—eight hundred and twenty-five. Of course, while the school was thus increasing, assistant-masters were added, although never at all in sufficient proportion. So late as 1731, there appeared in connection with this matter, the following curious advertisement in the *London Evening Post*:

'Whereas Mr Franc. Goode, under-master of Eaton, does hereby signify that there will be at Christmas next, or soon after, two vacancies in his school—namely, as assistants to him and tutors to the young gents: if any two gentlemen of either University (who have commenced the degree of B.A. at least) shall think themselves duly qualified, and are desirous of such an employment, let them inquire of John Potts, Pickleman, in Gracious Street, or at Mr G.'s own house in Eaton College, where they may purchase the same at a reasonable rate, and on conditions fully to their own satisfaction.

F. GOODE.

'N.B.—It was very erroneously reported that the last place was disposed of under 40s.'

But this hint of the crude state of affairs at Eton is thrown into the shade by the account of the election of a provost of King's College, thirteen years later, communicated in a letter from Cambridge to a correspondent at Eton. There were three candidates for this enviable post: Dr George, supported by Sir Robert Walpole's influence; Chapman, one of the college tutors, backed by the Tory party; and Thackeray, then an assistant Eton master, and afterwards head-master of Harrow.

'The fellows went into chapel on Monday, before noon in the morning, as the statute directs. After prayers and sacrament, they began to vote: twenty-two for George, sixteen for Thackeray, ten for Chapman. Thus they continued scrutinising and walking about, eating and sleeping—some of them smoking. Still the same numbers for each candidate, till yesterday about noon (for they held that in the forty-eight hours allowed for the election no adjournment could be made), when the Tories, Chapman's friends, refusing absolutely to concur with either of the two other parties, Thackeray's votes went over to George by agreement, and he was declared.

'A friend of mine, a curious man, tells me he took a survey of his brothers at the hour of two in the morning, and that never was a more curious or a more diverting spectacle. Some wrapped in blankets erect in their stalls like mummies, others asleep on cushions like so many Gothic tombs; here a red cap over a wig, there a face lost in the cape of a rug; one blowing a chafing-dish with a surplice-sleeve, another warming a little negus or sipping "Coke upon Littleton"—that is, tent and brandy. Thus did they combat the cold of that frosty night, which has not killed any of them, to my infinite surprise.* In spite of these vulgarities, of such comparatively modern date, Eton has always been the peculiar seminary of the aristocracy; at that time, young peers, and sons of peers, and baronets, sat in stalls in the college chapel (of all places!), as they do now in Trinity College, Cambridge, visibly elevated above their fellows; nor was it an uncommon thing, early in the present century, for an Eton boy whose friends were connected with the Court, to hold a commission in the Guards, and draw regular pay. Nay, if he

* Letter from Daniel Wray, *Nichols's Illustr.*, i. 95.

obtained an appointment as one of the royal pages, he was gazetted while yet a mere child. 'I had the honour this morning,' Dr Goodall is reported to have said on one occasion, 'of flogging a major in his majesty's service.'

Possessing for her pupils the boys of all the best families in England, with their success in life assured beforehand, it is small praise to Eton to assert that she has sent forth vastly more than her share of what History calls 'eminent personages.' Their eminence, whatever other credit she may take to herself, is scarcely owing to what she taught; nor, I am afraid it must be added, to what they taught themselves. Indeed, it is only upon perusing such a book as *Etoniana*, that one gets one's suspicions confirmed with respect to the very little practical advantage that flows from so magnificent a course of study as that pursued at Eton. While the desire of seeing their sons in good company animates British fathers, this great school will hold its own, and the prayer of its motto, *Floreat Etona*, will doubtless be answered (as we trust it will), even though we confess that, as an institution for developing the intellect, it does not appear to have been eminently successful. It is surprising, indeed, what comparatively little people are held up to us, in modern times, by the author of *Etoniana* as having been Eton men, and owing their success(?) to Eton training.* It would be invidious to mention the names of living persons; but of those who have departed of later years, the most eminent Etonians, according to the present record, appear to have been Mackworth Praed and Sydney Walker. With the admirable poems of the former, most of us are more or less acquainted, although we should scarcely call him a *very* distinguished writer; but of the very name of the latter, how few have heard! Yet, notwithstanding this paucity of talent in the past generation, our author does not hesitate to advance evidence which contrasts the present with the yet unfavourably. 'Formerly,' says a late Eton master in his evidence before the School Commission, 'any average boy of ordinary taste at Eton, on leaving school, had read much of the English poets, and a great deal of English history, as well as other literature. . . . The old English dramatists, a great deal of Dryden, a great deal of Pope, and an immense deal of other English poetry, were then read at Eton, besides most of the modern poems; but now I doubt whether you would find many boys out of the whole eight hundred who have read ten plays of Shakspeare.' Upon this the present writer has only to remark, that when he was himself at Eton, he came in the course of his classical reading across the phrase, *laudator temporis acti*; and that it seems to him to apply to the witness above quoted with considerable force. In my time, at least (Dr Hawtreys), we were by no means so voluntarily studious as this gentleman suggests: I should like to have the names of (say) ten boys (for instance) who read 'a great deal of Dryden.'

We have unfortunately no room to quote our author's description of Montem (alas, alas, how that name brings the old school-days back!), with its graceful highway robberies and laughing victims—when the embroidered bag was held up

alike to king and farmer for 'salt, salt,' and the little blue ticket with *mos pro lege* was given as a receipt by each agreeable young brigand. How gay was the old highway inn with rank and beauty! How bright the garden, not with flowers only, but with Turks and Albanians, Highlanders and Hidalgoes, and youthful captains in their scarlet bravery!

When William III. was 'stopped' as usual upon Montem day, on the Bath road, his Dutch guards were within a very little of cutting down the 'salt-bearers,' not understanding that they had special licence to take to the highway. Royalty never gave less than fifty guineas, and at the last celebration of this ancient festival, Prince Albert bestowed a hundred pounds. All the money thus collected was given, after deducting expenses, to the 'captain' (a college and a poor man of course), in order to support him at Cambridge. It amounted in 1841, the last year but one of *Montem*, to no less a sum than L.1250. It is of course only in later times that anecdotes of the school are preserved to any extent, and the last part of *Etoniana* is therefore by far the most amusing; this is especially the case where it refers to Dr Keate and his régime, which began in 1809, and lasted for a quarter of a century. Who does not remember the portrait of him in *Eothen*?

'He was little more, if more at all, than five feet in height, and was not very great in girth; but within this space was concentrated the pluck of ten battalions. He had a really noble voice, and this he could modulate with great skill; but he had also the power of quacking like an angry duck, and he almost always adopted this mode of communication in order to inspire respect. He was a capital scholar, but his "ingenuous learning" had not "softened his manners," and had "permitted them to be fierce"—tremendously fierce. He had such a complete command over his temper—I mean over his good temper—that he scarcely ever allowed it to appear; you could not put him out of humour—that is, out of the ill-humour which he thought to be fitting for a head-master. His red shaggy eyebrows were so prominent, that he habitually used them as arms and hands, for the purpose of pointing out any object towards which he wished to direct attention; the rest of his features were equally striking in their way, and were all and all his own. He wore a fancy dress, partly resembling the costume of Napoleon,* and partly that of a widow woman.' The doctor's fine figure and dress were all provocative of caricature. 'Any one without the least notion of drawing could make a speaking, nay, a scolding likeness of Keate.' An Italian modeller once made a clever statuette of him, which had a considerable sale among the boys. 'A good many copies of it also found their way into the shop of a compatriot in the same trade at Oxford, where a friend of the doctor's one day saw them. He had not been aware that Keate was so popular a chimney-ornament. "Do you sell many of these?" he asked. "O yes, sare; Eton gentlemen buy him many times—they have much pleasure to break his head."

This is not to be wondered at, for the fact is, that notwithstanding many good qualities, Keate was a ruffian. He had quite a mania for using the birch. 'On one occasion, when a confirmation was to be held for the school, each master was requested to make

* When we say this, we exclude statesmen, who in this country are for the most part (like poets) *born*, and do not

* The resemblance to Napoleon was owing to the fact

out and send in a list of the candidates in his own form. One of them wrote down the names on the first piece of paper which came to hand, which happened unluckily to be one of the slips of well-known size and shape used as flogging bills, and sent up regularly with the names of delinquents for execution. The list was put into Keate's hands without explanation: he sent for the boys in the regular course, and in spite of all protestations on their part, pointing to the master's signature to the fatal "bill," flogged them all (so the story goes) there and then. Another day, a culprit who was due for punishment could nowhere be found, and the doctor was kept waiting on the scene of action for some time in a state of considerable exasperation. In an evil moment for himself, a namesake of the defaulter passed the door; he was seized at once by Keate's order, and brought to the block as a vicarious sacrifice—a second Sir Mungo Malagrowth. Such legends may not always bear the strictest investigation; but they have at least the kind of truth which some Romanist writers claim for certain apocryphal *Acta Sanctorum*—they shew "what sort of deeds were done." The most terrible of Keate's deeds, however, was the thrashing of the whole fifth form, one after the other, for absenting themselves from afternoon roll-call.*

An organised resistance was to be looked for upon the morrow; so the doctor, 'who had not taught Latin so long without being aware of what *Divide et impera* meant,' resolved to take his victims in detail that very night. In *Etoniana* there is a charming account of this *coup d'état* by an—no, not an eye-witness, for, from the nature of the punishment, he could not be that, but from one of the sufferers. The doctor polished them all off during the small-hours. Surely never was such a school hecatomb! No wonder so historical a flogging-block was too great a temptation for his Lordship of Waterford, who, as everybody knows, carried it bodily away one night in defiance of the watchman, and sent it to his fastness of Curraghmore, where it now remains. Only one lad was ever known to escape from the birch of Dr Keate; once doomed, even a respite never occurred in any other case. The circumstances were peculiar. 'A boy who grew up afterwards to be one of Eton's most cherished names—the more so because cut off in early manhood—had got into trouble, and was looking forward to his first flogging with some nervousness. Some mischievous schoolfellows recommended a preparation of *gall-nuts* as an infallible recipe for making the surface to which it was applied insensible to pain. The result will be readily understood by those who know the composition of ink—and is certainly one of those cases better imagined than described. It was impossible to put in an appearance before the doctor in that state; a strictly private consultation with his tutor (the Eton boy's usual resource in difficulties) ended in that gentleman's waiting upon Keate, and explaining the impossibility of the impending operation being performed without great risk to the gravity of both head-master and attendant collegers; and a "pæna" of some hundred lines was accepted in commutation.' This, remember, is not merely a fiction founded on stern reality, but an absolute fact, as likewise is the following anecdote, for which the present writer can vouch, as it occurred in his own time. Under Dr Edward Craven

Hawtrej (although by no means under his direct patronage), the school possessed a pack of beagles; sometimes we hunted the hare, and sometimes we ourselves were hunted by masters, who took the field on horseback, whereas we were mostly on foot; but in spite of persecution, the sport was still patronised. Nay, 'at one time the members of the Hunt, in emulation of older sportsmen, determined on adopting a distinctive button, and had a die struck with the letters E. C. H.—Eton College Hunt. Dr Hawtrej soon noticed these new insignia in school, but could not quite make out the legend. Meeting a boy one day in the school-yard, he literally took him by the button, and asked what the letters were; but when his pupil, with some slight natural embarrassment, read out the mystic characters—the doctor's own initials—further question or comment seemed unnecessary, and it was the master's turn to look embarrassed at what he took for a delicate compliment from his pupils.'

We have not the least idea as to who the author of *Etoniana* may be (except that it is not likely to be a lady); but so admirably has he done his work, and so neatly does he tell his stories, that we only wish he would take up the social history of whichever university had the honour of his subsequent education, and narrate it as pleasantly as he has done that of Eton College.

SUMMER IN SPRING.

A still descent of summer gloom,
That greener makes the shadowed earth!
How ghostly shews the orchard's bloom,
And heavily the breathed perfume
Broods on the flower that gives it birth.

Yet all the air is shrill with notes
Of busy wings, that flit and call
Beneath the moisture dark that floats
In silent folds and misty notes;
They care not though the menace fall.

Why should they check their happy tongue
To fear what summer rain-drops bring,
With every tree's green banner flung,
And all the world's loud welcome sung
To the sweet eyes of long-lost Spring.

The Tale of MINK ABBEY (by the author of 'LOST SIR MASSINGBERD,' 'THE CLYFFARDS OF CLYFFE,' &c.), being now completed, will be followed on 7th July by an Original Serial Story, by THOMAS SPEIGHT, entitled

BROUGHT TO LIGHT.

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* Called at Eton *Absence*.

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GIVE ME BACK MY EIGHT MINUTES.

AS soon as I have stated it, I have done with it. I'm not like a bellman, who tells you what he happens to have on his mind a dozen times in the length of the street, and then stands on the market-steps, and says it over three times more. But yet, I'm not one for letting things rest altogether. When a grievance comes home to a man, I always think he'd better get it off his mind, and then he won't go home to the grievance. I always fancy that the morning that 'Civis' or 'Vindex' sees his letter in the *Times*, most probably ushers in the first entirely peaceful day that his family have had for weeks. It must do him good to have enclosed his card, and remained, &c. He has spoken in his own behalf, has explained their wrongs to his unconscious fellow-sufferers, and he is at rest.

I have a grievance, and since what I complain of is also a wide-spread injustice, I believe it to be a public duty to represent it. In common with countless numbers of Englishmen, I am being kept out of my rights. Having looked into Blackstone (Paine's valuable work I do not possess), I must frankly allow that in summing up the natural rights of man he does not mention the particular one for which I contend; nevertheless, I submit that, if there is a right which a man may fairly claim, it is that right which is being daily invaded—the right to his own time of day.

In our little town, we have enjoyed ours certainly for centuries. Our good ancestors bequeathed it to us by the gift of a sun-dial on our market-cross. We have had the figures twice gilded within my memory, and also keep a good church clock in repair out of the rates, so that I maintain we have a vested right to our own particular noon. Nor can any one shew that we have abused our privileges, so as to deserve to forfeit them. We have been, on the whole, a punctual town. And yet, because we lie in the West, we are to put ourselves forward in advance of our shadows eight minutes.

Now, I always stood up for bringing the railway round by our town, but I must say that I never

thought that, as part of that bargain, they would put up a station clock, which would have the audacity to face us out of our time. But it does, and one by one, it is bringing us round. I remember that clock's first appearance. It never apologised for the intrusion, but came down from London one morning, mounted a little turret, and gave the lie direct to our old time-keeper in the church-tower. 'Ten,' it shouted. 'Eight minutes to ten,' quietly said the clock that was in legitimate charge: and then, after a due pause, firmly remarked: 'Now, it's ten.' 'No, eight minutes past,' persisted the new-comer; and so they have gone on, these two, contradicting one another every minute of each day since. I wish it had stopped here—I do not mean either of the clocks, but the quarrel. I sincerely wish these two had been left to fight it out. I have some respect for honest difference of opinion fairly declared. But a third party has stepped in—a mediator—who made matters worse, as mediators always do. A watchmaker's clock in the town, which had been trying for some time to elect itself a public functionary, but had never gained our confidence, suggested a compromise, and offered to keep both times. While honest men were voting one side or the other, this clock held up one hand for the original resolution, and another for the amendment. And what I complain of is, that no one will see that by such temporising it stultifies itself. It is a matter of principle, as I conceive it. Either we are entitled to our own time, or we are not. If not, then let it be so fairly understood; let an Act of Uniformity fix a parliamentary noon; let all sun-dials be called in, and publicly smashed, and a Royal Commission be appointed to visit and regulate the church clocks; let all England strike twelve together. But why all England only? Why not the British dominions? We have been accustomed to boast that we are subjects of an empire on which the sun never sets; but perhaps it is quite as glorious a boast to belong to one on which the sun sets in every part at the same moment. Let it be acknowledged as a matter of principle, and I cease my opposition at once. I could soon even grow to

forget that the sun travels in the heavens. I could be as loyal to one meridian as any man. I don't want to be behind my age, or either behind or before my age's time of day, if it likes to start one. But if the principle is not acknowledged as universal, then I protest against being pushed backward or forward (forward especially) a single minute by a simply commercial Company.

For the convenience of commerce, I would concede something, of course. Let this station clock withdraw its claim to interfere, and conform to the ideas of the place in which it finds itself, and I have no quarrel. If, for the Company's convenience, I am wanted at the station ten minutes before the time fixed for any train, I would cheerfully accommodate myself to their arrangements. When old Mr Livewell, my neighbour, asks me to dine with him at seven sharp, I know very well that it is his whim to keep his clocks twenty minutes fast, and therefore I go twenty minutes before seven, out of politeness. I know, that is to say, that the dinner will be spoiled if I don't, and I should know equally well that I should miss my train, if I didn't humour the Company's commercial whims. But upon compulsion? No; not without protest. And here I make my declaration, that it is unjust that any city, town, village, or hamlet should be forced or cajoled out of the right to their own independent time of day, as by sun established; and I hereby warn my countrymen that railways are gradually usurping authority in temporal matters, and that, if we do not resist the encroachment, the next generation will see (let them pause, and consider what it means) the Centralisation of Time.

I have read a little history in my time, and I know that people have had their time of day, and even their time of year, interfered with before now. I know that,

In the most high and palmy state of Rome,
A little ere the mightiest Julius fell,

a decree went forth that the year should be stretched, and that stretched that one year was to the length of 445 days. Twenty-three brand-new days were let in between February 23 and February 24; and two brand-new months stitched on at the end of November. As we read these facts, we are not so much puzzled to know whence they got all these new days, as curious to speculate upon some of the effects of this wonderful month-making. The children that were born on any one of these new days, did they never (dismal thought!) have a birthday to keep? Or, were these poor little time-foundlings rated in the register as belonging for the future to some one of the old regular days, just as with us children born at sea are not left without a parish, but suffered to belong to Stepney? Again, did these new days come during the Roman school-boys' holidays, or in the half-year; and if in the latter, were the parents charged extra? Again, did these imported days belong to the men working on fixed annual salaries, or were they claimed by their employers as part of the working-year? Were they 'days of grace' to debtors? Were they holidays at the public offices? These are questions on which, unfortunately, the annals of the time throw no light. We are only told that it was called 'the year of confusion.' However, though doubtless many persons were bewildered, and never knew the day of the month afterwards, while to some few the change brought a trifle of hardship, I can-

not see that the general community could complain of so munificent a largess from 'royal Cæsar' as a gift of ninety days. I wonder, for my part, that Mark Antony, when commemorating dead Cæsar's generosity to the citizens of Rome, did not mention this handsome present, that Cæsar had not so very long before made them. What were 'three hundred sesterties apiece, and his gardens beyond the Tiber,' to this? 'Three months to any man not in a work-house is surely worth more than three pounds sterling. I should quietly have gone abroad, and spent this windfall of time, and come back with the complacent feeling that I hadn't lost a single day. Certainly I would never have dreamed of complaining.

The case of our countrymen in 1752 A.D. was, I admit, a hard one. With all my respect for an act of parliament, I must say I should have resented having eleven days taken out of the calendar in that arbitrary way. And what sportsman would not resent the cancelling of those precious days between the 2d and the 14th of September? For a free country, which also preserved partridges, it was certainly a startling and tyrannical measure, and though they got Lord Chesterfield to move the bill, with the purpose, I suppose, of introducing the subject (I have read his admirable Letters) in the politest manner, I should still have rebelled. I quite understand the feelings of that Oxfordshire mob, which, when the son of Lord Macclesfield, the seconder of the bill, some time after appeared before them on the hustings, greeted him with the cry: 'Give us back, you rascal, those eleven days your father stole from us.' They were wrong, no doubt, in believing that the whole affair was a private arrangement for the benefit of the Macclesfield family, but were right in their conviction that an injury had been done them.

After all, however, that robbery of eleven days was a trifling grievance compared with the one I am now denouncing. There was some pretext for it in the alleged fact, that the nation had lost its reckoning. It was a kind of national debt, which, though burdensome, it would not perhaps have suited the honour of England to repudiate. The days had been spent, I suppose, by a past generation, and though there was nothing to shew for them, a sound and upright policy may have dictated their repayment. That I don't know: it is a question of compensation, which I leave for a political economist. But there is no such pretext offered for the robbery of minutes to which I am here calling public attention. When I have to get up eight minutes earlier than my right time, no one pretends that my sacrifice is demanded to make good a deficit; and even if it were, what justice is that which taxes the community so unequally? Those favoured few, through the head of whose beds the meridian of Greenwich runs, get up by their own time—they pay nothing. Those who dwell in the eastern counties are absolutely rewarded for it by a daily gift of minutes. And we are the prey. To foreshorten our days is thought fair sport, and we are fined in proportion to our distance from a meridian which very few of us have ever seen. Then, again, those eleven days were paid once for all, and the debt was cleared. It was an eleven days' wonder, no doubt, that February should be so short in the year of grace 1752, but March kept its full allowance. But we are always paying. It is, as Milton's Satan so neatly expresses it, 'so burdensome, still paying,

still to owe.' The demand comes daily, and what is worse, comes at the most irritating moment. The old dynasty of the sun was just and equitable, but the petty tyranny which forces a man out of bed eight minutes before he is due at the dressing-table, is absolutely intolerable; and yet, as I have said, men are submitting to it, and setting their watches to the one central time. If we do not make a stand now for our municipal time, it will soon be too late. Men are already talking of 'railway time,' as if 'railway' were a part of our planetary system, whose right to rule the day no one could question. We shall soon have a 'railway week,' and be left to find out the Sundays in the time-table. We shall have to look in *Bradshaw* to know when the sun rises. This is what we are coming to, and we must at once resist this interference with natural laws. I do not intend, for my part, to lead an agitation; I have no gift that way; I am no county-town Hampden. I am content to sound from a high place one clear ringing note of warning; and I have done it.

CAST AWAY.

'On November 12, 1863,' you may read in *Lloyd's List*, that 'the *Grafton*, Captain Musgrave, sailed from Sydney to the South-Sea Islands,' a place the little vessel was fated not to reach. Early in the next year, it appeared under the sad title of *Missing Vessels*. It was lost among the Auckland Isles, a desolate group, situated about two hundred and forty miles south of New Zealand. The captain, the mate Raynal, and the little crew of four men, were destined for a year and a half—while the world went on as usual, and their memories were dying out in it—to inhabit that wave-beaten and sterile spot. A journal kept by Musgrave, during the whole of that sad time, has just been published,* setting forth how the castaways managed to keep soul and body together; and a most interesting record it is. It has little or no literary merit, but its air of truthfulness outdoes even the *vraisemblance* of Defoe; it is probable that the gallant captain never read *Robinson Crusoe*, but it would really seem as though this little history had been compiled out of that wonderful volume. The minuteness of the details; the earnest piety and repentance for the sins that seem to have brought him to this pass; the thankfulness for small mercies; the earnest and almost maddening desire for home—all these give interest to the narrative, which its perpetual references to the barometer, and quotations of the wind's movements, are unable to destroy. Nay, they rather assist the local colouring of the desolate picture: the state of the wind was all in all to them, for if a gale arose, these shipwrecked men knew that no vessel could possibly put in to save them; and no stormier spot than that on which they were thrown exists in the South Seas.

The captain describes the gale in which the *Grafton* was driven ashore as 'one of unimaginable violence;' but the wreck occurring in what might almost be called a harbour, and close to land, they got the boards out of their ship, and built a house with them and with the topmasts. Some small timber was growing near the spot, and there was fresh water. The seals, too, were exceedingly numerous, and went 'roaring about the woods like

wild cattle.' Upon this the poor captain remarks: 'If we had been fortunate enough to have kept the vessel afloat, I have no doubt but in two months or less we should have loaded her. Mine appears a hard fate; after getting to where I might have made up for what has been lost, I lose the means of doing so. The vessel leaves her bones here, and God only knows whether we are all to leave our bones here also. And what is to become of my poor unprovided-for family? It drives me mad to think of it. I can write no more.' And he writes no more for a fortnight, but works steadily at the house.

Like the famous Russian sailors on the island of Spitzbergen, these unfortunate men make up their minds for the worst, and prepare to encounter the winter. There seems no fear at present in respect of food; the seals are knocked on the head with the greatest ease, and there are hundreds of them, though only the cows and calf tiger-seals are considered to be eatable—not the black seals or the bulls. Of birds, too, there is a great plenty, the party shooting as much as one hundred and fifty pounds of widgeon in less than three hours. The beasts are tame in the sense of not being afraid, though they always shew fight; but the singing-birds, quite as unused to mankind as those of *Crusoe's* island, actually feed out of their hands. When the hawks are hovering, the feathered tremblers fly into the house in flocks, as into a temple of safety. They salt and hang the widgeon, and smoke-dry the seal, beginning wisely to lay up in store at once. 'God is certainly good,' sets down pious Captain Musgrave, 'in sending us plenty to eat. I hope and pray that He will soon send some one in here that will take us away.' It was mercifully hidden from this poor man that a time would come when provisions would be lacking, and that it was fated that no relieving sail should ever gladden his eyes. Captain Musgrave had left his wife and helpless family at Sydney, and the allusions to them are throughout most touching. 'Sunday, March 13, 1864.—My heart beats fast to-night as I sit down to write, somewhat similar to what it might do if I was about writing a love-letter. I know that many a bitter tear has been shed for me by this time, and most likely to-day, as this is the end of another dreary month since I left those I loved so much; and how many more must pass, or how they will pass them until we meet again, or whether we shall ever meet again on earth—Heaven only knows.' But though desponding himself, he works early and late, and does all he possibly can to keep his men in good heart. Mr Raynal, the mate, is a sort of Admirable Crichton, and, in particular, an admirable cook. He gives them sometimes four courses at a meal, but only at the time of spring-tides. 'We then have stewed or roasted seal, fried liver, fish, and mussels.'

Fish, however, can very rarely be got, by reason of the mobs of seals. Soon, too, the singing-birds began to leave them; and the trustful parrots, and the robins that used to chirp round them at their meals. In three months' time, our author presents us with this sadly-altered bill of fare: 'Breakfast—seal stewed down to soup, fried roots, boiled seal, or roast ditto, with water. Dinner—Ditto, ditto. Supper—Ditto, ditto. This repeated twenty-one times per week. Mussels or fish are now quite a rarity; we have not been able to get either for some time. The man who killed the seal to-day had been fishing nearly all day, and had caught

* *Cast Away on the Auckland Isles*. Lockwood & Co.

one small fish. The men have stood it bravely thus far, but it grieves me unexpressedly to hear them wishing for things which they cannot get. I heard one just now wishing he had but a bucket of potato-peelings! 'I can scarcely call this "living,"' adds he sadly. It is almost a wonder that the poor fellows did not become seals themselves. The very Journal itself got to be written in seals' blood, for the ink failed.

And yet a time came when the most terrible event to these unfortunates was the desertion of the seals. 'It is evident,' writes Musgrave in September 1864, 'that the seals have left this part of the island entirely: we were out in the boat yesterday' (their wretched little ship's boat), 'but did not see one. I have often thought I could get across to the western shore of the island by a valley at the head of the bay, where I imagine it is not more than three miles across. We started in the boat the first thing after our breakfast, and landed at the place where I intended to cross. We left the boat, and the three men who were in her started to go with me; but the travelling was so horribly bad, that when we had got half a mile, two of them turned back, leaving the other man and myself to pursue our way without them, which we did for about a mile further; and I may say we had accomplished this distance by creeping on our bellies, very seldom getting as high as our hands and knees. I have described some bad roads before. This beats description, and it also beats me; and this is the first time I have been beaten in getting through the infernal scrub and swamp. The time which we occupied in going and returning this mile and a half may give some idea of what sort of travelling it was: we were about seven hours in doing it! I got a severe cold over it, which was the only reward of my trouble.' The above will give an idea of the prison-like character of their desolate abode. They could not even roam over their island. There was one seal which stuck to them so long that they grew quite attached to it, although he was always ready to shew fight. 'Had not meat been so very scarce,' writes the captain piteously, 'we would not have killed "Royal Tom." But as it was, his majesty was slaughtered. They do not despise even the black bull seals now. 'Not very long ago, we thought it would be impossible to eat this kind of seal; and indeed they are not by any means fit for food, for the strong smell of the meat is enough not only to disgust but to stifle a person. But what are starving men to do? and we may consider ourselves such. Hunger is certainly a good sauce. We were all in a state of excitement over the seal that was shot, for fear we should lose him, and not be able to get any more.'

At last, there are no fresh seals—only dried and smoked ones—and there is nothing for it but patience. How often they go to Flagstaff Point, their look-out station, and 're-paint our signal-board,' is pitiful to read. It is the season when a vessel may be most probably expected; but none is seen. 'Sunday, October 23, 1864.—Week passes on after week. Another one has passed like its predecessors, and thus, I suppose, it will continue till time shall be no more. Each day passes, and we know not what the next may bring forth, or whether we shall see it or not; and probably one of the best gifts of Providence is the veil that conceals futurity. My eyes are positively weak and bloodshot with anxious looking. Since last Sunday, I have scarcely slept, for night and day I

have been constantly on the worry, expecting that a vessel would come in.' They survey all the coast they can command, and note where any way for a ship to come at them is practicable; but the breakers are very dangerous; moreover, there are mountains rising perpendicularly from the very water's edge. 'I hope no vessel will go humbugging about these places looking for us,' writes the poor fellow. But he need not have harassed himself with any such notion. He and his companions were even as dead men—out of mind. They were already approximating to the condition of savages, not only as respected food, but apparel. 'We are not yet,' writes the narrator of this sad story, 'reduced to wearing seal-skin clothes entirely, but those which we do wear look most deplorable, although they are neither ragged nor dirty; but they are patched to such a degree that in scarcely any piece of garment that any of us wear is there a particle of the original visible. Joseph's coat would scarcely be a circumstance of comparison with some of ours. Old canvas, old gunny-bags, anything we can get hold of, goes in for patches, and we use canvas ravellings for thread, and sew everything with a sail-needle. We are certainly a motley group.'

Long ago, when the spring had begun to set in—that is, in August—the Castaways had turned their attention to the wreck still near the shore, in hopes to render her seaworthy: a miserable task it was working tide-time up to their waists in water, and with the thermometer below freezing; but after getting all the ballast out of her, they found it impossible, either by pumping or baling, to keep the water down. There were a number of holes in her; many of her timbers broken, and the main wheel gone from her stern to about the main rigging. 'We threw her back on her sore side again. Nothing more can be done.' This was what Musgrave wrote in August. But in November, when hunger began to prick, he asked himself the question: 'Though the *Grafton* is useless as she is, cannot something be done with her bones?' Their stock of tools comprised only an American axe, an adze, a hammer, and a gimlet—a very insufficient assortment for taking a ship to pieces, far less to build another, even had there been a ship's carpenter among them, which there was not. There was, however, Raynal. After a weary time of storm and tempest, wherein nothing could be done, and the poor captain notes: 'A whole year has now passed since I first came to this place. . . . I have got quite gray-headed. My hair is now all coming out, &c.;' the new venture is begun. 'The vessel I am going to build will be a cutter of about ten tons. We have got the blocks laid down, and a quantity of timbers cut. All the frame, we shall have to get out of the woods, excepting the keel, which the *Grafton's* mainmast will supply. Mr Raynal is Vulcan; he has had some little experience in blacksmithing, which will now be of the greatest service to us, as we shall have to make nearly all our own tools. He has got a forge up ready for going to work at, as soon as we get some charcoal made. We have now a quantity of it in the ground, undergoing the process of burning. The schooner had a quantity of old iron in her bottom for ballast, amongst which we found a block, which will answer the purpose of an anvil. Mr Raynal has undertaken to make a saw out of a piece of sheet-iron. When we found the old sealers' camp on Figure-of-Eight Island, we found

an old saw-file, but the teeth were all rusted off it. This has been carefully reserved ever since, and Mr Raynal ground it smooth on a grinding-stone, which was our principal ballast, and with an old chisel, made out of an old broken flat file, cut fresh teeth in it; but unfortunately, as he was cutting almost the last tooth, he broke it—the part which goes into the handle—and about two inches of the file went. I think he can manage to cut teeth in the saw with it. I am afraid that augers will be the most difficult tools to make; but now that the job is fairly undertaken, I have not the slightest doubt of final success, in some shape or other. Every one works cheerfully and well: I sincerely hope nothing will occur to damp either. We work from six in the morning until six in the evening.

It is sad to write, even now, that all this zealous endeavour was destined to be labour in vain. They got the keel, the stem, the sternpost of the craft all ready, and a number of timbers for bolting them together; but there they stuck. 'Mr Raynal has made a saw, chisels, gouges, and sundry other tools. His ingenuity and dexterity at the forge have indeed surpassed my expectation, but making augers has proved a hopeless failure. Assiduously he wrought at one for three days, and it was not until there was not a shade of hope left, that he gave it up; and if he had had the material to make them out of, I feel confident he would have succeeded. The only steel he had was two picks and some shovel-blades, which tools we took from Sydney, in hope of having some mining operations to perform at Campbell's Island. It was truly deplorable to view the faces of all as we stood around him, when he decidedly pronounced it impossible for him to make one: they all appeared, and I have no doubt felt, as if all hope was gone. It went like a shot to my heart, although I had begun to anticipate such a result, and had made up my mind for immediate action accordingly; but when I saw positively that I must, as a last card, put my project into practice, I felt I was tempting Providence; for my tacit project and unalterable resolution is to attempt a passage to Stewart's Island in the boat.'

This boat was a clinker-built dingy, but twelve feet on the keel, very old and shaky, and a frail craft indeed to overpass the terrible sea that lay between them and the nearest land. 'The sea booms and the wind howls,' is the constant record; 'sounds which have been ringing in my ear for the last fifteen months, and during the whole of that time have not been hushed, I dare venture to say, more than a fortnight together. . . . I have been round both capes (that is, Cape Horn and Cape of Good Hope), and crossed the Western Ocean many times, but never have I experienced, or read, or heard of anything in the shape of storms to equal those of this place.' But starvation is staring them in the face. If they can manage to strengthen the wretched dingy, to raise her one foot, and lengthen her three feet, before the beginning of April—the most favourable time for the experiment—the captain will certainly start in her: he is in good hope, and even high spirits, whenever he thinks of it. There is not a day to lose, and they work from daylight till half-past nine at night, having sails, masts, and everything to contrive; on one occasion they break their one gimlet, and all seems to be lost, only admirable Raynal 'manages to make it so that we can make a

hole with it.' But they have much to contend against besides want of tools; for one thing, sand-flies, more malignant than any mosquitoes. 'If the wind is moderate in the least degree—that is to say, if it is not blowing a whole gale—they are flying about in myriads from daylight to dark (fortunately, they modestly retire in the night), and alight on you in clouds, literally covering every part of your skin that happens to be exposed; and not only that, but they get inside our clothes, and bite there. I do not think that at the present moment I could place the point of a needle on any part of my hands or face clear of their bites.' They are sometimes compelled by the attacks of these small but countless foes to discontinue their work. Then, when the plank came to be put on to the boat, it would not stand bending, although well steamed; and everything had to be remodelled, and planks cut out of the bush with a saw that required sharpening every half-hour. Then followed heavy rains, with their sad accompaniment, dysentery, and nothing to keep body and soul together save roots and water.

It is midnight on June 26, but still Raynal is making his hammer ring at the forge, putting in his finishing-touches. The next day, the boat is launched, but is found to be so 'tender,' that some of the men are frightened to sit in her. This is, in one point of view, fortunate, for it prevents its being overcrowded, which, with a crew of five, it would certainly have been. It is agreed that two shall remain, while three shall start, and if they reach New Zealand alive, return at once with help. George Harris and Henry Folger, it is settled, are to be left behind. Delayed, as usual, by continuous storms till July 19, 1865, the other three at length set sail upon their desperate voyage. When but twenty miles from the island, they are overtaken by a south-west gale, and 'for five days and nights I stood upon my feet,' writes Musgrave, 'holding on to a rope with one hand, and pumping with the other. The boat was very leaky, and kept the pump almost constantly going. As my anxiety would not permit me to leave the deck, I performed this part of the work while the other two relieved each other at the helm. The wind, although fair, was so strong that we were obliged to lay-to nearly half the time, and the sea was constantly breaking over the little craft; and how she lived through it, I scarcely know. I had not eaten an ounce of food from the time of leaving until we arrived, and only drunk about half a pint of water; yet I felt no fatigue until the night before we landed, when I suddenly became quite exhausted, and lay down on the deck, over which there was no water washing for the first time since we left the island. We were now close to the land. I lay for about half an hour, and then got up again, feeling that I had just sufficient strength remaining to enable me to hold out till the next day; but had we been out any longer, I feel convinced that I should never have put my foot on shore again.'

On the 25th, they landed at Port Adventure, Stewart's Island, where they were cordially received by Captain Cross of the *Flying Scud*. This gentleman (for such he proved himself to be) took the three to Invercargill, where a subscription of over one hundred pounds was at once raised for them by a good fellow called Macpherson. The *Flying Scud* was chartered to return forthwith to the Auckland; and Captain Musgrave, although keenly anxious to

return to his deserted family, very properly accompanied the expedition. The revisiting that lonely prison in a good ship, which was prepared to bring him back again, must have been what visiting his old school is to the enfranchised school-boy: but besides his own feelings of joy and gratitude, there was the pleasure of rescuing the two unhappy castaways who yet remained. And now comes a remarkable incident: as they drew near the well-known spot (after weeks of baffling winds), smoke was seen ascending from the land, but in quite a different part of the island from that where he had left the men. They brought their vessel to an anchor in the same place from which Musgrave had sailed five weeks ago. 'As we did not come in sight of our old house until within about a mile from it, the boys did not see us until we were close upon them. Then the one who saw us ran into the house to tell the other; and before they reached the beach, Captain Cross and myself had landed, leaving the cutter under-weigh, as there was too much wind and sea to anchor her. One of them, the cook, on seeing me, turned as pale as a ghost, and staggered up to a post, against which he leaned for support, for he was evidently on the point of fainting; while the other, George, seized my hand in both of his, and gave my arm a severe shaking, crying: "Captain Musgrave, how are ye, how are ye?" apparently unable to say anything else.' Having taken them on board, it was a sight to watch them over a supper of fish and potatoes, tea and bread and butter! They had been obliged to eat mice of late weeks. Moreover, they had not been able to agree, and, 'strange as it may seem, although they were the only two, were on the point of separating, and living apart!'

Although neither they nor Musgrave believed in the smoke that had been sighted, good Captain Cross determined to run along shore, lest there should be other unfortunate shipwrecked souls to be rescued. Some of the crew remembered that there had been formerly a whaling-station on the island. 'If you had known of that, you might have found houses and vegetables, and plenty of pigs,' said they to Musgrave; but when the place was reached—which the scrub had, however, divided them from by an impassable barrier—behold there was scarce a vestige of a habitation! Bare levelled places point out where the houses have stood; traces of rude fences mark the site of innumerable little gardens; but there is nothing more. The only additions made by the colonists which had stood their ground were a few flax bushes, and one or two stone pathways—the soil being very soft—through which the long thick grasses grew even more rankly than elsewhere. 'I am glad we did not know of this place,' says Captain Musgrave, 'when we were cast away, for if we had reached it, it would have been a terrible disappointment.'

Such it doubtless had been to at least one poor soul, for here they find the body of a sailor, dead of starvation, but not long dead, since the flesh still remained upon his hands. A common roof-slate lay beside him, on which the dying man had scratched some hieroglyphic zigzags, but nothing could be deciphered beyond his Christian name, James. At the time of his death, he had been doubtless under the shelter of a wretched frame-house, but this had since fallen down entirely, without touching the body, but leaving it exposed to the weather. It lay upon a bed of grass, with

some boards underneath, raising it a few inches from the ground. Within reach was a bottle containing water, and close by lay a little heap of limpet and mussel shells. He was well and warmly dressed in sailor fashion, except as to his feet. An old shoe was partly on the right foot, and the left one was tied up with woollen rags, as though it had received some hurt. Round his neck hung a relic in the shape of a heart, made out of leather, and enclosing something, doubtless sacred in his eyes, between them. This last, and a lock of the dead man's hair, with the slate, Captain Musgrave reverently brought away, not without serious thought of how nearly such a fate had been his own.

After this, search was again made for signs of living persons, and as they coasted those inhospitable shores, they kept their glasses fixed upon it to the last; but there was not a vestige of human habitation.

Here the Journal ceases: but in an Appendix to the little volume there is this remarkable piece of information. On the 10th May 1864, during the captivity of Musgrave and his men, the *Invercauld*, Captain Dalgarno, was wrecked on the north-west end of Auckland, and nineteen of the crew managed to reach the land. Of these, sixteen perished of starvation, but three of them survived till May 20, 1865—the date of their unknown fellow-sufferers' failure to build their ship—when they were rescued by a Portuguese vessel (of course never seen from the 'look-out station,' where Musgrave was straining his eyes in vain at that very time), and carried to Callao, and from thence to England. Two sets of English Castaways therefore occupied the same desolate spot, without being conscious of each other's presence, for more than a year! Nay, there must have been more than two, for the starved sailor could not possibly have belonged to the *Invercauld*; and whence that poor soul came from, and what made the smoke seen from on board the *Flying Scud*, are mysteries still.

THE CIGAR SHIP.

We take tickets at Fenchurch Street for Poplar; and as we go upon the platform, perceive at once that we are in seaport London; none of our fellow-passengers are holiday-makers, and all seem to have something to do in the shipping or manufacturing line. The occupants of our compartment are not even inclined to lose the fifteen minutes which our journey will consume. One old gentleman in the opposite corner is studying a blue book, on the cover of which I see 'Merchant Seamen's Act'; and a young man, a draughtsman to some ship-builder, I suppose, is busily unrolling some drawings, to make them up into a smaller roll. The only exceptions to the general assiduity are myself and the merchant captain next me. I suppose his ship is being repaired, for he seems to have nothing to do or care for, and he and I soon get into conversation. He begins by asking: 'Have you seen the cigar-ship?'

'No, I am going to see her. What do you think of her?'

'Why,' says our captain, 'I think she looks like nothing else but a whale with a Greenwich boat on her back.'

'What do you think of her sea-going qualities?'

'I think she is seaworthy as far as the Nore; but if she ever gets into the chops of the Channel, she'll roll like Jack ashore just paid off.'

'But, sir,' interrupts the draughtsman, who has now arranged his roll to his satisfaction, 'by a proper adjustment of the weights, the centre of gravity may be brought so low that she will not roll more than any other ship. I think her worst fault will be pitching, there being so little of the ends under water to support their great weight.'

'O yes,' replies the captain, 'I know very well you ship-builders think that by your calculations you can find out just how a ship will behave at sea. But put you aboard my craft in a gale, under close-reefed topsails, and you'd find out how little you knew. Why, you wouldn't be able to tell the sky from the water.'

After a minute or two, our captain resumes in a milder tone: 'What reasons have you, sir, for thinking that the *Ross Winans* will be steady?'

'My opinions as to the sea-going qualities of vessels are only formed by comparing their respective forms; I cannot pretend to any other knowledge, as I have never been to sea beyond Margate; but I should say that as the cigar-ship is not really so much unlike other ships in form as she appears to be, she will not be so much unlike them in performance as you anticipate.'

'What,' says the captain, 'not unlike other ships! That's a new theory. I never saw the steamer that I would not rather sail to Australia in than take this new-fangled ship across the Channel.'

'Well, you know, captain, that the form of the vessel above water has nothing to do with her stability; and if you take the piece of the cigar-ship that is below the water, and compare it with twenty different models of yachts, you will find at least two or three which only differ from it in having a keel and cutwater. She will certainly be very much inclined to go off to leeward when under sail, through having no projecting keel to keep her up to the wind; but I do not see that her want of keel will affect her speed in steaming; and it will certainly not affect her stability to a greater extent than can be set right by ballast.'

'Well, you may be right about it,' says the captain; 'but she will be very awkward to manage, having such a small deck; and, at the best, her peculiar form does her no good, and is only a piece of fancy on the part of her designer.'

But we are now at Poplar; and a walk, first through narrow streets, where boat-builders, and oakum-dealers, and pump-makers, and carvers of ships' figure-heads work and live—and past that old house once inhabited by Sir Walter Raleigh, but now a greengrocer's shop, with nothing but pieces of worm-eaten battered carving here and there to shew what it once was—and then by the river-side—and then across the gates which let ships in and out of the docks—and then along the wharfs, where piles of timber are heaped up, enough, one would suppose, to build ships for many years to come, and behold we are close to the cigar-ship, and have only to cross a bridge to be alongside. And what do we think of her? Is she like a cigar, or will our merchant-captain's simile describe her? Imagine a cigar much larger than Anak or Chang would care about smoking—indeed, longer than any of our river-steamers; not exactly the shape of an ordinary cigar, having no blunt end, but a point at each end. Now, take a small steamer, and cut off all the part below water, and place the remaining upper part on the middle of the cigar, and you have a tolerable approximation to the form of the cigar-ship.

Before we go on board, we notice at a small distance from each end what appear to be, and are really, the *finns* of the ship. Three metal blades are visible near each end, and three more, we are told, are out of sight under water. Each set of blades, or fans, forms a screw-propeller, it being intended that the vessel shall go ahead or astern with equal facility. The propellers differ in many respects from the screw of an ordinary vessel—in there being one at each end of the ship in half of each being out the water, whereas usually the whole is immersed, and also in the peculiar way in which they are connected with the ship. The engineers say that their six blades, of which, as they revolve, three will be always immersed, will do the same work as the three blades of an ordinary screw. Those pointed pieces beyond the screws are to divide the water as the ship goes ahead or astern; they turn round with the fans, the whole revolving with an axis or 'shaft,' which extends the whole length of the ship, and turning about a straight line drawn from point to point of the cigar. The ship really ends inside of the screws, and, divested of the screws and points, would look like a cigar with two blunt ends; but the form of the vessel appears perfect to the point, and the blades seem to have been thrust in to the surface. Like the fins of a fish, they are so evidently not parts of the surface as not to take off the effects of its curvature.

On board the ship, we are first shewn the engine-room. We go down a staircase so constructed as to put our hats in imminent danger of being knocked in or off, and find ourselves on one side of the engines, which are in the centre of the ship. What an intricate maze of pipes and rods and cranks, all polished to a marvellous degree of perfection! Every cubic inch appears to have been made some use of; and when the engineer, who has volunteered to shew us the engines, lifts up a piece of iron in the flooring, we see that the small place beneath is full of pipes and taps also. 'Our great difficulty,' says he, 'has been to find room for everything; we never fitted engines of such great power in so small a space.—You can see here,' he resumes, 'the way in which the ship is put together. This, which you can touch, is the half-inch outside plating. What would they have said a few years ago to having ships half an inch thick!'

He informs us that these half-inch flat iron plates form the skin of the ship, and are kept out to their curved form by iron ribs, which, in the ends of the vessel, are complete circles; but here, where we are rooed in by a deck, they form three parts of a circle, and the ends turn up, and make the upper boat-shaped portion of the ship. The ribs are formed of what are technically called angle-irons, a section being an angle, each of whose two bounding lines is about half an inch thick. An idea of the form of one of these ribs may be obtained by half opening a book, first dividing the leaves in the middle of the book. One of the covers with its leaves may be taken to represent the leaf of the rib which is next the skin, the other the leaf which is at right angles to it, and imparts the strength required to keep the skin in its proper form. The advantage of this form of rib appears to be that it can be easily fastened to the skin by rivets. The ribs in the engine-room are placed about a yard and a half apart, that being the largest compartment of the ship, and also being

subjected to great strains by the motion of the engines.

As the engine is only interesting through being fitted in so small a space, we do not spend much time over it, but ask our guide to shew us the next compartment. He says the next is the stoke-hole; so we mount the staircase, and go down a still more difficult descent into a box about three or four yards square. We notice four furnaces, two on the fore and two on the after side. 'You see,' says our guide, 'there is not much room for stoking, and I can assure you it is very hot here when steam is up, although we have got thick doors to our furnaces.'

'Where do the coals come from?' I inquire. 'The coal-bunkers at the side seem very small.'

'Oh, they are stowed under the saloons and cabins; but we can get at them from here. Perhaps you have seen an absurd drawing of the ship in some shop-windows in the city. The artist appears to have seen your difficulty, and has shewn the coals in the points beyond the screw. It is true we might have filled the points with coals, but we should never have been able to get them out.'

I remark that they seem to have a very small space for water in the boiler.

'Yes, only three inches all round the furnace; and so our pumping arrangements have to be very carefully contrived, so that the boilers shall be filled as rapidly as the water is turned into steam.—I must introduce you to the donkey, this small engine in the corner; his duty is to pump water into the boilers, and to work the ventilating apparatus.'

'The ventilating apparatus—where is that?' I ask.

'The part of it which you can see here is that tube overhead, and the barrel through which it appears to pass. The tube extends nearly the whole length of the ship, and small pipes convey the hot air into it from the cabins. It empties itself into the barrel, in which are revolving fans. The donkey turns the fans, and thus the air is drawn out of the tube, and expelled through the opening which you see in the barrel. When we have steam up, we are so hot here that the heated air from the cabins is cooling, and as we only get the draught on our heads, it is something like having one's feet in a warm bath, and head in a snow-storm.'

'And I suppose the donkey works that ballast-machine which I have heard of as one of the curiosities of the cigar-ship?'

'O no; there is another small engine on purpose,' answers the engineer. 'You know, then, that we have something new in the way of ballast. It is under the engine-room, just in the middle of the ship, and consists of a pendulum of lead weighing about seventeen tons. When the ship is too much over on one side, we move the pendulum to the other, and she is righted at once; so you see we shall not roll over and over in the first heavy sea we meet, as people are fond of saying about us.—You have now seen all I can shew you of the engines; I suppose you will not care about the saloons, which are only painted and gilded as they might be in any other yacht, but would prefer seeing the novelties of the ship. If so, I am at your service.'

Cheerfully accepting this offer, we ascend to the deck, and go forward. Here is a ladder-way to the smoking-saloon, but just above it we are told to look

for the steering apparatus, or rather the part of it which is to be seen above the deck. The compass is in close proximity to it, and is so suspended as to be unaffected by the pitching of the ship, and to uninterruptedly tell its tale in storm and calm. The representative on deck of the steering apparatus is a brass handle and axle, the handle something like that we see used to set a railway locomotive in motion. The handle turns horizontally, the axle being vertical, and, as we are informed, extending the whole depth of the ship. It is of course impossible to put the rudder in its usual position at the stern of the ship, the stern in this case being one of the cones which revolve with the fans; so where could it be placed, and how moved? This was one of the many problems the solution of which the peculiar form of the vessel involved. The rudders (for there is one aft, and one forward) are square thin pieces of metal, and if we could see under water, they would appear to project from the keel. One edge touches it, and the other three edges are made sharp like a knife, so as to offer no resistance to the water. The axle, of which we can see the upper end, runs out through a tube to form a connection with the middle of the rudder, and about it the rudder turns. And having thus settled to our satisfaction the steering question, we ask what next.

'The next interesting thing,' says our guide, 'will be the anchor, or rather that part of its gear which can be seen on board. To see it, we must pay a visit to Jack's quarters: here is the boatswain, will he ask him if we can go there.'

The boatswain, on being asked, says that Jack has just finished his dinner, and if we don't mind the odour of pea-soup, we are at liberty to go; and he'll go with us, as Mr Jones is wanted ashore. As we walk along the deck, he informs me that 'We berth the blue jackets right aft, abaft the cabins, and the stokers forward; but what you want to see you'll best see in Jack's quarters.'

We accordingly descend another ladder, and first we notice a table in the middle extending the whole length of the compartment. 'That,' the boatswain informs us, 'is the casing of the shaft. You know how it is just in the middle all the length of her, in the way everywhere, and the shipwrights have had to make tables, and steps to ladders out of its casing, anything to hide it, just as the ladies like you to think a sofa bedstead's only a sofa. The men use that table to mess on, and sleep in the berths along the side.'

'What! in those places that look like shelves in a linen-draper's shop?'

'Yes; there is just height enough between two shelves for a man to get in and drop down inside the boarding in front, which keeps him from rolling out. Talk about over-cramming the people that the railways turn out of their houses; none of 'em are crammed like this, I know; but sailors are used to it.—But you want to see about our anchors. I don't believe in 'em myself. Our gov'nor thinks they'll hold her by their weight; but I don't think as the skipper trusts to 'em much, for he's got a pair of others as a stand-by.'

We cannot see anything like an anchor, and are decidedly of opinion that a cabin is not the most likely place to find one; but our guide does not leave us to wonder long. He shews us an upright iron tube, something like a small funnel, up which, he tells us, the chain comes from the anchor. Another strange contrivance! The anchor is shaped

like a mushroom, and has a hole just its shape cut out of the bottom of the vessel for it, so that when it is 'weighed' the surface of the ship is unbroken, and there is nothing to tell of the existence of an anchor. When the ship is to be anchored, the chain is let go, and the mushroom is dropped into the water, to find a hold in the bottom of the sea.

The compartment at the other end of the ship corresponding to the one we are now in is appropriated for the stokers. Although it is much like the other, we go to see it, passing on our way the cooking-place, which is in a house on the deck. We are rewarded for our trouble: the doors between this house and the spaces on the fore-side of it happen to be now open, and we can see one of the ends of the vessel. The ship is divided into eight compartments, the partitions being made watertight; and thus hitherto, in going from one to another, we have had to ascend to the deck, and descend by another ladder. But now we cannot do this, as we are in the extremities of the ship, beyond the deck. The remaining spaces must be entered through this, and so the usual contrivance of watertight doors is adopted, the doors being shut upon india-rubber, and screwed close, so that the india-rubber completely fills up the joint. These compartments are used for provisions and stores. At the end of the next one to us is the bulkhead or partition upon which the shaft turns, and which communicates the power of the screw to the ship. It is made very strong, and is rigidly connected with the ship, it being the part of the ship which first receives the moving force of the screw, and thus has a tendency to move from its position.

'And now for the saloons,' says the boatswain; and accordingly we visit them, and see that the engineer's description is correct. Everything is done on the principle of getting as much accommodation as possible out of a little space. The cabins in which the officers will eat, drink, and sleep are about the size of a compartment of a railway-carriage.

'And what do you think of the *Ross Winans*,' says our guide in parting; 'isn't she a queer fish?'

Without expressing ourselves in such decided terms, it is certain that any one who has seen the cigar-ship must allow that in many respects she is a great curiosity; and whatever may be thought of her chances of answering the expectations of the owners, there can be but one opinion as to the excellent and skilful manner in which every detail has been suited to the general design.

IN OCCUPATION.

IN TWO PARTS.—PART II.

As we entered the Champs Elysées, the band was ordered to strike up a favourite tune of those days—now doubtless forgotten—*The Downfall of Paris*. The bandmaster, no soldier, was frightened; he hesitated; but got a repetition of the order, in a tone that admitted no delay. It so happened that this tune greatly resembled the French revolutionary air of *Ça Ira*, for which, I have reason to believe, it was taken.

Coming to a halt, we established our bivouac in the Champs Elysées, under the trees, on the left of the road, just at the entrance of the Place Louis Quinze, adding one more to the many memorable scenes enacted on this spot.

'I can repeople with the past' as well as Byron,

and I like to do so. I see Mary just as she looked when her first apparition literally took away my boyish breath: I still hear the ringing laugh of jolly little Johnny, who lived in a halo of sunshine (his own creation), which warmed one's heart to come near: though I am told she is now a withered widow; and he a careworn secretary, whose nearest approach to a smile is the paralytic twitch about his mouth. In like manner, the Champs Elysées are to me a merry camp, in which every imaginable uniform, except the French, is fitting about, while swarms of staring *badauds* are stumbling over the tent pegs. My days were days of pleasantness, but the nights were no joke. Most of the captains had by this time contrived to get tents, and took their subalterns in. But I had no captain; I was nobody's child. My bed was the bare gravel, for straw was no longer to be had, though only a hundred yards off, the Cossacks—who had a Hetman instead of a Duke over them—were wallowing in hay. Many a night, July though it was, have I crept in among the horses of a cavalry picket for warmth. Hurrah! here's my baggage at last. But oh, my poor horse, what a back! 'Shoot him,' say my kind friends; but one of the men undertook a cure, and I let him try. I opened my portmanteau. Some anonymous friend had evidently done that for me already. In alarm, I went straight to the treasury—a worsted stocking, which contained my whole worldly wealth in dollars. There were just about half of them left: the robber, after all, had a conscience. I put a few of them into my pocket, and strolled to the Palais Royal to buy—what think you? Well, a scabbard. That Waterloo night, I missed it. The buckle of the sword-belt was a little loose; and I think it must have slipped off while I was scrambling across that hollow road. At anyrate, I was under the ridiculous necessity of marching all the way to Paris with a naked sword.

The allies were now crowding in. The Austrian Guards came past our camp, and we were gathered by the roadside to look at them. I was curious to hear the opinions of our men (capital judges). At first, all was unqualified praise. 'Well, them is men sure enough!' Tall and stately they were; waists pinched in, chests stuffed like turkeys. 'Look at that un, with all the medals; he must have been in the thick of it.' But these shrewd critics were not slow to notice that all had crosses and medals, and justly concluded these were no distinction at all. 'Rather be as we are,' I heard. Now, before Waterloo, medals for the men in the British ranks were unknown. Decorations did not then fall like the rain from heaven, on the evil and the good alike. Some simple marks of merit there were, hard earned, and therefore highly valued. By the commanding officer's order, the master-tailor had sewed an S of white cloth on a man's arm, and he walked a taller fellow among his comrades, though beyond the regiment it would not be known that he was one of the volunteer storming-party of St Sebastian. The conclusion generally arrived at with respect to Austrians seemed to be: 'Hanged if I don't think we'd lick 'em easy, big as they be.'

The health of my regiment had been wonderful. Before taking the field, out of more than one thousand bayonets, the average sick-list was not more than four or five, and those chiefly accidents; and there had been no sickness whatever on the

march; but now, without any imaginable cause, ophthalmia broke out, and of the most malignant character. One man I remember who entirely lost both eyes in less than three days. A few simple precautions were adopted, and strictly enforced. The principal one was to give every man a couple of towels—with a caution, if he valued his eyesight, to let no one touch them but himself. It did not spread to any extent, and in a few days, disappeared as suddenly as it had come on.

I was standing in one of the little *cafés* near our camp, when two fine young lads in Russian uniforms, mere boys, walked in like old acquaintances, and said simply and quietly: 'Well, mother, here we are again!' This was their second capture of Paris within two years. If a prophet had told them of Sebastopol, what would they have said? Possibly they may have been there. 'The whirligig of time brings his revenge.'

We were planning all sorts of schemes of life in Paris, when I and some half-dozen more, who in fact belonged to the second battalion, were now, as the work was over, ordered to join it in England.

I put myself into the first diligence for Calais that started after the cessation of hostilities. Among my fellow-passengers was a handsome young French officer, with one arm in a sling, going home. We had not much conversation, but were very friendly. Near Boulogne, the diligence was stopped. He looked out—burst open the door: I heard a slight scream, and saw him in the arms of half-a-dozen women, who carried off their wounded relative.

I had to cross the water before meeting with something of a similar reception—though I had no interesting wound to shew. Without time for notice—travel-stained as I was—I walked into my uncle's house the shortest way—by the back-door—and went straight up stairs, hearing, as I went, the cook say to my aunt: 'La! mum, if there isn't such a dirty soldier just gone through the kitchen; and I do really think he's walked into the drawing-room.'

It is not easy, I am happy to say, to yawn and cry at the same time, else the yawning reader might cry: 'What a time he is in coming to his "Occupation."' I am somewhat of that opinion myself; and have made more efforts than I am likely to get credit for, to compress this yarn. But there is good authority (Bayle's) for saying that abridgment is the most difficult operation that can be performed with a pen. Hydraulic pressure might do, but applied to the brain, it sounds too satirical. Well, then, kind and patient reader (for none but such will have read so far), be kind enough to take a couple of kangaroo jumps—one over my furlough, and one over my garrison-life in England; next, please to break my heart by putting me on half-pay; then make all right by replacing me in my old battalion; and finally, allow me to join its *dépôt* at Canterbury. There you will find me living in one room, so small, that to get my camp-bed in at all, it had to be placed diagonally. Will you pity me for this? It would be tenderness thrown away. If I had talked of such a matter as a grievance, I should have been laughed to scorn, and told I had mistaken my profession. But in truth I was quite contented with my lodging.

My brother sub. was a good fellow. Our major was one who had fought hard, and drunk harder. English society was then in that transition state

which hardly approved of a gentleman, even a soldier, coming more than half drunk into a ball-room; and we, for the credit of the corps, nursed the major with infinite care, and pretty tolerable success. The men were recruits—of a very, very inferior stamp to the old sort; and something possessed the major to get an order for sending out a batch of them under my charge, to join the regiment, then forming part of the 'Army of Occupation.'

Let us shift the scene to Dover pier—a very poor place then. Alongside of it lies a wretched hired cutter, on board of which I placed my recruits, and seeing detachments coming down to an amount quite beyond her reasonable capacity, and guessing what was to happen, I told them: 'Stow yourselves on deck, forward; keep quiet, and only, don't go below.' Troops were poured on board, till I was reminded of the water-torture in the days of the Inquisition. Down, down into the hold streamed the ignorant victims. The officers came aft, where I was quietly watching the scene. On the pier was a staff-officer superintending the embarkation, swaggering and playing grand. There was not the slightest reason for hurrying troops off, or crowding them; all was profound peace, and shipping was abundant; but he had a certain number of men to get off his hands, and that done, he cared no more about them. The skipper had his wife on board; she made a scene, imploring him not to risk his life by going to sea in that overloaded trim. He d—d her for a fool, and told her to go ashore if she liked: she did like, and went, after taking a solemn farewell of him. And now the great man lifted up his voice, and cried at the top of it: 'Where's that officer of the ———?'

'Here, sir.'

'Send your men down below, sir.'

'I can't, sir.'

'Why not?'

'See for yourself, sir: neither they nor I can stir.'

It was undeniable. They were safe where I had put them—immovable. The fact was, the other officers had been complaining that my men had got the deck to themselves; but to have equalised the misery, the whole embarkation must have been undone, and done afresh.

We slid out of harbour, and drifted across. Providentially, we had only the lightest of light airs, for the craft was nearly unmanageable, and I expected suffocation down below. We were twenty-four hours in getting to Calais, and the wretches who crawled on deck in the morning made me think of Calcutta. My own people had at least breathed fresh air all night, but they were a poor set, and I felt quite ashamed of bringing such an addition to the regiment, where, as I supposed, we were not expected, not wanted, and coldly received.

I gave them over to the adjutant, and was left to take care of myself. It was a dismal, drizzling day, and I stood lonely and wretched enough, when a tent-door opened and shewed the friendly countenance of one junior to myself, who, on first joining in England, had come to me as an old cadet, to set him on his legs, and now stood ready to return any such little attentions tenfold. This hospitable reception was the foundation of a friendship which formed the pride and pleasure of the best years of my life, and which has shared the fate of all mortal blessings.

But, to return to regimental doings. My vagabonds were absorbed, and, in due time, no doubt assimilated: if a good school could make soldiers, there was no fear of them. At any rate, they had ceased to reflect discredit on me. I was appointed to a company, welcomed by former acquaintances, and settled quickly down into my new state of life.

O Curragh and Aldershot, if you could have seen that camp! But you wouldn't believe it. The soil was clay; the weather such as brought on the deluge; but there was neither discontent nor sickness. The camp had been, with immense labour, thoroughly drained; every tent was an island. Officers and men always found something better to do than to grumble and quarrel. Even a gale of wind, which blew down half our tents one night, did but furnish merriment for the next day. A sound tent, well pitched, will keep you triumphantly snug and dry for a time; but the first drop that falls on your nose is a caution. All the canvas gets soaked through about the same time. Before you know where you are, the drop becomes a shower; the shower, a bath; then, if wind shall enter into a conspiracy with rain to draw your pegs or smash your pole, the consequence is literally overwhelming: the more you struggle, the worse you get entangled in the sloppy folds of the wreck; and by the time you are thoroughly wrapped in wet canvas, you'll begin to think you have got your winding-sheet on.

But the time was now drawing near for taking up our winter-quarters in the villages, previous to which the whole army was to assemble for a review. Favourable weather was waited for in vain, so it was determined to have it out weather or no, and we marched for Denain. In spite of wet and dirt, the march was a pleasant one. The field-officer of the day would indeed form an advanced-guard, and if he were zealous, as some were, would give you a real hard day's skirmishing. But all the while there was good sport on the flanks. Hares were abundant. We were all mounted; and almost every one kept greyhounds. You made up a party, got an hour's leave, went right or left, killed perhaps a brace of hares, and came back to the regiment with a dinner. Half-a-dozen such groups at a time might be seen scurrying across the open, while the column kept the high-road.

I have a very grateful recollection of one night-adventure. I was ordered to take a party and press wagons for the next day's march. The country was a very difficult one; night came on—a real bad one. After much losing of way, and many blind tumbles, I reached the village château whither I was bound, and sent my message in to the owner, mayor of the commune. I was shewn, in spite of my remonstrances, into a handsome drawing-room, where half-a-dozen card-tables were occupied. I apologised for my dirty condition (it was extreme), and for my disagreeable errand, and was told to make myself easy on both points.

'I dare say,' said my kind host, 'you would prefer supper to cards. Pray, sit down at that table; the servant shall bring you something; and you may depend upon your wagons at the proper time.'

I really felt confused—overpowered. Just as much general conversation was offered me as might relieve any such feelings. Then came a capital supper, followed by the offer of a bed, which was quite equal to the supper. I sent for my corporal.

'At four o'clock to-morrow morning, I shall be fast asleep; but haul me out of that bed, and don't leave me till I know what I am about.'

'Yes, sir.'

'How have you and the men fared?'

'Like princes, sir.'

'Well, mind you don't forget yourselves.'

'No fear, sir.'

I left the house next morning in admiration of my hospitable entertainer; and asking myself, what English squire, under similar circumstances, would have shewn such courtesy to a French officer. Should I have done it myself? My conscience felt uneasy.

The review was a sight worth seeing. We were to act (weather permitting) the battle of Denain. The reader will remember, that when Louis XIV. was on his last legs, Villars wound up his campaigning handsomely by giving the allies a clever flogging on this ground.

The troops were massed, waiting the arrival of the Duke and his party. There was an interval of leisure, which I employed in a little review of my own. Nearly all the great survivors of the great British army were here collected, and I walked round to see whether they looked worthy of their deeds. The result was most unsatisfactory. I can only remember two out of the whole whose appearance was at all striking—Sir J. Kempt, and a worthy member of the valiant House of Douglas; I forget his Christian name: he was colonel of a Highland regiment, and his chest, of the broadest, had hardly room for the crosses and orders which, even in those chary days, were clustered upon it.

The inspection took place, and the mimic battle was attempted. When my regiment got the word to move forward, there was a struggle, a staggering in the mud, a dislocation—but no advance. They tried to open fire; *fiz, fiz, fiz* was all they could do. On our left, the old 95th were more effective. They just undid the leather caps which they wore over the locks of their rifles. These had enabled them to keep their powder dry, and they made a very respectable noise, which we grudged them. The nearest approach to fighting was in a village occupied by British, which a Danish detachment ought to have taken; but that was a disgrace not to be endured. I understood that serious mischief was with difficulty prevented. The weather beat us all. The battle ended like Hudibras's 'adventure of the bear and fiddle.' We were ordered back to camp. Darkness set in; the whole country was full of *flax-pits*, among which the men picked their way right across the plain, and utterly dispersed; but within two or three hours, not a bee was missing from the hive. Next morning was a triumph for the old soldiers; they assembled on parade as clean as if they had turned out of barracks at home. To this hour, I cannot account for the fact, but such indomitable neatness has been a mark of finished soldiers ever since Hannibal's days.

We went into cantonments, the regiment occupying about fifteen villages. Among them were some rather remarkable places. Terouenne, where, as old Mézériai tells, Queen Brumhant, the pet of Pope Gregory the Great, hired her 'two robust and brutal men' to perpetrate one of her many murders (her husband's, I think), and rewarded them for it as only a woman can; and where our own robust and brutal Henry VIII. played jauntily at soldiering in the days of his youth. So changed

was the very soil of Terouenne, that I found an old map laying down as a lake the vast meadow which was our exercising-ground. On the hill above was Guingate. Between them took place that unlucky skirmish, 'the Battle of the Spurs,' in which Bayard used his as no good knight should, ran away *sans peur*, and was restored to his position *sans reproche*. Within a day's ride was Agincourt, that sacred spot, to which we were always going to make a pilgrimage, and never did. Then there was what we used to call the 'yellow château,' inhabited by a man who claimed to have been a familiar friend of the First Napoleon in his early days. I give, for what it may be worth, one of his stories—remarkable, if true. Mr B—— and Napoleon were in Paris in the thick of the revolutionary puddle. Both got sick of such a life, and resolved to return to Italy. Got into the diligence, and went a stage. While the horses were changing, they got out to stretch their legs. Napoleon seemed uneasy, and kept walking up and down by himself. When they were called to take their seats, he said to his companion: 'I have changed my mind: I shall go back, and see the game out.' Argument and persuasion were useless; the diligence started with Mr B——, without Napoleon. One was now in St Helena; the other, a ruined speculator on the banks of the Lys.

Now for my own quarter. I set out alone, on foot, to find it; no easy problem, in an unknown country, by reason of pitch darkness; however, I got into the required lane, made out the great gates of the farm; felt for the little door which ought to be in them; found, and opened it; stepped in upon deep straw, in which I heard a rustling, and was groping my way with both hands, when I felt one of them in the mouth of some animal. It did not hurt me, and I pulled it out. Feeling my way, and stepping round the corner, I saw lights, knocked, and was admitted. I was all right. But who was the unknown friend who had welcomed me with such a shake of the hand? A bull-dog; so old, that he had not a tooth in his head, and if he had ever barked, was past barking. My uniform spoke for itself, and I was shewn my room. 'Yes,' I said, 'but there are two; am I not entitled to both?' There was no denying it; but it was pleaded they were a large family. Old grandfather had been accustomed to that other room as his own; if I would be so very kind, &c. 'So be it,' I said; 'I can do very well with one.' And so I could, but they evidently had not expected this; seemed astonished, poor people, at their own presumption, and, I do believe, took me for a great fool. However, I went to bed. It was in a little recess, too short altogether; but at the foot was a little niche, and in that niche a Virgin. I put the Virgin carefully under the bed, and my feet into her sentry-box, and slept. Oh, how I could sleep in those days!

My hosts were very poor, though it was a large farm, employing at least fifteen horses. Besides Old Toothless, there was an enormous *dogue*, as they called him, rejoicing in the full strength of his youth. Coming into the yard one day, I was aware of some fun going on among a circle of blouses triumphant, with a slight sprinkling of our men smiling quietly. There was the *dogue*, standing over a little smooth English terrier, who lay on his back, paws in the air, still as death. The giant's hair was bristling, his fangs displayed, and he was indulging in boisterous canine excretions.

The blouses were rejoicing, as over a national victory, never regarding the disproportion of size; the soldiers, with unshaken faith in the little one's mettle, plainly thought 'it isn't won yet;' and they were right. Pincher had been only taking his ease between the rounds. Up he jumped, full of fight—so full, that he ended by driving his big enemy out of the yard. I have never forgotten the lesson. In after-life, when overpowering circumstances have got me down, often have I said to myself: 'Lie still, little dog; get your breath, and at it again!'

Duty we had hardly any to do. The men were not harassed with needless parades, and behaved admirably. True, they were well aware of an eye over them which hardly anything escaped, and a hand which would not hesitate to strike, and hard, if necessary. We had strict orders to ask regularly at every house if there were any complaints against the men, but I never received or heard of one, unless it might be about occasional civility to the daughters of France, beyond what her sons quite approved. Often have I been beset by the cottagers, asking me to give them a soldier. And well they might ask. He was a willing and handy ally; could do almost anything; would drudge for love as if it had been for money. I have seen these bloody warriors sitting on the door-steps, nursing little children as if they had been their own. They would throw their rations into the pot—now for the first time a flesh-pot—and elaborate soup such as the natives had never dreamed of.

The conduct of the officers was, if possible, more strictly watched. The only mischief we might do with impunity was riding across the country, for the Duke encouraged hunting. Everybody was able to keep horses here, and we set up a very nice little pack of regimental harriers. But the evil spirit of pomp and vanity tempted us to try fox-hunting. A subscription was raised—with what contempt would modern luxury smile at its amount. (It was punctually paid, though.) We got from England hounds and huntsman; the men volunteered as earth-stoppers. But the thing proved a failure. We laid the blame on the foxes (enormous brutes), and said they didn't know how to run. At any rate, we got little sport.

Christmas was at hand, and I resolved to give a Christmas dinner. I rode over to the messman at Terouenne, secured a sirloin, and bought groceries; held a privy-council with my servant as to the possible construction of a plum-pudding; went through a curious course of experiments with him in that branch of chemistry, and decided to make the attempt; replenished my cellar; invited my guests. All was ready, when the adjutant sent me an order to escort prisoners to Calais. The good-conduct of our men was, it seems, somewhat exceptional. Here were a dozen or so, from various regiments, under sentence of courts-martial, on their way to penal colonial stations.

Hoping against hope, I rode over to the adjutant. 'Very sorry; no help for it. Here's the order from head-quarters, and you are next for duty.'

I told my servant to go on with the cookery; asked a friend to take my chair, and entertain in my name; took command of my party, and received the prisoners, handcuffed. After marching a few miles, my sergeant came to me: 'Please, sir, the prisoners say, if you'd be kind enough to take off the handcuffs, they'd promise good-behaviour,'

and our men would be much obliged to you, sir. They don't much like the look of those things.' I did a very foolish thing—consented. But there was honour among thieves: their conduct was perfect, and I said to myself, as we came in to Calais: 'Now, if I can get these fellows off my hands at once, I'll be back in time yet.' No such luck. Another party of prisoners was expected, and to make one job instead of two for the staff-officer at Calais, I had to await their arrival. Two mortal days passed, and now it didn't signify. The officer in charge of the others had played strict warden. His prisoners had sulked, lain down in the road, and defied him. After all manner of troubles, he was two days after his time, and in a scrape for it; yet he had done his duty, and I had not. On my return, I was tantalised with the success of the feast I had lost—taunted by my own servant with praises of the pudding I had contrived, but not tasted, and presented by the farmer's wife with a minced-pie, slightly resembling a warning-pan; so I gave all the farm-people a supper, frightened them to death with brandy and salt, brought them to life with snapdragon, and led off the dance with oh! such a *maritonne*!

Among ourselves, we led, not a gay or brilliant life, but something better—a sociable, easy, hospitable one—humble as our scale was. We were lords of fifteen villages; we hunted, we shot, we coursed, did what we liked. We got new books out from England, were within a morning's ride of St Omer, our little capital, where the married officers (then rare) had their families; and one, whom we boys thought an old fellow, and a particularly uncouth one, was detected in taking dancing lessons at another town. Accident would perhaps bring half-a-dozen of us together at my farm towards the afternoon; they would agree to stay dinner. As much and as good as they wanted would be set before them, without any trouble. Wine, such as satisfied us, was very cheap. Will the reader pity us, or, will he believe me, if I say there would be no smoking? We kept very early hours. This was a flax country, and the wealth of these farms consisted in linen. There was no end of sheets. As bedtime approached, my servant would bring in materials, and arrange on the floor the requisite number of shake-downs, which would speedily be tenanted, while I retired to the chapel of the Virgin. In the morning, there was a breakfast to match the dinner. The horses, which had found rough plenty, were brought out; every one went his own way; and very likely I wound up the day in a similar way at a brother-officer's quarter. It was the wettest winter I ever remember, but we absolutely defied weather. Ours was real wealth—the command of all that we desired; easy, friendly society. We were a band of brothers. How soon, I wonder, should we have tired of such simple and pleasant monotony? The question was not tried. This state of things came all too soon to an end.

Drop the curtain. My best bow to the audience. But how shall I take leave of the *dramatis personæ*—my brethren? What has been their fate? A more than average portion have held good positions in civil and military, commercial and (what should be happier than any) English country life. A few have achieved wealth and eminence. It is a high honour to have been one of them. But no less worthy, in their degree, were our humbler comrades. Why should I call them humble? In their own formidable ranks, and in their own modest

way, they were then as proud as their modest leaders. Now I should have to search in holes and corners for them, to find

How few, all weak and withered of their force,
Lie on the verge of dark eternity,
Like stranded wrecks—the tide returning hoarse
To sweep them to its depths. Time rolls his cease-
less course!

Such must be the relics of one of the finest bodies of infantry that ever trod earth since Mars was a god. Yes; the vision of Mirza is nearly past; that gallant procession of bright spirits has almost disappeared through the broken arches.

My Occupation's gone.

AN ABODE OF BLISS.

A CENTURY ago, the world in England was afforded a peep into the modes of life of the world in Turkey, by the eloquent pen of a gifted woman. Lady Mary Wortley Montagu—writing with a perfect knowledge of the court-life of England, when at perhaps its lowest point of debasement—did not dwell with extraordinary emphasis on the system on which oriental domestic life is constructed, but accepting it *en philosophe*, did her best to reproduce its outward features, in their most striking and imposing forms. And her best was very good—indeed, so good, that nothing has surpassed, and little has approached it—so good, that any writer taking up a topic which she touched, is at an immense disadvantage from that circumstance alone. Another English lady* has lately had an opportunity of inspecting the inner life of the courts of Egypt and Turkey, and her experiences have gone further and deeper than those of the brilliant ambassadress. She saw the harems not *en papillotes*, but very much *en déshabillé* indeed; she lived in them, the associate of their inmates, not the splendid guest, for whom all was swept and garnished, but in a subordinate position, as governess to the Grand Pasha Ibrahim, the son of Ismael Pasha, viceroy of Egypt. This was a curious turn of fortune in the life of an Englishwoman; and the account which she gives of the manner of existence, the habits, and the surroundings of persons who must be regarded as the most fortunate of their sex in those countries to which the emancipating touch of Christianity has not extended, cannot fail to have an interest at once curious and painful for her countrywomen.

The story of life in the harem of Ismael Pasha at Ghezire, has all the pictorial effect which can be produced by strong contrasts—contrasts which begin with the exterior of the building—and it reads like a chapter of the *Arabian Nights*, constantly interrupted by modern disapproving comment. There is a confusion, a heterogeneous disorder about the splendour of the picture, which gives it a quaint resemblance to a stage rehearsal of some grand pageant at a mock court. The actors are cross, dirty, and contentious, and the properties are huddled together in an extraordinary and unpicturesque jumble. The furniture and the fittings, the dresses and the adornments, are there indeed, but they are in utter disorder; and the light being turned on, only brings out the squalor which characterises the entire scene. To compre-

* *Harem Life in Egypt and Constantinople*. By Emmeline Lott. Richard Bentley.

hend the life of these splendid, comfortless palace-prisons aright, it is necessary to get away from any point of view of human existence to which one is accustomed. Home, the central idea of the English mind, must first be abandoned—home, with its cares, duties, powers, privileges, and economies, with its sorrows, its sacredness, and its inviolability. The inmates of the harems know nothing whatever of home in those aspects of its meaning. They are portions of a system in which it does not exist. The wives of the pasha are purveyed for and served, like animals in a menagerie; and if any one is uncomfortable or ill-treated, it is no business of theirs, so long as their own bodily comfort is satisfactorily secured. No moral responsibility is imposed upon these women, and so the natural virtues have no soil for their culture, no room for their exhibition. The wife does not even know how many sharers there are in her husband's affection—her chief anxiety is to secure more than a fair share of the bales of goods, and the masses of precious stones purchased in lots for harem consumption. Her son is systematically taught to ignore women altogether in every serious purpose of life, and so is not likely to understand more of maternity than its pangs and its nominal rank.

The present viceroy of Egypt is one of the richest individuals in the world, and quite the richest Mussulman, and though his harem at Ghezire is not so splendid as the Sultan's at Stamboul, the inmates of the one live more luxuriously than those of the other, and harem-life at Ghezire may be confidently accepted as the best thing of its kind, not to be seen for love or money.

This abode of bliss is reached, like everything in Egypt, by the sacred Nile, on which float the viceregal barges, resplendent in scarlet and white, under the steady sunshine, and bearing the standard of the Prophet. The building is a large pile, composed of five blocks, and is entered by a small door. This is suggestive of a prison; but the courtyard resembled one of the floors of an enormous warehouse, when the little pasha's English governess passed through the portal into the precinct of his home. The harem stores were being renewed that day; and hard-working Fellaheen were rolling into the immense space 'hundreds of bales of Genoa velvet, Lyon silk, Manchester prints, Irish poplins and Irish linens; Brussels, Mechlin, Valenciennes, Honiton, and imitation laces; Nottingham hose, French silk stockings; French and Coventry ribbons, cases of the purest Schiedam, pipes of spirits of wine; huge cases of fashionable Parisian boots, shoes, and slippers; immense chests of *bon-bons* in magnificent fancy-worked cases, boxes, and baskets; bales of *tombaks*, and the bright golden-leaved tobacco of Istambol; Cashmere, India, French, and Paisley shawls; baskets of pipe-bowls, cases of amber mouth-pieces, cigarette papers, and a host of other miscellaneous articles.'

Received by two of the harem guards, and presented to their chief, the Mesrouf of this story—in which Ismael Pasha makes but a sorry substitute for Haroun-al-Raschid—the English lady must have begun to feel like Dick Swiveller, that she was 'in an Arabian Night,' for anon she trod a marble hall, supported by porphyry pillars, and found herself in the presence of the 'lady-superintendent of the slaves,' who wore a muslin robe and trousers, and a lavender-coloured satin paletot. This does not sound like a pretty or an interesting

toilet; but the head-dress might have found favour in the eyes of Lady Mary herself. It was a blue gauze handkerchief, gracefully adjusted, with a natural dark red rose tucked under it, and a spray of diamonds, forming a forget-me-not, which hung below the left ear. The lady's jewels attracted the stranger's gaze—she was fresh to the sight of them then, and would not readily believe that it should become difficult to believe in their value, and impossible to covet their possession. Let us look at the medal, before we turn the reverse, however, and follow in the path of this splendid progress; up the marble stairs, flat and broad, covered with gorgeous carpeting; through long suites of lofty rooms, hung with satin, crimson, yellow, and white; through doorways surmounted with gilded cornices, and heavily draped with satin; past walls whence silver candlesticks projected in countless numbers, with tulip-shaped crystal shades; by magnificent mirrors, inserted in the walls, reflecting the stately silent length of the rooms; by shuttered windows looking on the Nile. No furniture occupied the vast space, but across one apartment a line was suspended, and over it hung the jackets of the Princess Epouse. In another was a heap of beds, piled up against the wall, and covered with a huge square of costly silk. No wardrobes are to be seen in the palace, nor washing-stands, nor toilet-tables; but the pasha's ladies are served as Fatima or Amina was, by slaves holding silver trays, containing their toilet requisites, which are set down upon the divans, and covered with golden-fringed embroidered gauze.

So far, the cage is sufficiently fine, if somewhat incongruous; but we follow in search of the birds, and find one, the Princess Epouse, the mother of the all-important Grand Pasha, little Ibrahim, in a small room, seated on a divan, covered with dirty yellow satin. She is a handsome woman, very small, a blonde, with blue eyes, and beautiful teeth; her hair is dressed in Savoyard fashion, with long plaits behind; on her head is a brown handkerchief, with a band of seven large diamond flies. Her dress is dirty muslin, and she is 'doubled up' on her divan, smoking a cigarette, without shoes or stockings. An awful personage is seated beside her, no less than his Highness the Grand Pasha, a pretty, dark child, of five years old, in the full-dress uniform of an officer of the Egyptian infantry. His manners are hardly courtly, for he screams violently at the sight of the English lady, and his mother laughs heartily. In front, behind, and on either side of the divan, stood a bevy of the ladies of the harem, all ugly, many old, some clad in dresses of white linen, others in coloured muslin. Their hair and their finger-nails were dyed red, their ears and fingers were covered with diamonds, and every one had a massive gold watch and chain. After some time, the lady-superintendent named the governess to the princess, who stared at the stranger, and smiled.

The installation over, still let us follow in the steps of the English visitor, conducted through the palace. Descending the stairs, and crossing a small garden, we come upon two stone halls, round which are divans, on which the slaves lounge by day, and sleep by night. In a room to the side stand numerous huge jars of water for drinking, in the charge of a slave, who keeps the key. Another room is devoted to the preparation of their Highnesses'

coffee; and then we come to the bath-room, which is very seldom used, and concerning which the fancies of the poets are entirely mythical. On the basement story is the laundry, a department of immense importance and general interest. Washing-days are as momentous in the harem as at Clapham, and their Highnesses make as much fuss about them as Mrs Varden in her unconverted days. Sunday is the Pasha's 'clean-shirt' day; Monday is appropriated to the first wife, or Lady Paramount; Tuesday, to the second wife, or Princess Epouse; Wednesday, to the third wife, who does not appear to have any title; Thursday, to the Grand Pasha Ibrahim; Friday is kept holy, in honour of the Prophet; and on Saturday, the ladies of the harem, the children, and the slaves have their turn. Up stairs again, and into the princesses' apartments, very splendid, so far as satin hangings and marble tables go, but about as habitable as the *salon of a restaurant*. The divans are of red satin, and the splendid carpets are thickly sprinkled with drops from the wax-candles which the servants carry about in their fingers. Not a single ornament, not a trace of occupation, was to be found in any of these palace chambers; not even the lute, to which we are accustomed to believe that Zobeide and Amina were wont to declare the calcined condition of their hearts, and to swoon away occasionally during the performance. The dormitories of the princesses, the seven daughters of the viceroy, were wholly empty, for the beds, mattresses covered with cotton, are collected and carried away to the store-rooms every morning, and laid down again every night, and toilet equipages these infant magnates of Egypt have none. The Grand Pasha and his sisters are washed by the simple process of having their faces and hands rubbed over with a ball of soap, and dried with a tuft of rag.

The only apartment which contained furniture, in the European sense, was that prepared for the governess, and in this magnificent palace the preparation consisted of 'a green-painted iron bedstead, with two thin cotton mattresses laid upon it, but neither bolsters, pillows, nor bed-linen, for which last, two worn-out wadded coverlets were substituted. No dressing-table or chair was there, the only other article being a Parisian chest of drawers, and a shut-up washing-stand, with an elegantly painted basin and ewer of porcelain.' This was not precisely royal hospitality, nor were its defects ever remedied. The household did not comprehend the English lady's wants, and it was nobody's business to supply them.

The grand event is a visit from the pasha, and the toilets made on those occasions are very gorgeous, but very incongruous. Fine robes are put on over dirty, tumbled muslin dresses, which have been worn day and night—for the ladies of the harem sleep fully attired—and quantities of superb jewellery are worn on unwashed necks and arms. Nothing in the costume of oriental women is more interesting and beautiful than the jewelled head-dress, with its flower symbols and its fantastic grace; but the charm must be considerably decreased when personal inspection bears witness to the fact, that the tresses so adorned are unbrushed and infested with vermin.

It is not pleasant to contemplate the mode of eating which prevails in the harem, nor is the fate of the subordinates, to whom the trays descend in right of succession, exactly enviable. The food is good in itself, no doubt, and according to the taste

of the eaters; but so incongruous in its mixture, and so unpleasant to think of, that a harem dinner is devoutly to be avoided by all who wish to retain their illusions. The cream tarts and general confectionary of the *Arabian Nights* are accurately described in that wonderful book, no doubt; but its revelations advisedly leave the commissariat department in considerable obscurity. When the prince and princesses have been fed, their little slaves, who are also the pasha's children, squat upon the floor, and devour the remnants of the supper, heaped upon the trays; no separate table is ever provided, so that the food literally passes through fighting ranks until its final consumption; and occasionally the young slaves fare very poorly in the magnificent mansion of the Croesus of the East.

The ceremonies of the *lever* and *coucher* of the little Grand Pasha are very funny, and singularly uncomfortable, according to our notions of the exigencies of a hot climate. When supper is concluded, the beds are pulled out of the store-room, and laid down on the carpet in the universal apartment—the prince, his sisters, and their nurses being each accommodated with two mattresses. The child is then dressed for the night in drawers, broad waistband, a cotton dressing-gown, and a quilted Cashmere paletot, girded with a silk handkerchief, and a fez, tied under his chin. His sisters are similarly attired. Then a silver brazier is brought in, filled with charcoal, into which are thrown a quantity of wood of aloes, aromatic gum, and lumps of crystallised sugar. The child is lifted up by his nurse, and swung round in the fumes nine times, to the chant of 'Allah! Bismillah!' after which he is laid down, and his sisters undergo the same process. Then they are sung to their sleep by the monotonous song, 'Baba, mina; baba, nina,' or 'Father, mother; father, mother,' repeated *ad infinitum*. No physical training could be worse, and it is to be hoped that nowhere in the world beside is the moral training of children so bad as in these abodes, where the rulers are at once despots and slaves. Lying, greediness, selfishness, cruelty, and depravity of every kind are familiar to the minds of these little ones. Imagine the chance of any clear moral perception on the part of a boy whose mother, watched like a thief, and locked up like a chattel herself, punishes his childish faults by tearing his flesh with her gold pins, and orders her own slaves to torture his (who are his own relatives), for his amusement! The subject of this delightful system will probably be his father's successor in the viceroyalty of Egypt some day, and hold the fate of thousands at his disposal, as Ismael Pasha is bribing the needy Sultan enormously, with that object in view.

It is pleasant to turn from the actual squalor and the moral degradation of this picture, to some of its grand aspects, to the *Arabian Night* phases of it, to feel as if we were making an excursion to the fairy realm of *Pari Banou*, or to *Sindbad's Valley of Diamonds*. The festival of the Grand Bairam is the period which exhibits the attractive side of harem-life in perfection. Then state visits are paid, and gorgeous apparel is assumed, and feasting goes on all day long. All the inmates of the harem are arrayed *en grande toilette*, and visit their Highnesses, the three wives, to whom each presents a gift, and receives its value ten times told in return. The dresses of their Highnesses on this occasion are of extraordinary magnificence; but the jewels

almost surpass description. The Lady Paramount, when she received the Grand Pasha's visit, 'wore on her forehead a tiara of large pansies in diamonds; round her neck, a costly necklace of the same flowers, with emerald leaves; and large pear-shaped pearl drops, as big as pigeons' eggs, were suspended from the centre. Her armlets were of large pear-shaped opals, which hung suspended like drops, between which was set a large diamond. Her waistband was of gold, fastened with diamond clasps; her watch was incrustated with brilliants; and the chain, an inch broad, was of diamonds and emeralds. On one hand, she wore a sapphire ring, the size of a walnut; and on the other, a pink-rose diamond of enormous value.' How hard it is to realise the scene in which the little Grand Pasha, the son of this woman's husband by another wife, is brought to see her in all her splendour, and is shewn his father's portrait, set in a splendid bracelet, a fac-simile of the likeness being at the same time displayed upon his own mother's bosom in a still more splendid brooch! When we think of this for a moment, all the brightness fades from the diamonds, all the magnificence becomes meaningless, and we feel that the simple circlet of a European marriage-ring infinitely outshines them all.

Let us look at the toilet of the royal boy's mother, for somehow the illusion we try to hold persists in slipping away the moment we do more than admire; the fairy coin turns to slates ere it has time to ring in the pitcher. The Princess Epouse wore a tiara of May-blossom in diamonds, with a necklace to correspond, having large sapphire drops hanging down her neck. On her arms were three bracelets of diamonds and sapphires, and an armlet of sapphires, simply priceless. This was the most beautiful of all the harem treasures, the gift of Ismael to the mother of his only legitimate son. On her right hand was a yellow diamond ring; and on the left, a white diamond, whose value is untold. Her waist-belt of gold was clasped with crocodiles' heads in diamonds and emeralds; her watch-chain was sapphires and diamonds; and at her waist hung a jewelled bag, containing the keys of her cash-box and jewel-cases. With these, their Highnesses never part, by day or night. The little prince was almost as richly laden with jewels, and every woman in the harem carried about her gems which might excite the envy of an English peeress. The pasha, the prince, and all the wives repair, with immense state and ceremony, on this sacred occasion, to visit the Validé Princess, the pasha's mother, the widow of the illustrious Ibrahim. This lady is an interesting personage. She was dearly loved, and completely trusted by her great husband; and though her origin is quite obscure, she is a person of great talent and strength of character. The pasha holds her in immense esteem, and she takes precedence of all. Her influence in political affairs is still powerful, and her aid in negotiating the affair of the viceregal succession with the Sublime Porte largely relied upon. She is immensely rich, very avaricious, arbitrary, and despotic, and seems, with many evil qualities and violent passions, to be less of an animal than any of the other women. When the viceregal court visited the imperial, the full extent of the magnificence of both was revealed to the English lady. The splendour of the Sultan's harem is inconceivable, and indeed extremely wearisome, and the attire of the Validé Princess and Validé Sultana would tax the imagination of

an Alexandre Dumas. But even their splendour fades before the description of the wealth of the Princess Nuzly, the beautiful, cruel, and licentious daughter of Mehemet Ali. The stomachers of rubies, and the parasols incrustated with every gem in the lapidary's catalogue, fade into insignificance before huge chests, which four slaves can hardly carry, laden with uncut jewels, such as topazes as big as hens' eggs, and emeralds as large as pears. Let the female imagination picture a chain of diamonds, mounted transparently, all of the same size, without spot or blemish, as big as Barcelona nuts; and then a waist-band three feet long, and half a foot wide, made entirely of diamonds, and forming one solid piece! Imagine these things, and realise the condition of their possessors. Is there any peasant-woman in the Christian West, whose honest toil brings comfort, whose honest love brings peace to her husband and children, but to whom the meanest gem in these treasure-chests would be unimagined wealth, who would change places with one of these Egyptian princess-slaves? A curious association of ideas is awakened when we learn that among the jewels in the possession of Ibrahim Pasha's widow is a diamond crown, which was one of Napoleon's gifts to Josephine. How it came into the Egyptian viceregal treasury, no one knows, but it glittered on the head of the Validé Princess when the illustrious pasha's widow visited the harem of Abdul Aziz at Stamboul.

PARTED.

It is twenty years since my love and I
Stood together, hand in hand,
To say farewell, in the chestnut woods,
While the spring came o'er the land.

The grass burst up from the quick'ning earth,
And the buds on the hawthorn bough,
And the birds were astrir in the linden trees,
And they sang as they never sing now.

And out of the wood came the low clear call
Of a black-bird on her nest,
And my love had the violets in her eyes,
And a primrose in her breast.

For twenty years, it has stayed with me,
The scent of that primrose faint;
And the light that shone out of those tear-filled eyes,
Like the eyes of a dying man.

And the black-bird's call yet rings in mine ear,
Whenever the spring-days rise;
And for ever as clear as in bygone days,
Is the light of my darling's eyes.

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SENT TO GRAN MORFEW.

IN TWO PARTS.—PART I.

IN order to comprehend the full horror of the fate foreshadowed in the above expression, it would have been necessary to cultivate a close personal acquaintance with Mistress Jael Morfew, our maternal grandmother, during those not unfrequent periods of her life, when a temper, naturally irritable, and wholly undisciplined, became, under the influence of toothache, furious and implacable.

Gran terminated a somewhat tedious spinsterhood by marrying, late in life, the only man she ever feared or respected—her dentist. The match was brought about in an unusual way. She bit him. His friendly steel was in the act of closing upon a formidable old fang, when its neighbours closed fiercely upon him, inflicting an injury so severe as to evoke all there was of tender and womanly—it was not much—in Gran's bosom, in a burst of sympathy that amazed the sufferer, and probably acted healthfully on herself. At all events, it must have been some such softening change that emboldened Mr Morfew, before that hand was healed, to offer it to his assailant, for good and all.

He must have enjoyed a splendid practice, since it enabled him to bequeath her, at his death, the uncontrolled disposal of a hundred and twenty thousand pounds. This, with her own fortune of fifty thousand, placed her in a position to exercise a very respectable amount of caprice and tyranny; and so excellent was the use she made of it, that her only child, my mother, not then sixteen, quitted the house one winter's evening, as if fleeing from the presence of a maniac, and was found freezing and fainting in the snow. She never recrossed that miserable threshold. Borne tenderly into a poor cottage on the neighbouring moor, she was nursed and comforted by its humble inmates, the parents of her rescuer, a young soldier, at home on furlough. This was the first meeting of my parents. Their last was in that dismal field of India, where my father, then a commissioned officer, abandoned with other wounded, through

miserable necessity, was found, by love's unfailing instinct, and saved from the jackal and the wolf, to breathe his last upon a loving Christian heart.

My first distinct and reasonable recollections are associated with a period when I, a child of six, and my sister Grace, aged four, dwelt with my mother in a pretty little honeysuckled nest of a cottage, whose garden skirted one of the rich green lanes of Devon. My mother's health had failed in India, and although the soft airs of western England had somewhat restored her, it was evident to many, if not, at the time, to us her children, that the springs of health and vigour were irremediably affected. *Afterwards*, I learned to understand well enough the wistful looks with which she had often regarded us, as she felt the stealthy approach of the destroyer, coming to lay desolate our little world, and hand over her tender orphans to the mercy of one who never knew what love and pity meant.

Ah, if I had been suffered to know the worst! It was a cruel compassion that concealed from us our impending orphanhood: it made the shock only more deadly. It added to my life a remorse never to be effaced; for I was a jealous child, and when I noticed that my mother's mournful, loving eyes dwelt ever longest on my sister—melting, at such moments, even into tears—my selfish little soul rose in bitterness against them both. I could not know for certain, as afterwards, that she was thinking what future was in store for her shy, simple, sensitive darling, under the government of terrible Gran Morfew!

Our Gracie was such a fairy-child, that it seemed, if she were not touched delicately, she might dissolve or fly away altogether. She was also so like a flower, that I am not romancing when I aver that I have seen her golden curls and little rosy face moving among the flowers, where it had been her fancy to hide, without, for a moment or two, discerning the difference. She was brimful of loving, playful ways, and of a nature so fond and gentle, that I believe she would have caressed her greatest terror in the world, a beetle, if Signor Scarabæus could have been by any means put upon honour not to do her serious bodily hurt.

Gracie was, past comparison, the greatest coward in this world. I have before me still the look of wild, wondering terror that stole, on the very slightest provocation, into her large blue eyes, and at which, in those early, thoughtless days, I have often laughed, secretly exulting in my own superior hardihood.

I know that I must have been rough and bitter—indeed, at all times, more like a brother than a sister in my dealings with Gracie—for, though I loved her heartily, my contempt for her utter want of courage led to my treating her with less gentleness than such a nature demanded. I was wrong in saying 'like a brother.' A brother might have been rude and overbearing (I have seen no worse tyrants than little brothers), but he would not, as I did, have made a parade of his protection.

Especially in my moods of jealousy, poor Gracie must have suffered not a little. To be a coward, was no particular merit. I could not imagine why the little timid thing should be a greater pet and favourite than I. It was hardly for her superior beauty. At all events, I, though dark of tint, was pronounced, by the excellent judges who resided in the neighbouring cottages, the prettier of the pair.

Strange as it may seem, my mother lingered on for three years, after—as I subsequently understood—her medical attendant pronounced the case hopeless. It was as if her fond anxious love held together the decaying mansion of the flesh, and prolonged her struggle with death until her darlings were strengthened to begin theirs with the world.

Before she died, she essayed one fond, half-hopeful effort to reconcile herself with her implacable mother. Although that object failed, one favourable result was obtained: Mrs Morfew coldly announced her intention of not allowing us—when orphaned—to become chargeable to any parish, and even went the length of promising that, for a certain period after that event, we and our attached nurse, Emma Rusbridger, should remain in the occupation of our cottage-home.

Those only who knew Gran Morfew can fully estimate the comfort of this latter concession. I believe it soothed my mother's heart more than if Gran herself had come down, in her mighty old coach, with the towering horses, and taken us to her rocky bosom on the spot; for, though Gran was but human, and was known to have yielded to an occasional emotion, she was *never* known to forgive. It was certain she would see in us only the confirmation of the wrong she considered she had received. Our best hope, therefore, was that her unconcealed repugnance might preserve the form of keeping us at a distance, permitting us to 'dwell with humble livers, in content,' rather than be shut up in the 'glittering grief' of her luxurious but loveless home.

I cannot write of my mother's death; enough to say, she was translated from us. The shadow we had been so long accustomed to watch and tend, passed into the world of shadows. Henceforth, Nurse Emma united in her own person the offices of guardian, steward, governess, cook, and general director. Except for a slight tincture of authority, she was the same kind, devoted Emma as before. One habit of hers alone underwent a change; whereas she had been used, almost from our cradles, to wield Gran Morfew's name as a symbol

of terror and punishment, she abandoned that weapon altogether.

'Do that again, Miss Mildred, and you go to Gran Morfew!'

'Very well, Miss Gracie! Gran Morfew's coach is a-coming for you in five minutes. Hark! there's the wheels.'

'As sure as my name's Hemmer—both you naughty girls!—you'll be sent to Gran Morfew, and nobody'll hear no more about heither of you!'

This never-failing remedy for exuberant spirits had to be dispensed with. Emma knew that we were living on Gran's bounty, and was dumb.

There was no perceptible difference in our mode of life; if anything, Nurse Emma appeared to be in the possession of more money than our dear mother. We were somewhat better dressed than formerly—had more playthings—and, to our breathless delight and surprise, a donkey—an actual living donkey, possessing ears and lungs, such as no human ingenuity could simulate—was added to our establishment.

Once every three months, a young gentleman came to pay us a morning visit. His hair was light, long, and rather oily. He seemed to prefer bright colours and decided patterns, and, though we never saw him ride, always wore spurs, whose jingle appeared to afford him satisfaction. He was partial to the village ale, a fair allowance of which, with bread and cheese, was always placed upon the table when he was expected. He never once disappointed us. In the height of a storm which no rational creature, not under the pressure of most urgent circumstances, would have dreamed of braving, this faithful young gentleman, with locks lank and dripping, and spurs too much incrustated with mire to emit the slightest melody, made his appearance as usual. His luncheon finished, Emma was wont to present him with a bundle of bills and a little red book. With a single glance, he seemed to cast up the whole of the accounts; then, placing money on the table, he received a written paper from Emma, and the business part of his visit was concluded. Then followed a game of romps in the garden, for he was a very affable young man, and, though somewhat embarrassed with his spurs, would take part in a game of hide-and-seek (in which he always made Emma join) with great delight.

When he went away, he invariably forgot something, and, stopping just at the turn of the path, would beckon Emma to him. They were invisible, round the corner, for about two seconds, when Emma would be seen fleeing back, with her face the colour of a peony, and adjusting the cap, about the size of a crown-piece, which she wore at the back of her curly brown head.

At first, I thought he must have slapped her, but, my condolences being ill received, I said no more. However, the perpetual recurrence of this incident excited my curiosity to such a degree that, one day, just as our visitor began to shew signs of departure, I slipped away, and concealed myself behind an elder-bush that commanded the usual place of meeting. All occurred, as before, until the pair had whisked round the corner, when, to my unbounded surprise, the young gentleman caught Emma round the neck, and kissed her!

'What nonsense 'tis!' was, I think, Emma's remark; and making a slight blow at him, which did not reach its object, she vanished.

Too much interested to care for consequences, I bolted from my ambush, and was next moment at Emma's side.

'What did he do *that* for, Emma?' I panted breathless.

'You naughty, sly, deceitful heavesdropper!' said Emma, giving me a shake. 'You shall go this very day to wicked Gran Mor— Now, Lor' forgive us, what are you a-making me say?'

'Emma,' I persisted firmly, 'what *did* he do it for?'

'He done his dooty to his employer, Miss Milly,' returned Emma: 'that's enough.'

'Thank you, Emma; that's all I wanted to know. You needn't be so cross,' I said; and the conversation terminated.

I forget after what precise number of these periodical visits it was, that the smart young gentleman, Mr Slithers, announced to us, rather mournfully, that, on the succeeding quarter-day, chops had better be superadded to the accustomed banquet; also, that pale sherry, if such a fluid were recognised at the *Three Jolly Ploughboys*, should be substituted for the humbler beverage, inasmuch as we should be visited on that occasion, not by himself, but by Mr Samuel Pinkerton, of Lincoln's Inn Fields, his Principal.

The peaceful pastoral ideas suggested by the 'Inn' and 'Fields' were entirely dissipated by the impressive manner in which Mr Slithers pronounced the concluding word. Poor Gracie at once burst into tears, and Mr Slithers, who was always upset by infant sorrow, took a confused and hasty leave—so hasty, indeed, that on this occasion he did his duty to his employer without the ceremony of beckoning Emma round the corner.

Gloom fell upon Honeysuckle Cottage when he was gone, and with the last gleam of his departing spur, we felt that we had lost a friend.

All three of us—nay, the very donkey himself, who was manifestly gloomy and troubled in mind—partook of the conviction, that an unfavourable change was impending in our mode of life. A dread, that none of us dared to put in words, was undoubtedly present to all—that Gran Morfaw might be intending to break up our home, and take us to her own.

Time swept by only too quickly. The day came—and the Principal. A last desperate proposal, from Gracie, that we should all go to bed, and pretend to be ill, leaving the donkey to explain matters, being overruled, we busied ourselves in preparing such a cottage-feast as might propitiate our terrible guest; and all was completed, when we heard the distant gate swing roughly to, and a powerful step come up the walk.

There was no knock; but after a momentary pause, the door slowly opened, and a large, full, brown face, very near the top, peered savagely down into the room, the body remaining outside.

'Where are my lambskins? Oh, *here* they are!' growled the intruder, with an expression like that of a famished ogre.

Gracie uttered a loud shriek, and dived under the table. Down came the head about three feet, and the Principal, his ogre aspect changing to one of the most ravishing good-humour, stood before us. He must have been standing on the garden-stool; but he was naturally tall. He was also very stout; and his big brown face—the size of our tea-tray—undulated with a kindly, pleasant smile, entirely corroborated by his small but

bright brown eyes, and at once destructive of every childish fear. I held out my hand to him; but Gracie, with a quicker instinct still, crawled from her refuge, and clasped his mighty leg! It was a fortunate act for her, that seal of a mutual confidence, so instantly begun, so long and faithfully observed, by both the great and little friend. Still, it was such an odd thing for Gracie to do—Gracie, who held even Mr Slithers in a kind of awe—that I stood positively confounded, as the Principal, his eyes twinkling with delight, lifted the little thing, and, sitting down, placed her on his knee.

I was not at all jealous of that; on the contrary, I took it rather as a compliment to my advanced age, that he did not do the same to *me*, and busied myself with Emma in putting the finishing-touches to our banquet. Meanwhile, the Principal and Gracie rattled on as if they had been old friends just reunited after a long separation, and had an immense deal to say to each other.

'Aha!' I heard the Principal suddenly exclaim; 'you know my name, it seems?'

'Yes; Mith' Pigwiggin,' said Gracie promptly.

'Say it again, my pet.'

'Mith' Pigwiggin,' repeated Grace distinctly.

'Good. And a very pretty name I've got,' said Mr Pinkerton complacently. 'Pig-wig-gin.' It seemed as if he were storing it in his memory. He was. I have scores of letters, in his large, neat, clerkly hand, and every one of them is subscribed, 'Your loving friend, Pigwiggin.'

It was lucky we had no secrets at Honeysuckle Cottage, since, in about a quarter of an hour, Miss Gracie's prattle had made our visitor acquainted with our entire domestic history and doings—our wants, our wishes, our views on divers subjects, down to the probable cause of the protracted indisposition of a neighbouring duck, who, though nominally resident across the way, passed much of her unoccupied time with us.

Suddenly, Gracie was seen to be curiously inspecting the Principal's boots, and passing her tiny palms gently over and over the heels.

'Well, fairy, what's the matter?' asked the Principal.

'Mith' Pigwiggin, where are your 'purs?'

'Purs! Ah, *spurs*! We Londoners don't have much use for spurs, dear. Spurs for soldiers,' said the Principal.

'Is Mith' Slithers a soldier?'

'Slithers a soldier? No. Why?'

'He wear 'purs'—'purs as long as that'—measuring her little arm nearly up to the elbow—'all bright silver.' (Gracie was not as yet grounded in her metals.)

'Mis-ter Slith-ers wears *spurs*!' repeated the Principal, in unfeigned astonishment. 'An attorney's clerk jingling about in silv—I'll spur him! A fellow, too, that never was across even a rocking-horse in his life!'

After this little episode, we went to lunch, Gracie still, to the Principal's evident delight, doing the honours of the mansion, feeding our guest with tit-bits, as if he were a pet chicken, and hovering about him like a benevolent little fairy, to whom he had been given in especial charge. Despite these attentions, the Principal, for so vast a man, ate very little. The meal was soon over, and his face—all our faces—looking a little graver, he proceeded to business.

Our cottage, alas! was to be immediately handed

over to another occupant; Emma—dear, faithful Emma—discharged, and ourselves transferred to—the—(Mr Pinkerton seemed to hesitate) to the house of Gran Morfew.

These terrible tidings were not softened by the mode of imparting them. I had never seen a great grown-up man stammer and colour as did the Principal. I was sure that, as he glanced at Gracie's scared little face, a tear came into his brown eye; but he took an immense pinch of snuff, and tried hard to look as if he enjoyed it.

My poor Gracie! Perhaps she felt injured that her chosen friend should be the bearer of this long-dreaded announcement. At all events, it occasioned a momentary coolness between them. Gracie came weeping to me; while the Principal, making such sonorous use of his handkerchief, that the donkey, who was never out of hearing, felt it his duty to respond, took Emma apart, and held a conversation which seemed to have a reassuring effect upon her spirits. Then he returned to us, and having re-established relations with Gracie, there ensued another merry chat, until the Principal, after looking at his watch, gave a little start, and rose to go.

He bade us a brief but kind farewell, and was striding away, when Gracie caught him by his ample skirts.

'Top, top, Mith' Pigwigin! you've forgotten.'

'Forgotten what, darling?' asked the Principal.

'Your duty to your employer,' said Gracie, to our utter amazement, and with perfect distinctness.

'My *what*?' exclaimed the Principal, as much taken by surprise, as if a wren had opened its beak, and uttered some moral reproof.

'You haven't *kithed* anybody at all!' said Gracie, in the same rebukeful tone.

'No more I have!' returned the Principal, breaking into one of his pleasant smiles. He kissed us both; Gracie twice. '*So that's* my duty, is it? How do you know that, little one?' he added gravely.

'Mith' Slithers does it to Emma; and Emma said he did his duty to his employer,' faltered Gracie, with some misgiving; for Emma had uttered a low shriek at the fatal words, and flushed to the very roots of her brown curls.

'Mis-ter Slithers!' repeated the Principal. He glanced at Emma, but with a good-humoured twinkle in his eye. '*Spurs! kissing!*' I heard him mutter. '*A pretty choice of a messenger I seem to have made!*—Come, my little ones, be busy now with your packing, and have all ready by Saturday: I shall come for you myself. My love to the donkey; best wishes to the duck. Emma, come and open the gate for me. Don't be afraid, Emma; *my duty's* done!'

The two walked away for a few paces, then stopped, and spoke for a minute, when Emma came skipping back, wiping her eyes, but otherwise in excellent humour; thereby causing great relief to Gracie, upon whose mind there had begun to dawn an impression that she had better have kept her ideas of duty to herself.

The interval, up to Saturday, passed like a melancholy but somewhat hurried dream—in which a donkey took a very active and intelligent part, and a duck, in precarious health, was always, though welcome, getting in the way. For the former cherished inmate, a home that promised tranquillity, if not bliss, had been found; and

with drooping of ears on one side, and weeping on the other, the last farewells were being taken, when the prodigy of Gran's carriage, with the elephantine horses, was seen entering the lane—looming so large, that Gracie hazarded a hasty calculation whether much trouble and discomfort might not be saved by removing in it cottage and all.

The Principal, beaming with smiles—followed by Mr Slithers, sad and spurless, a degraded knight—descended at the gate. The final arrangements were quickly made; and Mr Slithers being left in charge, pending the new tenant's arrival, we started for Gran Morfew's dreaded mansion, Emma being allowed to attend us thither, though she was not to remain.

Towards evening—for it was many miles, and Gran's horses, though immense, were slow—we approached Coldstone Towers; and now it was that I began, with an unusual sinking of the heart, to observe a decided change for the worse in the tone and bearing of our hitherto gentle conductor. Happily, my Gracie, overpowered with fatigue, kept falling asleep, and was but vaguely conscious that something was going wrong.

We drew up at the great entrance. Everything at Coldstone Towers seemed colossal. The steps up to the portico might have served for giants. The columns that sustained it, were almost terror-striking, in their girth and height. The two stupendous beings that admitted us—while a third hovered in the dim distance of the tremendous hall—appeared like giant guardians of some enchanter's domain.

Mr Pinkerton spoke a few words apart to the third individual, who had white frizzly hair, and was dressed in black, with glistening knee-buckles, which caught Gracie's eye; but there was no time to investigate the phenomenon. The Principal took a hand of each, and we ascended a wide, velvety stair, down which ran a balustrade of crimson silk, tasselled with gold. The next minute, we were marching and trotting, according to our stature, across a plain of rich carpet, towards a canopied sofa, placed near the fire. We had approached within a yard, when a hand, gleaming with rings, shot sharply out. The Principal stopped short, as if a snake had sprung at him! The fingers of the warning hand were long and white; and so lean, that I remember wondering, even at that moment, how upon earth they managed to retain those large and lustrous gems with which they were literally covered.

'No nearer,' said a cold hollow voice—out of a heap of coverings on the couch—and following the direction of the sound, I beheld Gran Morfew. Only her face, however, was visible. She was covered with a mountain of shawls, and seemed to be suffering from ague; for, despite the summer, her wrappings, and a fire, her shivering made the canopy above her vibrate. I found, however, that this was her chronic state.

'I trust you are somewhat better, madam?' said Mr Pinkerton, with a sort of guarded cheerfulness, such as one might assume in caressing a dangerous dog.

'Then you are a fool,' was Gran's polite reply. '*All* are fools, who yield themselves to a groundless trust. You have got that beggar's brats, I see. O—h!' she concluded, forcibly repressing another shiver, with a violent gnash of her teeth. She always did this—which led me to observe that her

teeth were large, white, and strong—though her face was withered and very old—and the shrunken features made her great gloomy eyes unnaturally large.

'Take away those icicles! See how they make me shiver!' moaned the wretched old woman, her menacing hand quivering with passion as much as ague.

The Principal drew us back.

'That is better,' resumed she, looking relieved. 'Now—to have done with all this—shake that imp, sir, and stop her whimpering.'

Mr Pinkerton, with his eyes nailed on Gran, gave Gracie an admonitory jog.

'Have you agreed with those women? Can they take them to-morrow?'

'I waited for your final directions, madam,' said Mr Pinkerton in a voice that was not a bit like his own. 'Misses Hollabone and Skimpin are—not'—

'Why don't you go on?' said Mrs Morfew, with another shiver and gnash. 'Not what? I see. I must tell them myself.' She raised herself a little, and fixed her gloomy eyes, filled with quiet hate, alternately on Gracie and me. 'I have not sent for you, children, to give you clothes, and food, and toys, and servants, and a sumptuous home: I hate you both too much for that. I have been somewhat misled'—she darted a suspicious look at Mr Pinkerton. 'You were too happy in that cottage; I took you from it. That maid was spoiling you; I have dismissed her. I cannot turn you into the streets, for the world would say rude things of me; and, besides, even our reasonable prejudices should be indulged with moderation. So I have treated with some kind ladies' (a malignant grin)—'sweet, benevolent ladies, my little souls—to nourish and educate you, dears' (Gran grew quite tender), 'in their own quiet peculiar way. There are two things, darlings, but you won't mind those. Miss Hollabone never has fires; and oh!' (shivering) 'how cold you will be at first—only at first, you know. And there are no holidays. You go to-morrow, and you come back to your Gran—dear, loving Gran—in five years.'

I felt the Principal's hand tighten. I think he had noticed the sudden quickening of my pulse. But it was not from fear. The cold mocking malice with which Gran had spoken inspired me for a moment with the spirit of a tiger-cat. My sole desire was to fly at her, and strike her cruel face.

'Your good friend there has taken much pains to find this happy home; haven't you, Mr Pinkerton?' resumed Mrs Morfew.

'I think they will be happier there—than here,' replied the Principal, looking at her.

Gran laughed almost merrily, but a shiver stopped it.

'You understand, sir, all I wish?' she said impatiently.

'Perfectly,' he replied. 'I will deliver them myself to Miss Hollabone to-morrow, and communicate to that—hem!—benevolent lady your desire that they should be educated in the quiet peculiar manner you speak of, and for which that secluded neighbourhood offers such excellent facilities.' And he smiled at her with an expression that, for the first time, sent a thrill of terror to my heart.

Gracie, half-unconscious as she was, with fatigue and fear, must have felt the same, for I saw her

cast up at her treacherous ally a look of wonder and rebuke that must have pierced his heart, if he had seen it. But the false Pigwiggins was not heeding her; he jerked us almost roughly by the hands.

'Come, make your courtesies, children, if you have been taught so much manners: say good-bye to your kind grandmamma, and come along with me.'

I cannot answer for Grace's manners on this trying invitation; mine, I fear, were wanting, for I remember, at this hour, Gran's face as she answered to my look—shaking those white talons till the jewels rang: 'Well, well, child. Gran will remember.'

Mr Pinkerton dragged us rudely away. We passed to a small room at the far end of the corridor. It was lighted. There was a table spread, and a servant in waiting.

'Bring supper,' said the Principal; 'and send that woman—what d'ye call her?—Emma.'

'What would you please to have, sir?'

'Something warm for me; crust and cup of milk for these torments,' was the reply.

The man looked almost pityingly at Gracie, but Mr Pinkerton made an impatient gesture, and he quitted the room. Almost before the door had closed, Gracie was caught up in the arms of her Pigwiggins, and loaded with soothing caresses. From these and from his broken words—hastily uttered, for fear of interruption—it became evident to us that there were *two* Pigwiggins—one for us, and one for Gran; and that, whatever cause we might have to complain of the latter, it was in no degree to interfere with our relations towards the former. Content with this assurance, Gracie laid her little golden head upon the shoulder of her recovered friend, and forgot the troubles of the day in sleep.

MALTOTS.

WHEN Dr Johnson defined Excise as 'a hateful tax levied upon commodities,' he did but say, with reference to a tax which he particularly disliked, what most people say of any tax whatever.

Probably, there is not any one who really likes taxes. Even those who hold it very 'stuff' of the conscience' to pay something of what they owe to the public purse, though uncalled upon to do so, and whose payments are now and again acknowledged by the Chancellor of the Exchequer in the newspapers—even they, probably, do not experience any pleasure in their act beyond that of discharging an uneasy conscience from the weight of so much gold. The payment of taxes *per se* cannot, in the nature of things, be enjoyable. Who can be gratified at yielding up out of his hard-earned store even such sums as his judgment tells him are moderate, and indispensable to the carrying on of the government under which he lives, and by which he is protected. The benefit given in return is too indistinctly seen, too general, to allow of his particular satisfaction at contributing towards the procuring of it. This something or other makes taxes unpalatable things, even when moderate and just. How much more so when they are oppressive in their weight, and unjustly apportioned, and when there is no need for the levy beyond that need which comes of wasteful expenditure and prodigality.

History is full of complaints against taxes, and it is impossible to say that these complaints are all

factions. It is proposed in this paper to look at some of the complaints which the people of this country have raised from time to time against the 'hateful imposts'—'*maltots*' (from the barbarous word *malatolta*, ill taken), as they used to call them, which have been levied upon them.

When the Danes came with a hostile fleet to Southampton, and announced their intention of ravaging the country, Ethelred the Unready, who was king of England at the time, bought them off with £10,000 which he raised by taxation from his subjects. So good a fee prompted the invaders to try again, and on that occasion they refused to depart until they had been paid £16,000, upon which sum they afterwards advanced an additional £8,000, reaching a maximum of £48,000 when they were so good as to visit the country for the fourth time, in the same Ethelred's reign.

The money raised for this ignoble and suicidal purpose was called *Danegelt*, or '*Dane-money*,' and was exacted with rigorous severity from the descendants of men who had fought with Alfred, and who had been wont to pay the Danes who came for ransom with a different and much harder metal than gold.

Succeeding kings, even the Danish kings of England, levied the tax which was so odious to the people, not caring even to change its name, though the purpose for which it was levied was totally altered. The word *Danegelt* came to signify money raised at the will of the sovereign, but ostensibly for the defensive purposes of the kingdom. Under Hardicanute the Dane, who 'died as he stood at his drink, and suddenly fell to the earth with a terrible convulsion,' the people of Worcester kicked against the tax, and rose in rebellion, but to no purpose, for they had to pay the impost as well as fines for resisting it.

Not only during the Saxon and Danish rule was *Danegelt* paid, but the Norman kings continued to demand it until the time of Henry II., who, finding another and more yielding mode of taxation, dropped the old one, which pressed upon one class of his people only, in order to adopt the new, which drew money from them all.

Before this period, the king's revenue was derived from the extensive lands belonging to the crown, voluntary gifts from his subjects, and the '*aids*' which, on particular occasions, the feudal law gave him from his tenants; and as these sources of income were often found to be choked, or to yield a supply inadequate to the royal wants, the king was not unfrequently driven to impose taxes upon the property of his subjects, though he had no legal right to do so, and he depended for the collection of his imposts mainly upon his men-at-arms. No wonder that he chose on these occasions to levy upon the despised English their old and hateful tax, since in so doing he was fleecing only those who were far too much depressed by the weight of the Norman yoke to offer resistance, at the same time that he was getting the means of carrying on his government, and of winning useful Normans by grants of Saxon money.

But by degrees the golden goose laid fewer golden eggs. The English were gradually but surely squeezed out of situations which would bear taxation. Fresh hordes of Normans came, and fed like kites upon the fat pastures of England, while the English either merged in the ranks of their conquerors, or became hewers of wood and drawers

of water for them, in both cases rendering it impossible for the king to tax them distinctively as heretofore.

By the feudal law, the only taxes payable by the tenant holding from the king were '*reliefs*' or fines on succeeding to the property, and '*aids*,' which were for the purpose of providing a dowry for his eldest daughter, and to pay the expenses of making his eldest son a knight. The principal condition of the holding was, that whenever the king should take the field, his tenant should attend him for forty days at his own expense, bringing with him a representative in arms for every knight's fee that he held from the king.

This last and chief incident of the tenure was found to be very ill suited to the arrangements both of king and tenant. As nothing could compel a military tenant to stop out more than six weeks, the king often found himself stripped of his army at the very moment when its help was most needed; and, on the other hand, it was often most inconvenient to the tenant to be called off from his estates, no matter what he had in hand, for the purpose of following his liege lord on some expedition, which, may be, would earn him no glory, and would be certain to put him to considerable expense. So a compromise began to be made about the time of Henry II., the king agreeing to accept compensation for non-attendance upon him in his wars. The money so paid was called a '*scutage*,' because it was the product of an assessment on shields.

This redemption of personal service was largely adopted, enabling the king either to 'put money in his purse' for his own purposes, or to hire soldiers, who would probably serve him better in the field than his jealous barons, touchy on points of honour and dignity, and available only for a poor six weeks. It did not, however, do away with '*reliefs*,' nor with the aids for endowing the king's daughter and knighting his eldest son; and these last two were levied pretty much upon the principle of '*give what you please, but so much is expected*'—a principle which was often applied with singular force and effect—until the amount of such '*aids*' was ascertained and fixed by 3 Edward I. c. 36, or part of what is commonly called the Statute of Westminster the First.

Richard the Lion-hearted wanted money for the Crusades, and as the sources of the crown-revenue yielded not nearly enough, he forced loans from the clergy and the merchants, and sold a number of charters to towns. He also insisted that old charters should be resealed, and charged a heavy sum for the trouble of doing it; he screwed up the rents of the crown-lands' tenants, and compelled the Jews to give him large sums of money: and all this without a shadow of right.

But while the king had no privilege to tax the people, it was by no means certain that the people had a right to resist him. They could not appeal to any law which protected them, and the king was not likely to stop from pursuing a course in which no statute barred him, and which gave him a good supply of money in his treasury. So, in order to put a stop to a practice which grew less and less pleasant by repetition, the barons and clergy, who, as a class, had been severely pinched by these forced loans, when they drew up the Great Charter, which they wrung out of John, inserted in their twelfth chapter: 'No scutage or aid shall be imposed in our kingdom, unless by the

general Council of our kingdom; except for ransoming our person, making our eldest son a knight, and once for marrying our eldest daughter; and for these there shall be paid a reasonable aid. In like manner it shall be concerning the aids of the city of London.' But by some trick or neglect, the words 'and other cities,' which came after 'city of London' in the rough draft of the Charter, were omitted in the copy which was signed; and in the charter which was renewed as being Magna Charta, by Henry III., and for renewing which that king received a fifteenth of all their movables from the 'archbishops, bishops, abbots, priors, earls, barons, knights, freeholders, and other our subjects'—the clauses of John's Charter forbidding the levy of escuages, &c., unless by consent of the general Council of the kingdom, were left out altogether.

Though Henry III. availed himself of the first-mentioned trick to tax the towns unmercifully, he seems to have respected the property of the barons and prelates; but Edward I., in desperate need of money for his expensive wars, and unable to bear the 'want of pence that vexes public men,' resorted to all sorts of expedients for raising money, by which he rode roughshod over the charters of his ancestors.

He strained to its greatest stretch the power which the feudal law gave him, and he extorted money from landowners, whom he charged for compulsory proof of their title, and when they could not make their title clear, seized their land for the use of the crown. He taxed the clergy so heavily that they got the pope to forbid them to pay, and then the king outlawed them till they succumbed. He took an account of all moneys in the monasteries, whether belonging to the order or to depositors for safety's sake, and borrowed the principal sums on indefinitely long credit. He taxed wool and hides, he fined the towns, and on one occasion he took by way of loan the value of all the wool exported. Finally, when men were growing tired of all this, and the king thought it inexpedient to wring more money from them, though he wanted provisions for his army in Guienne, he laid hands on all the wheat and cattle he could collect, adding insult to injury by telling the owners he would pay by and by.

But men had got tired of these pranks, and among the weary were Humphry de Bohun and Roger de Bigod, respectively earls of Hereford and Norfolk. These noblemen flatly refused to obey the king when he told them to go and join his army in Gascony, and they had a reason for refusing quite unconnected with a desire to keep whole bones. Edward had to command in person in Flanders, and sorely against his will to leave behind him two such powerful enemies to his home policy as the two earls. As soon as he was gone, they set to work, and presented to his Council of Regency a bill, which was emphatically called the '*Confirmatio Chartarum*.' By this, they restored the omitted clauses of the Great Charter, and made them plain according to the original intention of the framers. The bill declared, '*that for no business from henceforth we shall take such manner of aids, tasks, nor prises, but by the common consent of all the realm, and for the common profit thereof, saving the ancient aids and prises due and accustomed.*'

Edward's Council were afraid to assent to this bill, or to send it over to the king in Flanders. But the earls were strongly backed, and stood firm, till, with the greatest ill-will, King Edward

signed the charter, and it became a law for ever. The passing of this law necessitated a total change in the system of taxation; and in this king's reign went forth the first regular writs summoning the representatives of cities and towns to join the great Council of the kingdom in voting supplies to the crown.

Edward III., though, for the most part, an observer of this law, when hard pressed to defray the cost of his intended expedition against France, the overtaxed people beginning to shew signs of discontent, had recourse to forced loans and tallages, and seized for his present use the tin and wool of the year. But the people would not have it; and when the king came to them in a constitutional way for more money, they impeached, for the first time in English history, the king's ministers. They granted the subsidy asked for, and then said that 'if their said liege lord had always possessed about him faithful counsellors and good officers, he would have been so rich that he would have had no need of charging his Commons with subsidy or tallage, considering the great ransoms of the French and Scotch kings, and of so many other prisoners; and that it appeared to be for the private advantage of some near the king and of others by their collusion, that the king and kingdom are so impoverished, and the Commons so ruined.'

With Richard II., in whose reign was the rebellion which was urged into action by the poll-tax, originated the impost mis-called a 'benevolence.' Begging-letters were sent in the king's name to such people as were supposed to be able to give, and strong pressure was brought to bear to induce them to comply with the request. Large sums were thus collected, of which no account was rendered; and the tax being a convenient one, succeeding kings used it in spite of the law down to the time of the Stuarts. Under Edward IV., these 'benevolences' became an intolerable nuisance, for they were raised in addition to the taxes legally voted. It was one of the first acts of 'usurping Richard,' who sought thereby to win popular favour, to abolish them by statute; but Henry VII., whose money-loving character is well known, set this most salutary law on one side because it had been passed by an unlawful king; and because, though it forbade the compulsory levy of such imposts, it did not forbid entirely the solicitation of gifts from private persons.

Cardinal Morton, Henry's minister, caught the people on what they called 'Morton's fork.' He said that those who lived frugally must have saved wherewithal to give, and those who lived sumptuously could evidently afford to spend; so that in either case they must comply with his demands for money.

Henry VIII. twice resorted to benevolences, the second time in 1545, when he screwed £119,581, 7s. 6d. out of the people. On this occasion, Alderman Reed, a citizen of London, was so bold as to refuse to contribute; and by way of bringing him to reason in respect of his duty as to freewill-offerings, the king had him arrested and sent down to Sir Ralph Ewer, the general commanding on the Scots' border, with orders to employ him as a common soldier, at his own charges, and to put him to the hardest and most perilous work—adding, 'you must use him in all things according to the sharpe discipline militar of the northern wars.'

When in an earlier year of the reign, Wolsey demanded an enormous present from the city of

London, the magistrates remonstrated; but Wolsey warned them they had better do as he bid them, 'lest it might fortune to cost some of them their heads.' Such was the spirit in which the government went to work, and twice it met with armed resistance in the counties. With a House of Commons that approved an act releasing the king from his debts, almost anything could be done; though even that assembly, on several occasions, ventured to resist; and once, to Wolsey's great disgust, cut down the king's demand one-half.

Besides the regular subsidies voted by parliament, and these miscalled benevolences, Henry VIII. received money from forced loans, which sometimes he paid back, and sometimes did not. His daughter Mary adopted the loan-system, but dropped benevolences; and Elizabeth borrowed under letters sealed with her privy seal, but she made it a practice to repay. James I., who, having quarrelled with his parliament, had to live how he could for six years, raised money by forced loans, enormous fines inflicted by the Star-Chamber, and by means of a benevolence. For refusing to subscribe to the last of these, Mr Oliver St John was fined five thousand pounds, and sentenced to imprisonment during pleasure; and in 1606, when Mr Bates, a Turkey merchant, refused to pay a duty on foreign currants, which had been imposed by the act of the crown alone, he was pursued in the Court of Exchequer, and a judgment obtained against him.

After Charles I. had dismissed his second parliament, in order to save the Duke of Buckingham, there was a 'plentiful lack' of means for carrying on the government. Recourse was had to a forced loan, towards which the persons addressed by the royal letter were required to contribute a *specific sum*, instructions being given to the sheriffs to send the names of refusers to the council. In addition to this, an order was issued that every one should pay into the king's exchequer a sum equal to that which he had paid under the last parliamentary assessment.

This was a little too much for the people to stomach. They had paid illegal loans, benevolences, imposts, duties, &c., though they might have been protected in their refusal to pay them by statutes of Magna Charta and Edward I.; but when it came to be a question of levying general taxes by the royal order—a plan which would have enabled the king to do without parliaments at all—there were found good men and true to resist.

Darnel, Corbet, Earl, Heveningham, and Hampden refused to pay, and were arrested by order of the king. They sued out their writs of habeas corpus, and, after long argument, judgment was given against them. It was time then to be up and doing, and the Petition of Right was presented to the king.

In the Petition, the protecting statutes were recited, and the late unconstitutional proceedings were complained of, a prayer for redress being added. Over this and the other subjects of the Petition, a severe struggle ensued; the king, assisted by some of the Upper House, trying his utmost to evade granting it. Only by making the very firmest stand, and refusing to abate one tittle of their just claim, did the Commons obtain for their Petition of Right the royal order, '*Soit droit fait comme est désiré.*'

Then came, in 1634, disputes about ship-money. It was found that in old times the seaports, and

even the maritime counties, had been called upon to supply ships for the defence of the realm; and though this call had not been made for several centuries, Charles's necessity suggested to him to revive it. He not only taxed the ports, but inland towns also, and for the latter he had not an iota of right. Mr Hampden, who lived in Buckinghamshire, refused to pay his share. Judgment was had against him in the Court of Exchequer; so the Long Parliament, early in its session, passed a bill which declared ship-money to be illegal, and reversed, as an act of parliament, the decision of the Exchequer against Mr Hampden.

'Tonnage and poundage,' which was a custom-house duty on merchandise at the outports and on home-manufactures, had been commonly granted to a new king for life. To Charles, the Commons, in view of some redress they wanted, gave it for one year only. He therefore took it of his own accord, saying, when remonstrated with by parliament, that this was 'what he had never meant to give away, nor could possibly do without.' Judgment having been given against several merchants who refused to pay it, this tax was included among those others imposed by royal prerogative, which the Long Parliament by statute abolished.

In Charles II.'s time, excise taxes, which had sprung up during the Protectorate, were established as a source of revenue. Convocation, which had hitherto voted the taxes payable by the clergy, in his reign also resigned their right, and took for the clergy, instead of it, the right to vote at elections of members of parliament; and the abolition, in the twelfth year of Charles II., of all feudal rights derived from tenure, was the death-blow of purveyance, that constant source of bitterness, which was a levy in kind upon the people who lived in the line of country through which the king might be travelling.

Notwithstanding all that had been done to secure the subject from exaction on the part of the crown, it was found that the confusion caused by the Great Rebellion had somewhat impaired the supposed strength of the protecting statute. At all events, in the Declaration of Rights which parliament presented to the Prince of Orange, it was stated that 'the late King James, by the assistance of divers evil counsellors, judges, and ministers employed by him,' had levied 'money for and to the use of the crown, by pretence of prerogative, for other time and in other manner than the same was granted by parliament;' and in the Bill of Rights it is expressly declared that any taxes levied without consent of parliament are illegal. This was the last time that a fresh law was required to establish the principle laid down by the wisdom of those to whom Englishmen for ever are indebted for their Great Charter.

The right of parliament to control the expenditure of its supplies was acquired during the minority of Richard II., when John Philpot and William Walworth, members of the Commons' House, were intrusted with the money collected on the votes, and were ordered to account for the same to the House. In the sixth year of Henry IV., a treasurer, rendering accounts to the House, was appointed to disburse the supplies; and it is common to find attached to money-bills of this and subsequent periods, a direction how the money is to be spent: 'for guarding the seas,' 'to be spent in the king's wars;' or 'for the payment of pensions.'

But though this right was in some cases allowed,

it was not universally so. In 1593, when Elizabeth was anxious to get a supply from the House, she told Bacon to offer to shew her accounts, 'not of necessity, but of royal grace;' and James, in 1624, offered, as a matter of favour, to allow the money voted to be disbursed by a parliamentary committee. In 1663, Charles II. offered to shew his accounts—a courtesy not apparently appreciated by the Commons, since a few years later, when they made some difficulty about a grant, they refused to accept 'the royal word that the money shall be properly spent.'

The right to vote specific sums for specific purposes, to know how the money voted has been expended, to regulate the public payments as well as to fix the public income, was acquired incontestably when the self-taxation right was finally established—when liberty, order, and rights quite as divine as those of kings, were secured to these kingdoms by the accession of a dynasty for which a course was plainly marked out, and which had its authority in a parliamentary title.

THE SEA-SERPENT.

'I BELIEVE in the Great Sea-serpent.' Unconsciously, I uttered these words aloud, as I stood one night on the fore-castle of an American clipper. We had just escaped from the China Sea, after sixteen days' hammering against head gales, and were gently gliding into the Pacific under a crowd of cotton canvas, which, in the full moonlight, almost pained the eye by its brightness. The deck was crowded with a strange, motley mass of human beings, the prevailing type of humanity being Chinese, for we had about six hundred Celestials on board, rushing to the El Dorado of California.

The sailors were men of all nations, and a vast variety of costume; many of them wore red shirts, thereby relieving the monotonous blue cotton of John Chinaman. I had wandered forward, and, finding myself alone on the fore-castle, had been standing there, mayhap, half an hour, enjoying the rare luxury of solitude, and watching the porpoises darting backwards and forwards across our bows, as the noble old ship rose to each long smooth swell, and then made a stately bow towards the blue hillock, as it swept away from her.

It was a mild, peaceful night, and doubly delightful after the pitching and tossing, the jerking and groaning, we had undergone for a fortnight. My thoughts naturally reverted to the mysterious inhabitants of the element on the surface of which we were floating. What wonderful creatures might at that very moment be beneath our keel, perhaps never requiring, possibly unable, to reach the surface! The monsters which are revealed to us by the microscope may have mammoth relatives; the fantastic forms of fossil reptiles may be outdone by living creatures beneath us, and possibly in view of those playful, long-snouted porpoises beside me. Perhaps the sea-serpent; ah, the sea-serpent! Imagination at once mounted on stilts; memory brought before me the various accounts of its appearance, accounts so numerous, so full in detail, attested by so many witnesses, and agreeing in the main so thoroughly with each other, that it seems impossible to discredit them. The objection raised by Professor Owen, that none of its bones have been found, weighs little against the positive evidence of the captain and officers of a British man-of-war, so lately as 1848, that they passed within

one hundred yards of a snake which they estimated to shew sixty feet of his body above water, and to have probably forty feet more underneath.

That sea-snakes of small size do exist cannot be questioned. A few miles off the coast of Borneo, I have passed many hundreds of them on the surface of the smooth sea, measuring about eighteen inches or two feet in length, and of a dark colour, barred with yellow. I recollected that a stampede took place one night on board a ship lying in the Hooghly, opposite Calcutta, when the fore-castle was taken charge of by a six-foot snake, which had crawled up the chain cable and through the hawse-pipe.

Turning these matters over in my mind as I stood alone in the bows of the ship, the words I have commenced this paper with involuntarily found utterance: 'I believe in the Great Sea-serpent.'

'So do I, sir,' came back to me like an echo. The voice came from near my feet, and, looking closely at the place, I found an old-salt coiled up on the heel of the cathead, but hidden from me before by the black shadow of the jib. The man was quite a character on board, singular in appearance and manner, rough and surly with strangers, but improving on acquaintance. He was a thorough seaman, and had already proved himself one of the most reliable men on board for any service requiring courage and judgment. Our crew had found nicknames for each other, and I had learned to distinguish Irish Mike, Soldier Harry, and One-eyed Sam. The old sailor beside me was known by the sobriquet of Jake the Whaler. He spoke in such a marked and earnest tone, that it roused my curiosity. 'Why do you believe in the great sea-snake; have you ever seen him, Jake?'

'I have, sir,' said Jake.

The tone and look of the old man were like those wherewith the Ancient Mariner chilled the blood of the wedding-guest. Not another word passed for several minutes; Jake seemed in a reverie, and, for myself, I was wondering whether the old man was mad, for I could not doubt his being thoroughly in earnest. That voice and look could not have been assumed by the best actor that ever wore buskin. After a pause, during which I lighted my pipe and sat down on the anchor-stock, I said: 'Come, Jake, tell me all about it; when did it happen, and where?'

'I never tell it now, sir,' said he; 'I can't bear to be laughed at, and told that it was all delirium and fever. For two years past, I haven't even heard the name of the sea-serpent; though day and night I think of him, and shall while I live.'

'But, Jake,' said I, 'you need not fear that I shall laugh at anything told in earnest; and of all things in the world, I should like a yarn about the sea-serpent.'

'Don't call it a yarn, sir,' said Jake; 'tis too true and too horrible to be called a yarn.'

'Fok'sle there,' hailed the mate from the waist of the ship.

'Ay, ay, sir,' answered my companion.

'Strike eight bells.'

As the eight measured strokes were given, and the sweet, sharp sound filled the air, followed by the boatswain's hoarse voice, I felt that all chance of hearing Jake's story for that night was over, and strolled back to the poop, had my nightly glass of grog, and turned in, determined to find an early opportunity of learning the old sailor's secret.

Early next morning, I came on deck, and found a strange and menacing change of weather had taken place. The wind had died away, and the ship pitched uneasily in a heavy, confused swell. A heavy bank of clouds was rising in the south-west, illuminated every few moments by vivid flashes of lightning. The barometer had been gradually falling, and the men were engaged taking in the light sails. Fitful puffs of wind sang through the rigging, and the sails alternately thrashed back on the masts, and then tugged forward, straining at their tackle like chained hounds. The main-course was now reefed, and the topsail brailed up sharp, looking like a row of great bladders as it blew out from the yard. I glanced to windward, and saw the rapidly-advancing bank of cloud edged with white, where the coming blast ploughed up the sea in its course.

'Send another hand to the wheel, Mr Blow,' shouted the captain.

The words had scarcely left his lips when the gale struck us, and the ship heeled over till the water rushed in at the ports, and everything loose on the decks flew into the lee-scuppers. The halliards of the upper topsail-yards were let go, but, while the yards were coming down, the foresail tore adrift, split into long streamers, which fluttered out, flapping and cracking like gigantic stockwhips, till they were borne off by the gale. The ship righted and gained way at the same moment, and we flew through the water with the wind on our quarter.

For eleven days and nights the weather never moderated, and we ran before the gale at a terrific rate of speed, crossing the North Pacific in as short a time as it had ever been done by a sailing-vessel. There was but little chance of hearing Jake's yarn during this time, but I kept the matter in my mind, and, when at last the gale ceased, and we were no longer rushing through the creaming foam pursued by great, green mountains with threatening crests, but calmly gliding towards the golden land, I got the old sailor to unburden his mind to me, and shall now try to give an accurate version of his story, though I cannot follow his exact words.

'Tis eight years, sir,' said he, 'since I shipped aboard of the brig *Mermaid*, bound from Liverpool to the west coast of Africa on a palm-oil voyage. She was a poor craft, and we had a bad set on board of her. The skipper spent most of the time he was sober in tormenting the cabin-boy, but, after the poor lad was lost overboard—most of us thought he jumped over to escape his tyrant—the captain was seldom off his sofa, where he lay swigging rum and swearing at the steward. The mate had to navigate the brig, and he was such a stupid, thick-headed fellow, that it was little wonder we ran off our course, and made the African coast a little below Cape Blanco, and far to the northward of where we ought to have been. Our water had fallen very short, and the mate coasted along for some miles till we found a small bay, and, after considerable search, discovered a stream from which we could fill our casks. He brought the brig to an anchor about a mile from the coast—the breeze was very light, and sea almost calm.

'The next day we were busy getting water, but we made slow work of it, as the small stream was nearly dry. The mate didn't much like stopping where we were, so close to the shore, but he had no choice, for it fell dead calm, and kept so for a whole week. It was on the evening of the third

day after anchoring that the captain came on deck and sat down on the break of the poop, smoking his pipe. He was almost sober, and had a quieter way with him than usual, but suddenly he dropped his pipe, and gave two or three wild shrieks, like a frightened woman. The mate ran to him, and asked what was the matter.

'Look there, look there!' he said, pointing to the water, about a boat's-length from the brig.

'I looked at the place, and saw a queer swirl on the surface, and the stain of blood, just as if a whale had been lanced and sounded.

'There was a big shark there,' says the skipper, his eyes staring, and trembling all over—'there was a big shark there, lying quiet on the surface, and suddenly a great pair of jaws opened and seemed to swallow him as you might swallow a shrimp.'

'Only another shark falling foul of him, captain,' says the mate; 'I've often seen them bite each other.'

'The skipper called out for rum, and lay down on the deck, shaking as if he had the ague. The mate looked at me, shook his head, and said: "Gone mad at last," and I certainly thought that liquor had turned the captain's brain. We soon learned what good reason he had for his terror.

'It was not more than an hour afterwards that he rose alongside, and with his head as high as our mainyard, looked down on the deck, opening and shutting that horrible mouth the skipper had first seen.'

'What rose alongside, Jake?' said I.

'The Sea-serpent,' said Jake, in the solemn, earnest tones he had used when speaking to me first on the subject.

I had the conviction that the man was in earnest. 'Well,' said I, 'tell me all about it; and first, what length and thickness might he have been?'

'Judging by the length of our brig, sir, I think he must have been good two hundred feet, and he looked more like a monstrous conger-eel than anything else I can think of. His body was as thick as a cart-horse, and his head was flat like an eel's, and a couple of fathoms long. He had great gills, too, like an eel. His eyes were very big and bright; and when he lifted his head, opening and shutting those frightful jaws, as he had a habit of doing every few seconds, he was the most awful sight you can fancy. Some of the men said they saw his teeth, and that he had a double row like a shark, but I can't say that I saw them myself. It was his eyes, sir—his eyes I was always looking at, and always with a fear that I should find them looking right at me. His skin was dark and glossy, like the skin of a whale—I didn't see a hair anywhere about him; and when we afterwards saw him swimming about, he wriggled through the water eel-fashion; and you could see that the dark colour of the back got gradually lighter on the sides, and the belly was nearly white. But those matters I noticed afterwards, for at the time I speak of, when he rose alongside, and stared down on our decks, as I've told you, I was sitting on the deck cleaning some brass work, and when I looked up, and saw that dreadful head, I just sat where I was, and stared at him with my mouth open, till he sank down gently out of sight.

'My head felt dizzy and my eyes dim for half a minute, and then I heard the captain howling, and saw that he was lying on the deck flat on his face.

The mate and myself lifted him up, but he kept shrieking, and wouldn't open his eyes; so we carried him below, and laid him on the sofa. On the cabin table was the captain's case-bottle of rum, and the mate filled himself a full glass, and drank it off; then he filled a glass for me, but his hand shook so that good part of it was spilled. When I went on deck again, I found that the men had shut themselves up in the fore-castle, in spite of the heat, and two of them, who had been ill with coast-fever for some days, were now quite out of their senses. Well, sir, that night the steward got so frightened by what he had seen, and by the horrible yells of the skipper, that he went forward amongst the men, taking a small keg of rum with him; and the hands were soon all drunk, and fighting amongst each other like devils. The mate and myself took it in turns to mind the skipper; and about daylight, I was awakened from a short snooze by a sudden quiet coming over the ship, and there was the captain quite dead, his chin fallen, and his eyes wide open. The same afternoon, the two men who had been ill of coast-fever died, and there were three others in their berths raving. Twice that day we saw the great snake—once about a mile from us, and the next time some six miles out to seaward, and we hoped he had left us altogether; but on the next day, he rose about two hundred yards from our starboard beam, and moved his head about as he had done at first. Eight times in all we saw him, sir; and once the steward, who was wild with drink, got the captain's gun out, and would have fired at him, but the mate took it out of his hands. On the seventh day from the time we came to anchor, the weather suddenly changed, and a heavy tornado came on, and blew us right out to sea. We lost most of our spars, being so short-handed; and as soon as the gale moderated, we hove overboard the captain and four of the hands who had died in that bay, but whom we had been afraid to bury before, lest the snake might take a fancy for human flesh. At last, we reached Sierra Leone, nearly dismasted, and with only three hands on board fit for duty. We got help from another vessel before we could bring the ship to anchor; and after that, I remember nothing, till I found myself recovering from fever in the Sierra Leone hospital, my head shaved, and my limbs as weak as a child's.

'The brig had left the port with a new crew, and the few survivors of her former crew had returned to England in another ship. They laughed at me when I told them about what we had seen and gone through; they told me it was only my dreams when I had brain-fever. I wish I could have thought so, sir; for it was all too true—too true.'

Again the sharp, sweet sound of the ship's bell, again the hoarse call of the watch, and old Jake the Whaler and I parted company.

THE STAGE OF OLD.

THE stage is wonderfully conservative in its way. Hamlet's advice to the players might have been written yesterday instead of three hundred years ago. But spite of the tenacity with which the theatrical world clings to its traditions, its customs are not endowed with Median inflexibility, and Time has rung the changes behind the scenes as remorselessly as is his wont elsewhere. The tedious two-act farce, the musical burletta, the five-act tragedy and comedy—saving the glorious

classics of the stage—the comic pantomime of Rich and Grimaldi, have all vanished from the boards. Even that time-honoured institution, the pit, is in course of extinction, become small by degrees and disagreeably less every day; and before long the playgoer who does not care to spend nearly half-a-sovereign for an evening's diversion will have to betake himself to some other amusement.

So strong at one time was stage tradition even in trivial matters, that Macklin caused as much debate by wearing a black wig as Shylock, as he did by taking a serious view of the character. The old stage was lamentably indifferent regarding costume, splendour rather than fitness and propriety being its aim. Garrick played Macbeth in a gold-laced waistcoat and red velvet breeches; and Mrs Siddons arrayed Queen Katharine in an old woman's cap and a regal diadem, to the great disgust of Miss Hawkins, who argued: 'Katharine was a Spaniard, and with the advantages of her national dress, would have made a deeper impression, and proved her tyrant still more unjust.' The witches in *Macbeth* wore mittens, plaited caps, laced aprons, red stomachers, and ruffs. In 1793, the management of Drury Lane resolved that the tragedy should no longer be represented as a tragi-comedy, and ordered the actors who played the weird sisters to abstain from all buffoonery; the costumier doing his part towards the reform by providing them with a dress stated by a panegyric critic not to resemble any human garb whatever; what it did resemble, he neglects to inform us, thinking it quite sufficient to observe that 'they appeared as preternatural beings, distinguishable only by the fellness of their purposes and the fatality of their delusions.' At the same time, Banquo's ghost was left entirely to the imagination of the audience. Some years before, Lloyd had written:

In stage customs, what offends me most,
Is the slip-door and slowly rising ghost.
Tell me, nor count the question too severe,
Why need the diurnal powdered form appear?
When chilling horrors shake the affrighted king;
And guilt torments him with her serpent sting;
When keenest feelings at his bosom pull,
And fancy tells him that his seat is full;
Why need the ghost usurp the monarch's place,
To frighten children with his mealy face?
The king alone should form the phantom there,
And talk and tremble at the vacant chair.

The experiment, however, was not sufficiently successful to decide the question one way or another; modern managers follow their own fancies in the matter, and Banquo's ghost has not yet suffered the fate of the spirits of Jaffier and Pierre in *Venice Preserved* (spirits originally made visible to the audience at the express desire of Otway himself); and considering Shakspeare's partiality for ghosts, we doubt if he would have endorsed the notions of the party advocating their practical abolition. Addison declared stage-ghosts were proper aids to poetical effect, and, as such, needing no excuse; adding, 'there is nothing which delights and terrifies our English theatre so much as a ghost, especially when he appears in a bloody shirt. A spectre has very often saved a play, though he has done nothing but stalked across the stage, or rose through a cleft in it and sunk again without speaking one word.'

In Shakspeare's day, the audience at a theatre was not confined to the body of the house, but

occupied part of the stage itself. Sixpence was the usual price for a seat on the stage, but there were also 'twelve-penny stools,' though what the difference was is not clear, unless the higher charge was paid by those who brought pages with them to keep their pipes duly supplied with tobacco. Poets were admitted without payment—the mysterious free-list, that now a days is always suspended, being an institution as old as the drama. The fast man of that period—the 'young gallant' as he was called—went to the playhouse to shew off his clothes, and witch the ladies by displaying his proportionable leg, white hand, Persian locks, and tolerable beard; and for such an exhibition the stage afforded the best opportunities. When the Prologue was ready to go on, the gallant made his appearance with his three-legged stool, sat himself down on the rush-strewed boards, 'valiantly beating down the mews and hisses of the opposing rascality,' and amused himself by taking a hand at cards till the third trumpet announced the commencement of the performances. Then he lighted his pipe, and whiled away the two hours occupied by the play by whistling accompaniments to the songs, crying at the merry speeches, mewing at the passionate ones, laughing at the serious scenes, criticising the actors loud enough to be heard all over the house, as was the custom of lords, knights, and templars; and filling up odd moments by tickling his neighbour's ear with a rush from the stage. If the plebeian spectators resented such behaviour by hooting, hissing, and throwing dirt, it was 'most gentleman-like patience to endure all this, and laugh at the silly animals.' If the gallant wished to shew his contempt of the play, he rose in the middle of it, saluted any of his acquaintances present, and departed with 'a screwed and discontented face.'

Inconvenient as the actors must have found this practice, they did not think of insisting upon a clear stage when the theatres were reopened after the Restoration.

At length, the nuisance grew so unbearable, that the king interfered, issuing the following notification, dated February 25, 1664: 'Whereas complaint hath been made unto us of great disorders in the Attiring-house of the Theatre of our dearest brother, the Duke of York, under the government of our trusty and well-beloved Sir William Davenant, by the resort of persons thither to the hindrance of the actors and interruption of the scene—our will and pleasure is, that no persons, of what quality soever, do presume to enter at the Attiring-house, but only such as do belong to the Company, and are employed by them.' If this had any effect at all, it was but temporary, for thirty years later, Mrs Verbruggen, as prologue-speaker, said:

Before the play's half ended, I'll engage
To shew you beaux come trooping on the stage. . . .
But hush! they're here already; I'll retire,
And leave 'em to the ladies to admire.
They'll shew you twenty thousand wits and graces,
They'll entertain you with their soft grimaces,
Their snuff-box, awkward bows, and ugly faces.
Between each act—performed by nicest rules,
They'll treat you with an Interlude of Fools;
Of which that you may have the deeper sense,
The entertainment's at their own expense.

Queen Anne prohibited any person not belonging to the theatre going behind the scenes or appearing upon the stage; but Colley Cibber claims for himself and his co-managers the merit of having effected the desired reform. 'Among our many necessary

reforms,' he writes, 'what not a little preserved to us the regard of our auditors was the decency of our clear stage; from whence we had shut out those idle gentlemen who seemed more delighted to be pretty objects themselves, than capable of any pleasure from the play; who took their daily stand where they might best elbow the actors, and come in for their share of the auditors' attention. In many a laboured scene of the warmest humour, and the most affecting passion, have I seen the best actors disconcerted, while these buzzing mosquitoes have been fluttering round their eyes and ears.' The custom, however, was only scotched, not killed. An advertisement of the performance of *The Prophetess* at Lincoln's Inn Fields Theatre in 1717 runs thus: 'Whereas there are a great many scenes to be moved in the opera, which cannot be done if persons should stand upon the stage; it is therefore desired that no persons will take it ill that they must be denied entrance on the stage;' and at the opening of Covent Garden Theatre in 1732, it was announced that, to prevent the stage being overcrowded, the admission would be raised to half-a-guinea. Garrick succeeded in clearing the stage of its invaders in a great measure; but even in his time the audience encroached upon the actor's domain, and Juliet lay in her tomb surrounded by a couple of hundred fashionably-dressed people, though such solecisms were only permitted upon benefit-nights and special occasions.

When actors and actresses were 'His Majesty's Servants,' *par excellence*, His Majesty's soldiers mounted guard every night on the stages of the patent theatres—perhaps a necessary precaution in those palmy days of the drama, when angry auditors were given to charging the actors sword in hand. When this custom first arose, we cannot say; it was not in vogue at the Lincoln's Inn Fields Theatre before 1721, when a mob of gentlemen, after a conflict with the members of the company upon the stage, set to work destroying the hangings and other furniture of the interior of the house; and to prevent the recurrence of another riot, George I. ordered a guard to attend that theatre as well as the others. Stories are not wanting of these guardians of the stage being carried away by the force of the acting, and starting out of their professional immobility. There is a tradition of an unlucky Othello being shot by a soldier, who felt it impossible to stand quietly by while Desdemona was murdered; and during a performance of the tragedy of the *Earl of Essex*, when Lady Nottingham denied having received any ring from the unfortunate favourite, the honest sentinel, starting from his post, seized the representative of the treacherous dame, and exclaimed to the astonished stage-queen: 'It's false; she has it in her bosom!' Another sentinel is said to have been so overcome by Garrick's Lear, that he fainted when the old king's troubles came to their climax; a flattering testimony to the actor's power, which so delighted Garrick that he gave the susceptible warrior a guinea. Next night, his successor, having heard his comrade's story, thought to earn a guinea too; accordingly he fainted; but as Garrick that evening played Ranger, it is needless to say the ruse failed to extract anything but a grin from Davy. This story may or may not be true; we have our doubts; and if it was invented, fancy its inventor derived his inspiration from *The Guardian* of April 2, 1713, which contains the following relation: 'It was a cause of great sorrow and

melancholy to me some nights ago at a play, to see a crowd in the habits of the gentry of England stupid to the noblest sentiments we have. The circumstance happened in the scene of distress betwixt Percy and Anne Bullen. One of the sentinels, who stood on the stage to prevent the disorders which the most unmannerly race of young men that ever were seen in any age frequently raise in public assemblies, upon Percy's beseeching to be heard, burst into tears; upon which the greater part of the audience fell into a loud and ignorant laughter; which others, who were touched with the liberal compassion of the poor fellow, could hardly suppress by their clapping. But the man, without the least confusion or shame in his countenance for what had happened, wiped away the tears, and was still intent upon the play. The distress still rising, the soldier was so much moved that he was obliged to turn his face from the audience, to their no small merriment. Percy had the gallantry to take notice of his honest heart, and gave him a crown to help him in his affliction.

Ladies—or the sex is libelled—like to be seen as well as to see; but they were once seized with a fancy for screening their beauty from admiring eyes at places of public resort. The fashion of covering fair faces with black velvet masks was a freak of Elizabeth's reign; but the vizard attained its greatest popularity in the time of Charles II. Pepys noted the fact in 1660, and although such an ardent lover of pretty faces must have thought the fashion detestable, like a kind husband, he hurried off to the Exchange to buy one for his wife, and put her on equal terms with her acquaintances. The easy dames of that day found the mask very convenient, as it enabled them to exercise their tongues without restraint, and enter into sprightly contentions with the gentlemen with all the advantages in their favour. Pepys doubtless was an ear-witness of many such wit-combats, one of which he thus records in his Diary: 'To the King's House, to *The Maid's Tragedy*, but vexed all the while with two talking ladies and Sir Charles Sedley; yet pleased to hear their discourse. And one of the ladies would and did sit with her mask-vizard all the play; and being exceedingly witty as ever I heard woman, did talk most pleasantly with him; but was, I believe, a virtuous woman and of quality. He would fain know who she was, but she would not tell; yet did give him many pleasant hints of her knowledge of him; by that means setting his brains to work to find out who she was, and did give him leave to use all means but pulling off her mask. He was mighty witty, and she also making sport with him very inoffensively, that a more pleasant rencontre I never heard; but by that means lost the pleasure of the play wholly.' Congreve seems to draw a distinction between ladies and mask-wearers:

The vizard-masks that are in pit and gallery,
Approve or damn the repartee and rallery.
The lady-critics, who are better read,
Inquire if characters are nicely bred.

But the dramatists grew so utterly shameless that no lady dared venture barefaced to the theatre, particularly on the first night of a new play, but donned a mask to hide her blushes, or not to betray her inability to blush. Even when playwrights ceased to believe

the ladies were loath to give up their masks; and when they did, ladies that were not ladies wore them still in pit and gallery, till Queen Anne, determined to reform 'the indecencies and abuses of the stage,' peremptorily forbade any woman appearing masked at any of the theatres, and so crushed the fashion—for ever, it is to be hoped.

Sunday performances (very properly), author's nights (the more the pity), prologues and epilogues, come in the category of obsolete theatrical customs. We wish we could say the same of two customs familiar to modern playgoers, which ought to be summarily abolished. The first is the ill-mannered habit of the occupants of stalls and boxes rising to leave before the fall of the curtain—a practice no less insulting to the actors than annoying to the better-behaved portion of the auditors. The second is the wearisome encore-system. Why do not our managers imitate the directors of 'The King's Theatre in the Haymarket,' who, in the year 1714, wound up their playbills with the following announcement: 'Whereas, by the frequent calling for the songs over again, the operas have been too tedious; therefore, the singers are forbid to sing any song above once; and 'tis hoped nobody will call for 'em, or take it ill when not obeyed!'

TOURING EXTRAORDINARY.

THERE is one way of going abroad, it seems, after all, without any of the inconveniences which rob foreign travel of half its charms: a way by which all anxiety about luggage, all uncertainty about means of conveyance, all troubles in crossing frontiers, are entirely done away with, and that without the expense and incumbrance of a courier. You have only to paddle your own canoe. We do not say that Paterfamilias can accomplish this, because he would require a whole flotilla for the purpose; but the bachelors of England can lean back at their ease while the banks of every river in Europe, from the Seine to the Volga, glide by them, if they please. Mr Macgregor* 'dropped' in this way, only last autumn, down the Thames, the Saane, Meuse, Rhine, Main, Danube, Reuss, Aar, Ill, Moselle, Meurthe (a river we never heard of), Marne, Seine, not to mention six canals in Belgium and France. Besides this, he had the most charming sailing-trips on Lakes Titisee, Constance, Unter See, Zürich, Zug, and Lucerne, in addition to a couple of expeditions in the open sea. His route led him also over mountains and through forests, though he did not paddle there, but had his canoe carried in a cart, drawn generally by a horse, but sometimes by a cow.

Our author gives the following exact description of his novel conveyance: 'The *Rob Roy* is built of oak, and covered fore and aft with cedar. She is made just short enough to go into the German railway wagons; that is to say, fifteen feet in length, twenty-eight inches broad, nine inches deep, weighs eighty pounds, and draws three inches of water, with an inch of keel. A paddle seven feet long, with a blade at each end, and a lug-sail and jib, are the means of propulsion; and a pretty blue silk Union-Jack is the only ornament. The elliptic hole in which I sit is fifty-four inches long, and twenty broad, and has a

* *A Thousand Miles in the Rob Roy Canoe*. By J. Macgregor. Sampson Low, Son, and Marston.

Intrigue was plot, obscenity was wit,

mackintosh cover fastened round the combing and to a button on my breast; while between my knees is my baggage for three months, in a black bag one foot square, and five inches deep.* In this confined space, Mr Macgregor found himself more at liberty than probably any voyager has done before, and achieved a thousand miles without fatigue and without *ennui*. Everything is painted so freshly and in such glowing colours, that the very perusal of his adventures acts like a tonic upon the reader. His canoe and himself are so inseparably mixed up, too, that one gets to regard the *Rob Roy* as something endowed with vitality, if not with the personal affection entertained for it by its owner. We are interested in knowing where it lodges for the night, and in the precautions taken for its virgin security.

Only once throughout its travels was the graceful tender creature provided for in a boat-house, and, curiously enough, it was there only that it received any damage—probably from jealous Craft. It was generally locked up in the haylofts of the various hotels, but sometimes, as at Namur, 'it was housed for the night in the landlord's private parlour, gracefully resting upon two chairs'; sometimes, as at Huy on the Meuse, 'in the coach-house, while the sails were hung to dry on the harness-pegs'; and not unfrequently in a garden, particularly if it chanced to be furnished with a summer-house. As a general rule, 'the captain, purser, ship's cook, and cabin-boy of the *Rob Roy*' locked his precious charge up, where it was practicable, with his own hands, and put the key in his pocket; but sometimes, as at Tuttingen, a good-natured hostler was permitted to exhibit it (let us hope gratuitously) to an enthusiastic populace, who were admitted one by one to its hayloft, and far into the night might have been seen mounting the ladder with lanterns, women as well as men, to examine what they were pleased to call 'the schiff.' For not only was a canoe like the *Rob Roy*, of course, a great curiosity everywhere, but it penetrated where no description of boat had ever been seen before. Our author's plan was to take it on wheels to the very fountain-head of the river he designed to traverse, and on which he embarked at a point scores and scores of miles above where it grew navigable to vessels however small. People stared a good deal, for instance, to see him toiling with his canoe up the Rothenhaus Pass, during a thunder-storm, in his cart, drawn by the horse or the cow. 'What! a boat, and up here among the mountains? Where can it be going? Whose is it?' Nor were they satisfied with what the driver could tell them (who could not, for his own part, in the least understand the matter), nor even with the cheerful countenance of Mr Macgregor himself, 'nodding and laughing at them through the bars of the cart, and lifting up my head among the wet straw.' The excuse they made for him, however, was that he was an Englishman, a fact which, it seems, would have accounted for much more; for at Aix-la-Chapelle, a gentleman, who took his expression *cannot* for *canon*, seemed to feel no particular surprise that he should be travelling about with a six-pounder, fifteen feet long, or that he carried it with him for *plaisir*, not to sell.

It is gratifying to learn that only upon two occasions throughout this protracted tour did our author receive the least discourtesy. At Cologne, a vagrant porter wanted to damage the *Rob Roy*, because he was not employed to wheel her from

the station; and at Maestricht, some wicked boys (but then boys are always wicked) threw stones at his fragile favourite as it shot beneath the bridge. With those exceptions, Mr Macgregor and canoe met everywhere with quite an enthusiastic welcome. His start in the morning from some little out-of-the-way town far up the Danube, for instance—which river he began, by the by, at a point where there was but three inches of water in the middle of the stream—was often little short of an ovation. The boys would assemble so early as six o'clock, and grievously disappointed would such of them be as having to attend early school, crept away with their satchels, casting longing lingering looks behind, before the performance took place: then the grown-up people flocked to the point of departure, and occupied the little bridge and its approaches. Once 'while I was endeavouring to answer all the usual questions as to the boat, a man respectfully asked me to delay the start five minutes, as his aged father, who was bedridden, wished exceedingly just to see the canoe. In all such cases, it is a pleasure to give pleasure, and to sympathise with the boundless delight of the boys, remembering how as a boy a boat delighted me; and then, again, these worthy, mother-like, wholesome-faced dames, how could one object to their prying gaze, mingled as it was with friendly smile and genuine interest?' Of course, a kindly soul like our author would be well treated by all who had any knowledge of him; but it is pleasant to mark how naturally good-natured the folks were among whom he chanced to find himself: for example, he is sailing on the Rhine, and scudding faster with wind and current than he ever did in his life, when suddenly he becomes aware of a youth running after the boat, yelling and shrieking, and waving his coat in the air. 'We therefore [he always speaks of himself and canoe as 'We'] 'drew nearer to him, and luffed up, hailing him with "What's the matter!"* and he could only pant out: "Wasserfall, wasserfall, fünf minuten"—the breeze had brought Mr Macgregor within a hundred yards of the falls of Laufenburg, where, but for this timely warning, he might have perished as poor Lord Montague did in the same spot, the last of his line, and, strangely enough, on the very same day that his family mansion, Cowdray, in Sussex, was burned to the ground. When the long day's travel of the captain of the *Rob Roy* was ended, he was never at a loss for willing hands to bear his precious boat to a place of safety. 'The formula for this was something in the following style: I first got the boat on shore, and a crowd of course soon collected, while I arranged its interior, and sponged out the splashed water, and fastened the cover down. Then, tightening my belt for a walk, I looked around with a kind smile, and selecting a likely man, would address him in English deliberately as follows—suiting each action to the word, for I have always found that sign-language is made more natural when you speak your own tongue all the time you are acting: "Well, now, I think as you have looked on enough and have seen all you want, it's about time to go to a hotel, a *gasthaus*. Here! you—yes, you!—just take that end of the boat up, so—gently, 'langsam! langsam!'—all right, yes, under your arm, like this—now, march

* Our author very wisely always addressed unknown aliens in the English tongue.

off to the best hotel, *gasthaus*." Then the procession naturally formed itself. The most humorous boys, of course, took precedence, because of services or mischief willing to be performed; and, meanwhile, they gratuitously danced about and under the canoe like Fauns around Silenus. Women only came near, and waited modestly till the throng had passed. The seniors of the place kept on the safer confines of the movement, where dignity of gait might comport with close observation.

Mr Macgregor can conceive nothing more delightful than this mode of progression, and really, as we read his account of matters, we are almost persuaded to agree with him. In a canoe, it must be remembered, it is not necessary to 'keep your eyes in the boat;' you are alone; the anatomy of another gentleman is not perpetually presented to your view; and you travel face forward, and not as in all other kinds of row-boat. 'At first, the river' [our author is speaking of the Danube] 'is a few feet broad, but it soon enlarges, and the streams of a great plain quickly bring its volume to that of the Thames at Kingston. The quiet dark Donau winds about then in slow serpentine smoothness for hours in a level mead, with waving sedge on the banks, and silken sleepy weeds in the water. Here the long-necked, long-winged, long-legged heron, that seems to have forgotten to get a body, flocks by scores with ducks of the various wild breeds, while pretty painted butterflies and fierce-looking dragon-flies float, as it were, on the summer sunbeams, and simmer in the air. The haymakers are at work; and half their work is hammering the soft edges of their very miserable scythes, which they then dip in the water. Now they have a chat; and as I whiz by round a corner, there is a row of open mouths and wondering eyes, but an immediate return to courtesy with a touch of the hat, and "Gut tag" when presence of mind is restored. Then they call to their mates, and laugh with rustic satisfaction—a laugh that is real and true, not cynical, but the recognition of a strange incongruity, that of a reasonable being pent up in a boat, and hundreds of miles from home, yet whistling most cheerfully all the time. Soon the hills on either side have houses and old castles, and then wood, and lastly rock; and with these, mingling the bold, the wild, and the sylvan, there begins a grand panorama of river-beauties to be unrolled for days and days.' He finds the Danube very swift at first, having three hundred feet of fall in each of his five days' journey; and this is charming, for, 'in going down a rapid reach, there is the same sensation about the diaphragm as when one goes smoothly on a lofty rope-swing.' The enjoyment is in this case varied by a good deal of exertion. Winding here and turning there, with each minute a fresh view, and of new things, he has always to be on the *qui vive*, or the boat will go bump on a bank, crash on a rock, or plunge into a tree full of spiders. Five or six times a day, too, he hears the well-known rushing noise of a mill-dam. 'On coming to it, I usually went straight along the top edge of the weir, looking over for a good place to descend by, and surveying the innumerable little streams below to see my best course afterwards. By this time the miller and his family and his men, and all the neighbours, would run down to see the new sight; but I always lifted out my little black knapsack, and put my paddle on shore, and then stepped out, and

pulled my boat over or round the obstruction, sometimes through a hayfield or two, or by a lane, or along a wall, and then launched her again in deep water.' Dams less than four feet high, the *Rob Roy* 'shoots;' and in places where there are breakers, the captain sits outside on the stern of his bark with both legs in the water, fending her off from big stones, and carefully steering with his paddle. Otherwise, he sits quite dry, leaning against his backboard, and lolling at ease where the current is excessive, and it would be dangerous to add impetus to its natural speed. Then only imagine the delicious intervals of rest 'under a high rock, or in a cool water-cave, or beneath a wooden bridge, or within the longer shadow of a pine-clad cliff. Often I tried to rest those mid-day hours (for one cannot always work) on shore, in a house, or on a grassy bank; but it was never so pleasant as at full length in the canoe, under a thick grown oak-tree, with a book to read dreamily, and a mild cigar at six for a penny, grown in the fields I passed, and made up at yesterday's inn.'

When a favourable breeze sprang up, our hero would set his sails, and dash down the lonely river at intoxicating speed, so fast, that the haymaker on the bank who caught sight of the supernatural vision had no time to draw the attention of his comrades, and is discredited by them as to his phantom vessel up to this day. But when falls were too high to 'shoot,' or a wide barrier made landing advisable, 'I used to walk straight into the hayfields, pushing the boat point foremost through a hedge, or dragging her steadily over the wet newly-mown grass, in literal imitation of the American craft which could go "wherever there was a heavy dew." On such occasions, the amazement of the untought clowns, beholding suddenly such an apparition, was beyond all description. Some even ran away, very often children cried outright, and when I looked gravely on the ground as I marched and dragged the boat, and then suddenly stopped in their midst with a hearty laugh and an address in English, the whole proceeding may have appeared to them at least as strange as it did to me.' Sometimes the gallant captain would play good-natured practical jokes with the haymakers, and where the thick bushes skirted the river, would glide close in to the bank, and suddenly strike up, in a very loud voice, 'Rule Britannia, Britannia rules the waves;' whereupon, long before he got to 'slaves,' all the field-labourers stood like statues, as astonished as Ferdinand with Ariel's music: they looked right and left, before and behind them, but into the river, up which no craft had ever been known to come, they did not look. The only objection to this mode of travel in such places was, that the villages were generally built away from the river, and the pursuer of the *Rob Roy* had sometimes a little difficulty in getting provisions for the ship's company. When he asked some gazing agriculturist where the nearest houses were, it was twenty to one that he pointed inland; and the pursuer of course could not venture to leave his ship: so the end of most discussions 'was that he said: "Ya vol," which means in Yankee tongue, "That's so;" in Scottish, "Hoot, aye;" in Irish, "Troth, an' it is;" and in French, "C'est vrai;" but then none of this helps one a bit.' But our author does contrive to get at his dinner at last, often at some humble inn, where the waiter smokes his cheap cigar as he waits, and where the *bett* has to be undermined and dismantled of its Tontonic furniture in the shape of

wedge-shaped bolsters and enormous pillows before horizontal refreshment can be obtained. Even then, the partitions of the wooden room (where the washing-basin is oval) are so thin that the gallant captain hears every noise till midnight; now the long-drawn snore of the landlord, then the tittle-tattle of the servants not asleep yet—a pussy's plaintive mew, and the scraping of a mouse; the cows breathing in soft slumber, and the sharp rattle of a horse's chain. Then the utter silence of cool and peaceful night reigns undisturbed until about four o'clock, 'when the first sound is some matutinal cock, who crows first because he is proud of being first awake. After he has asserted his priority thus once or twice, another deeper-toned rooster replies, and presently a dozen cocks are all in full song, and in different keys. In half an hour, you hear a man's voice; next, some feminine voluble remarks; then a latch is moved and clicks, the dog gives a morning bark, and a horse stamps his foot in the stable because he flies have aroused to breakfast on his tender skin. At length a pig grunts; his gastric juice is fairly awake, the day is begun. And so the stream of life, thawed from its sleep, flows gently on again, and at length the full tide of village business is soon in agitation, with men's faces and women's quite as full of import as if the little place were the capital of the world.' There is genuine poetry, it will be seen, in the composition of our captain, nautical though he be; he brings an eye for all he sees; he tells us of the stately herons and the burnished wild-fowl that haunt his liquid highway; he paints the kingfisher, often the sole fellow-creature that his eye encounters, perched on a twig within two inches of the water, and shaded from the summer sun by a single brier leaf, so still and steady on his watch for fish, that a less close observer might easily miss his back of azure and his breast of red. Nay, once, on the Moselle, when gazing down in the clear stream at some trout, our captain's keen eye marked a large stone, the upper part of a fine column at least ten feet from the surface. The capital shewed it to be Ionic, and near it was another broken pedestal of huge dimensions, and a little further on a pedestal of white marble; to account for the presence of which in such a place, no story could he glean.

It was on the Moselle that our agreeable voyager met with that one specimen of the fair sex upon whom his address and manner failed to produce their favourable impression. He had left his boat, urged by the pangs of hunger, at a place where some labourers were at work on a milldam, and knocking at a cottage-door, saluted its aged occupant with the remark: "Madame, I am hungry, and you are precisely the lady who can make me an omelette."

"Sir, I have nothing to give you."

"Why," said I, "look at these hens; I am sure they have laid six eggs this morning, they seem so proud."

"She evidently thought I was a tramp demanding alms, and when told to look at the boat which had come from England, she said she was too old and too blind to see. However, we managed to make an omelette together, and she stood by (with an eye, perhaps, to her only fork) and chatted pleasantly, asking: "What have you got to sell?" I told her I had come there only for pleasure. "What sort of pleasure, Monsieur, can you possibly hope to find in this place?" But I was far too gallant to say bluntly that her particular mansion was not the ultimate object of the tour. After receiving a franc for the rough breakfast, she kept

up a battery of blessings till the *Rob Roy* started, and she ended by shrieking out to a navvy looking on: "I tell you every Englishman is rich!"

Apart from the pleasant narrative of the cruise of the *Rob Roy*, the impression which the author leaves with us of himself is exceedingly agreeable; he seems such an honest hearty fellow, so thoroughly genuine; and although quite able to wield the rapier of sarcasm, so careful and good-humoured in its use. Among his fellow-countrymen abroad, he meets with certain fine gentlemen, who remonstrate with him upon his lowly mode of travel. "One said, for example: 'Don't you think it would have been more commodious to have had an attendant with you, to look after your luggage and things?'" The most obvious answer to this was probably that which I gave: "Not for me, if he was to be in the boat; and not for him, if he had to run on the bank." And, again. Another Englishman asked in all seriousness about the canoe-voyage: "Was it not a great waste of time?" And when I inquired how he had spent his vacation, he said: "Oh, I was all the time at Brighton!" One English gentleman who smiled at 'the extremely odd notion' of this canoe-expedition, was found to have himself wandered over the continent upon a velocipede; a second was travelling with a four-in-hand and two spare horses; and a third was making a tour in a road-locomotive, which had cost him seven hundred pounds.

We will answer for it, however, that not one of these gentry enjoyed their peculiar modes of transit half so much as did our author the paddling of his own canoe. Only once, we are told, did 'a melancholy sensation pervade the *Rob Roy*,' in consequence of the loss of the captain's knife: he lost nothing else throughout his thousand miles of travel—not even his temper. Perhaps this was most severely tried when the foreigners would mispronounce his adored one's name, painted though it was so distinctly upon her bow, in blue letters. Sometimes it was 'Roab Ro,' sometimes 'Rubree,' and sometimes an intelligent person, usually in spectacles, would cry out, 'Ah, ah, Valtarescot.' What must have greatly contributed to the gallant captain's enjoyment of this unique and charming cruise was, that 'not one shower fell in the boat from the source of the Danube to the Palace of Westminster.'

'OLD FRIENDS WITH NEW FACES.'

FROM nursery years, 'twas a joyous thing,
In the fresh delight of the opening Spring,
Whole quiet afternoons to pass
Where the violet peeped from the luscious grass,
And whispered us words that we knew before,
And because they were old ones, we loved them the more.

When the violet timidly peeps again,
In the pausing of March's gusty rain,
It will touch one heart with a different power,
It will be to one eye an altered flower,
It will speak new words in a solemn voice,
While it talks of an angel in paradise.

The Tale of Mirk Abbey (by the author of 'LOST SIE MASSINGBERD,' 'THE CLYFFARDS OF CLYFFE,' &c.), is now completed, and will be followed on 7th July by an Original Serial Story, by THOMAS SPEIGHT, entitled **BROUGHT TO LIGHT.**

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MY FINANCIAL OPERATION.

IF it is possible for an inhabitant of the same metropolis with Rothschild and Baring to know as little of Commercial Affairs as an agriculturist in the Black Country does of Mining, then am I that man. If it is not possible, then am I the nearest approximation to such a phenomenon. What caviare is to the multitude, so is the City Article of my matutinal *Times* to me. It is less than nothing to me to read that Railways are 'steady,' or that Mines are 'firm:' both statements are contrary to my own experience as a Traveller and an Observer; but I am aware that the expressions are metaphorical, and I do not pry into their meaning. If, on the other hand, the market is pronounced to be 'flat,' which corroborates my knowledge of markets so far as it goes, I am not thereby puffed up to imagine that I understand the statement. When I possess myself of the fact that 'shoulders and offal [in the Trade Report] are in larger supply, but not so much wanted,' it excites no astonishment within me; it is true that I hate shoulders, and as for offal, I have never been reduced by shipwreck or other calamity to be in a position to give an opinion, but then I am aware that there are other people in the world—and especially in the world of commerce—about whose tastes I know nothing; I simply say 'Very good,' with the same trusting acquiescence with which I learn that gutta-percha is 'depressed' or pig-iron 'lively.'

People with whom I mix do not talk of such things, and if they did, would only display their ignorance. Not one of my ordinary associates—no, not one—although many of them are very funded, can tell me what consols mean by being 'at 86½ for delivery, and 85½ ex div. for the account.' One would have thought 'ex div.' was Latin, but that it is not put in italics; and as for the fractions—really running matters so very fine as that seems to smack not a little of pedantry. Nevertheless, I do not affect that North American Indian indifference to all things out of my special sphere that is professed

by some of my acquaintance; I have preserved, thank goodness, my natural curiosity; and when the newspaper informed me, in another place besides its ordinary commercial column, upon a certain Friday in May, that there was a Panic in the City, I at once determined to go and see it. I could not prevail upon any of my West-end friends to accompany me: one had to meet a pair of sister-equestrians in Rotten Row, to neither of whom, being co-heiresses, he could make up his mind to propose, but was always wishing himself a Mormon; another was going to look at a chestnut at Tattersall's; a third would not have given up his daily rubber at the *Portland* to see St Paul's lit up from vaults to cupola. If the Panic was anything worth seeing, they said, I might depend upon it that it would come to St James's Hall, or the Hanover Square Rooms, in time.

This was annoying, because it necessitated the expense of conveyance, instead, as usual, of my using a friend's carriage. I am not rich myself, but I am thankful to say that I am the only person in that position among my associates; I could have had a hind-seat on a drag to Richmond, or have been accommodated (if I didn't mind sitting with my back to the horses) with a place in a barouche to Greenwich that very day; but since nobody could be prevailed upon to turn his horses' heads, for my sake, towards the Bank, I took a return-ticket to Farringdon Street by the Metropolitan Railway. A very curious affair is that underground line, and well worthy of a visit from persons of condition. It seems, however, to be exclusively used by the commercial classes, and by various old ladies, who keep their eyes shut long after they emerge from the tunnels, and are entirely dependent upon their fellow-travellers for discriminating the ordinary stoppages of the train from alarming accidents. However, they and I had one little peculiarity in common—we had neither of us any distinct idea of where we were going to, or for what purpose.

'Mr Brown,' explained one, moved to do so by that incomprehensible instinct which goods

unprotected females of a certain age to make confidants of the general public—'Mr Brown is to meet me at Margate—no, Moorgate Street Station. If anything was to prevent him, gracious knows what I should do. We are going to the Royal Exchange, I believe, to draw my dividends, of which I have given them warning. He tells me there is not a moment to be lost. What terrible times we live in, gentlemen! Goodness, mercy on me, if here isn't another tunnel!' One ancient dame was good enough to attempt to explain to us, in detail, how her grandfather made his money in Bubbles: 'Bubbles,' she said, 'which were of a very peculiar sort, and only to be procured in the South Seas.' This lady very nearly put me in an embarrassing position by asking my opinion, as a man of business, of the pecuniary condition of her Joint-stock Bank, of which, however, she had fortunately forgotten the name. 'Down at Bullock-Smithey,' said she, 'everybody is ready to swear by it. Lawyer Sharpshins always keeps an account there, and he's no fool, so you may know what is thought of it.' 'Perhaps,' observed a sarcastic old gentleman upon my right, taking the handle of his umbrella out of his mouth, for the first time, in order to give point to the observation—'perhaps he overdraws his account, ma'am.'

'I dare say he does, sir,' returned the lady earnestly, 'for he is a very rich man; and yet I can't help wishing, for nothing seems safe in these times, that I was not a director.'

At these words, all the old gentlemen in the carriage took the handles of their umbrellas out of their mouths with one consent.

'A director, ma'am—you surely are not on the direction,' observed two or three.

'O yes, gentlemen; there's no mistake about that,' replied the lady with dignity. 'I don't know what you mean by "on the direction," because, as I say, I've forgotten the address; but Mr Robinson, my brother-in-law's clerk, and a very respectable young man, who is to meet me at Alderman's Gate, he will tell you all about it. Why, I have a matter of eight hundred pounds—here's the exact sum written in my pocket-book, if you'd like to read it, for my eyes ain't equal to it by this light—talk of gas, give me candles say I any day of the week, or leastways after dark. Well, if I've got near upon a thousand pounds in a bank, I suppose you'll not deny that I'm a director.'

'She's a depositor,' observed the sarcastic old gentleman testily; 'of course, she's a depositor.'

'What's he saying?' inquired the female capitalist, addressing herself to me. 'If he is saying anything disrespectful, I shall put the matter into the hands of my brother-in-law.'

'I don't think he meant anything objectionable, madam,' returned I soothingly.

'Certainly not, ma'am,' added her involuntary detractor with a chuckle; 'though if I had called you a shareholder you might have had some reason for objecting to it.'

'If you had ventured to use any impertinence, sir, I should have complained to Mr Robinson's clerk,' replied the lady; and so, to my great relief, the matter dropped.

It was certainly strange enough to uninitiated ears to listen to the talk among the men during the intervals of suction. What was 'going' and what was 'likely to go'; what had 'stopped' and what had 'gone,' which seemed to be convertible terms; and, in particular, with reference to these

last misfortunes, how 'every one with half an eye had been aware of the rottenness of the concern for these last six months.' It was very like the conversation of good male society during the Derby week; only, instead of horses breaking down or getting 'scratched,' it was concerning joint-stock banks and discount-houses. I ventured to inquire of one of these worthies where was the best place, in his opinion, from which to see the Panic.

'You will see it everywhere,' said he, not without some symptoms of irritation: 'but if you are so exceedingly anxious, you had better hire a window in Lombard Street.'

I thanked him very much; but having once put that identical device into effect (with my Lord Tom Noddy and others) upon the occasion of a certain public exhibition in the Old Bailey, and found it to be very expensive, I determined to take my chance upon the pavement; perhaps there would be cane-bottomed chairs on hire, or other temporary elevations to stand upon, from which the sight could be seen at a more reasonable figure. I regret to say, however, that neither by the authorities nor by private enterprise were any steps whatever taken to provide for the general advantage in this respect. The City is certainly centuries behind the West End in matters of civilisation. It is not generally known that the Lord Mayor's Feast is, with the exception of turtle-soup, a cold collation, yet such is the humiliating fact. Nay, if you feel the want of luncheon (as I did) while in this barbarous district, I am sure I don't know where a gentleman is to find it. However, I am anticipating my difficulties. The first time I caught sight of the Panic was in a place called Cheapside, opposite a clockmaker's of the name of Bennett. It is true that the streets had been all inconveniently full, and the crossing of them attended with extreme peril; but that I have read is always the case. A French writer of the day has even founded a theory to account for the indomitable character of the British race—'nation of shopkeepers' although they be—upon the dangers to which they are daily exposed from wheel and hoof. He calculates also the pressure of the crowd in the neighbourhood of Threadneedle Street, on dividend-days, as so many pounds to the square inch, and thereby explains our marvellous powers of endurance. It is a great mistake, he goes on to say, to suppose that City-people are of sedentary habits: the stockbrokers keep their hats on even in their offices, so that they may be ready to rush out and purchase stock at discount, or sell it at a premium; while the rest of the commercial public amuse themselves at unequal but frequent intervals in running on the banks. That was what they were doing on that Friday when I went into the City. At first, as I have said, I thought that Mr Bennett's was a bank; but the crowd had gathered in front of his establishment for no other purpose than to see the figures over his great clock—symbolising, as I was informed, 'the small-hours'—come forth and strike the quarters. No sooner had these proclaimed it two o'clock, than an echo within me replied, 'And luncheon-time.' But I am a person (when once roused) of an inflexible resolution, and I had as yet seen nothing of the Panic. I had heard, however, enough and to spare. Every other person who met or passed me was talking of that, and nothing else. The only countenances which were not serious were those of the crossing-sweepers, who keep all the money they possess where the

monkeys hoard their gingerbread—in their mouths. It was a day of disgrace to Dives, and Lazarus, exempt from fear, was enjoying his rare advantage.

'Got a fourpenny left, sir? Got a copper, please, sir? Nothin' but Overend and Gurney's paper, eh? Dear me!' It was the world turned upside down, with a vengeance. Opposite the great house, with its closed doors—so frequent on their hinges a few hours ago—stood an enormous gathering of people of all ranks, looking at it with a strange sort of awe, as though it were the palace of their king, and he was lying Dead there; and to many of them so it doubtless was.

But yesterday the word of Caesar (or at least his bond) might have stood against the world; now lay he there, and none so poor that he would back his bill! 'Ten millions! That's a hundred hundred thousand pounds,' whispered one to his friend, in a hushed voice, as though he were speaking of the virtues of some great man departed. 'A thousand fortunes gone at a single blow.'

'Ay, and the poor people it has ruined,' returned the other; 'that is still worse to think about! The widows and the unconscious orphans, on some of whom, perhaps, it were better that the house itself had fallen, like the walls of Jericho, and spared them the ills to come.'

No wonder the crowd was sad and silent. It was looking upon the ruin of a hundred happy households, and on what would for the future be but a splendid monument to commemorate the 'better days' that they had known. The very sight of it seemed to decide some who were debating about the propriety of letting their money lie where it was, for they walked hastily away to join the crowd that was besieging the neighbouring bank. Lombard Street itself was well-nigh impassable; not, indeed, from the Panic, so much as from the throng who, like myself, had come to look at it; and ever and anon, as some quiet brougham, with steady country coachman, drove up to the bank door, with a frightened-looking lady for its occupant, nervously clutching her cheque-book, the crowd would give a great cheer to reassure her, and another when she came out with her money and a beaming face. Once, too, a tremendous shout rang forth as a cab, guarded by policemen, drove slowly up, and certain heavy packages were carried into the threatened house, for we all knew that it was gold. That was what all such houses prayed for on that day. How the poor old lady in Threadneedle Street was importuned and worried for those four-and-twenty hours by her prodigal children! How they begged of her for her autograph and miniature, and the watermark that never fails to cool the fever of impatient Demand; how they went down on their knees, and offered promises to pay—securities to which nobody would have had a word of objection two days ago—but at which she now shook her head, and wiping her spectacles, declined to have anything to do with, or, if consenting, tendered them but nine-tenths of what they asked, keeping the rest for usury; and even for that they were grateful, waiting in her parlour with beating heart—for even now the help might come too late—while she descended into her ample vaults and brought up, like Aladdin of old, her bags of treasure, and bade them make the most of it, for that she had not much more left than what she wanted for her own use. 'A pretty thing,' said the old lady, 'if people should come to my door, and make a racket as they do at yours, asking for their own,

and should find that it was not here. For my promises are not like pie-crust, I would have you know.'

There was nothing in the least like pie-crust to be seen in Lombard Street, nor anything eatable whatever. Even the London Tavern, which is said to be open to rich and poor alike, might just as well have been closed, for I found nothing in it but auctions. Everything was 'going, going' in the City on that fatal day. There were some oyster-shops, it is true, but who eats oysters in the month of May? And there were a good many public-houses with swing-doors, upon which was written Luncheon Bar; but I cannot feed standing like a stalled ox. Then I suddenly remembered that I had once met a merchant-prince, who had impressed me favourably with his class by hinting, that if ever I came by his little place in the City, I would look in and lunch. If it had not been for the Panic, I should certainly never have reaped any benefit from the invitation; but he had given it in all good faith. The wing of a chicken, and a tumbler of iced hock and Seltzer water, was all that I meant to trouble him for, and then I would light my cigar, and go home in a Hansom. I had no difficulty in finding the establishment over which Fortunatus Fipps presided—he was called Fortunatus because, although he had been connected with trade on a large scale for more than a quarter of a century, he had only been twice in the Gazette—but it was not so easy to find the gentleman himself. On my first arrival, there was quite a commotion among his clerks, who were all looking very white and idle, and one of them was running off with my card into the private sanctum of his proprietor; but upon my letting them know, in answer to inquiries, that I was not the accommodating gentleman momentarily expected from the Bank of England, he said he didn't think Mr Fipps could see me that day, unless I came by special appointment.

'That is just my case,' said I decisively: 'my compliments to Fortu—Mr Fipps, I mean—and I am come to lunch.'

The card was accordingly taken in, and after a little delay I was admitted into the sanctuary.

Fipps was not looking by any means so brilliant as when I had seen him last, which was in the smoking-room of a great ex-minister: his hair was dishevelled, as though recently combed with the fingers; his face was very pale, and he wore an anxious and distracted air, as though he were listening for something—such as the fall in the Bank rate of discount; but I was so full of my luncheon, or rather of the want of it, that I failed to notice these little peculiarities, although I remembered them afterwards.

'Well, Mr Fipps,' said I with gaiety, 'you see I am come for my bond.'

'I am not aware, sir, that we have anything of yours,' replied Fortunatus tartly, who was evidently in total ignorance as to my identity.

'My very dear sir,' said I in soothing tones, 'I do not refer to any business transaction. When I say my bond, I mean my pound of flesh (if cold chicken can be so denominated), the luncheon you promised me, when I had the pleasure of meeting you at Lord Tadpole's.'

'Yes, yes,' returned Fortunatus, forcing a smile; 'I remember now quite well: a charming dinner; no such thing as tightness anywhere; no symptom of a crisis. But I beg your pardon. Lunch, lunch.

What will you have for lunch? [He was talking like a man in a dream.] We have got some first-rate bills on Liverpool; names you can have no possible objection to.'

'Ahem,' said I, purposely sneezing with great violence, for I did not want to hear about Fipps's financial position. 'If you'd only give me a glass of sherry; but don't let me hurry you, pray.'

'Sherry?' echoed he gravely, 'and don't let me hurry you, pray. Spanish Passives. No. East del Rey—the sacrifice is enormous.'

'Then let me have some cheaper wine,' replied I, cheerfully.

'It's all locked up,' returned he in mysterious tones, 'Four hundred and eighty-five thousand'—

'Dozen?' cried I, making a rapid estimate of the possible extent of cellarge under the establishment. 'I don't believe it.'

'Hush,' said he, mysteriously, 'nobody does: but for Heaven's sake don't talk so loud.'

'Chicken!' ejaculated I, with resolution.

'No, sir,' returned Fipps, simply; 'I have no apprehension of the result, I do assure you—that is, of the eventual result. In that iron chest'—

'Ay, the Refrigerator!' exclaimed I; 'why the deuce did you not mention that at first?' and I clapped my hands together for very joy. The unaccustomed noise seemed to awake Fortunatus from his lethargy.

'I beg your pardon,' said he, frankly, and passing his hand across his forehead; 'but I have been immersed in calculations all the morning; and I thought I was talking to—a gentleman connected with another banking establishment with which we are—or at least hope to be—connected. Lunch! certainly; the hospitalities of the City must be dispensed with—I mean must be dispensed. You have no shares in any joint-stock bank, I presume.'

'Not that I know of,' replied I; 'oh no, I'm sure I'm not—that is, so sure as a man can be who has got no head for business. No; I've nothing but a running account with the north-west branch of the Imperial Adamantine.'

'What!' exclaimed Fortunatus, in alarm. 'Have you money in that bank?'

'Yes,' said I, 'I think I've got one hundred and twenty pounds in it: that's all.'

'My dear sir,' returned Mr Fipps, with solemnity, and laying his hand upon my arm; 'that is one of the banks that people are talking about: it is true,' added he hastily, 'that all of us—even the most solvent firms—are subject, upon occasions of this kind, to groundless suspicion; but the Imperial Adamantine—I suppose you have your cheque-book with you.'

'Gracious goodness!' replied I, 'I should just as soon think of coming out with my boot-jack: it's in my desk, of course.'

'Then take my advice, and go home at once and draw the money. Not a moment is to be lost; your bank will be closed at four, perhaps for ever. The nearest Metropolitan station is the fourth turning on the left. I am so glad to have had this opportunity of—of—giving you this timely warning—if indeed you are so fortunate as to be in time. This is your umbrella, I think'—

I didn't know whether it was or not, but I snatched up the one that happened to be the nearest, and ran out of the house with a speed that astonished myself almost as much as it seemed to

surprise other people. 'He's a-running on his bank!' cried one of those unfeeling crossing-sweepers, who, in my judgment, since they have no property qualification, should not be permitted to express their opinions, even though they chance to be correct.

In the very nick of time I caught a train—though not, of course, in motion—and arrived at my own lodgings at 3.10, or, in other words, with fifty minutes to spare. But it was not that which caused me to hesitate in my proposed financial operation. I had met an old gentleman in the train, to whom I had confided the cause of my excitement, and not only had he greatly reassured me in the matter of the Imperial Adamantine, but he had informed me that it was thoughtless people like myself who caused the Panic. To think that I, who had gone into the City merely to look at it, should be accused of such a terrible thing! At the same time, if everybody drew their money out, as I was about to do, he proved to me that every bank in the country must needs collapse. Altogether I was so ashamed of my intention—it seemed such an ungentlemanly sort of thing to do—that I determined to send my landlady to transact the matter instead of myself. Moreover, since even then I had my scruples, I only drew the cheque for a hundred and fifteen guineas, leaving the Imperial Adamantine Banking Company exactly four pounds five to break upon, if they were resolutely determined so to do. Never, surely, were generosity and security more happily combined than by this ingenious device. But the Imperial Adamantine did not break after all; nor, according to the Commercial Intelligence (which, now that I know what a panic is, I peruse with avidity), has it been in the least danger of breaking. I read, however, that there was a severe run on that Friday afternoon upon the great house of Fipps and Company; and I have my suspicions that, Fortunatus's mind being a little preoccupied, he may have inoculated me with his own panic, simply and solely for the purpose of getting me out of the way.

ON SURVEY IN YORKSHIRE.

IN FOUR CHAPTERS.—CHAPTER I.

In about three minutes, as I knew by indubitable symptoms, the six bare rafters of the roof of my little sitting-room would begin to jump about till they appeared to multiply into a score; the old chair, with the hateful chintz covering on it, standing near the sofa on which I was lying, would become, at the least, a full half-dozen, and would join as many tables, though there was only one at that moment on the hearth, in a fierce skirmish; and then the casement window would suddenly shoot out upwards, or dart downwards, into a long white streak, which would be the final signal for everything within sight to break into a wild topsyturvy dance, to the sickening music of my dislocating bones. The secret of so wonderful a transformation was very simple, but quite sufficient—I had the ague; and the hour for every bone in my frame to start, twist, pull, and shiver, had arrived.

'Yo' shaan't tak' un milk; let un drink t' watter, an' dey,' was whined in shrill tones below my window.

'Help, Chris! He is tearing my dress,' was called in a female voice, which I at once recognised. 'Give him t' whip well.'

Another male voice shouted something in angry tones, and then a quick succession of pistol-shot-like reports told that the cart-whip was being vigorously used, in accordance with the last injunction.

I found strength to get up from the sofa and reel across to the window. In the yard below, that idiot Jake was just disentangling himself from Miss Bowerhanks, and was turning wildly on Christopher Sowerby, her cousin, a young farmer, who was administering stroke after stroke of the whip on the half-wit's back with a will. The cry of the handsome Yorkshire girl was explained at the first glance. She held a dish containing milk in her hands, and a white stream from it was running down the front of her black silk dress, which also, as she turned about, disclosed a large rent from the waist downwards.

'Oi'll ha' revenge on yo' a', roared Jake, actually crying with rage, as he drew back from Christopher, rubbing his body where the strokes had fallen; and then uttering a kind of yell, he rushed across the yard, disappearing round the stable-end, leaving his assailant laughing at him.

But my time had come! The window was lengthening, and the floor of the room tilted up under my feet. I staggered back across the hearth, and flung myself haphazard among the dozen couches I seemed to see swaying up and down there. My attention, for the present, was fully occupied with my own affairs; and Jake, Miss Bowerhanks, and everybody else, were forgotten. By and by, however, the paroxysm subsided; the last conclusive shake, which I always expected would end in leaving me a disjointed skeleton on the sofa, being once more postponed. I was still lying with my eyes shut, from sheer exhaustion, but my ears were open, and I became aware of a whispered conversation outside the door.

'Turn to me, wench,' said the gruff tones of Sally Tebbutt, Farmer Sowerby's housekeeper, and who also attended on me as nurse. 'Oi wish Jake ud shoot himsel, instid o' t' weild ducks, ur tumble into t' dyke sum dark noight. T' foo! ee ha' spoilt t' dress, wench; it be gone roight daan.' There followed a rustling noise, as of the examination of silk stuff.

'Fayther shall know about it, an' I'll bring a dairy o' milk, if I like,' said a much softer voice, making the partial dialect quite acceptable. 'He hasn't a calf o' his own; much need he has to talk about milk! Gie me another pin, Sally, or I munnot stop, for I canna but look a fright. I've heard t' ladies always wear silks an' satins in Lunnon.'

'Tha beest a beauty wi'out any silk, wi' they bright eyes an' red apple cheeks,' was the enthusiastic reply.

'Hush! Sally, or he'll hear us. Beant he easier now, do you think?'

'Ee be comin' raand a bit na', oi shud sey; soo howd they tongue a minnit,' answered the nurse; and as the door opened, footsteps entered, accompanied by a rustling of silk, which I knew did not belong to Sally.

I thought I might now open my eyes, and on

doing so, I saw Miss Bowerhanks, with a milk-basin in her hand, standing between me and the window, in a ray of sunlight, which now condescended to remain upright. The nurse was turning about to do something to the fire.

'Good-afternoon,' said the beautiful girl, hesitating between coming forward and going backwards, a bright flush mantling on her face. 'I have brought you a little milk, and I will send you some more. It got part spilled,' she said; and, in an embarrassed way, she began to wipe the basin-bottom on the silk dress she wore, again unwittingly revealing as she did so the large rent on the near side.

'Thank you,' I managed to articulate, pulling myself up on the sofa. 'The milk does me much good.'

'I am very glad, and you are very welcome to it,' was eagerly replied. It was to be noticed that the speaker's native dialect, in talking with me, almost entirely vanished.

'Our watter be orful, oi dessay, to them as beant used to t', loike un be,' put in the nurse, looking round from the hearth, with the poker in her hand.

'Who be a-givin' un watter?' demanded a fresh voice in a roar, and heavy footsteps could be heard clambering up the staircase. 'Nowt o' t' soart; ee shaant ha' watter. T' doctor said ee munnot; and the speaker entered the room with a reel. 'Heer be a soop o' t' best rum as oi cud get. None o' t' poor stuff: it be Jammaky; an' brandy beant fit to howd t' candle to t' fur ague. Yo' may put un a soop o' watter i' this, ef yo' loiken; bur let it be rum an' watter ner watter an' rum. Look 'ee heer, sur,' and Miss Bowerhanks, a burly Yorkshire yeoman, my female visitor's father, came unsteadily forward, triumphantly holding up a black bottle.

'Father! you have stopped too long at Hull market. Give me that bottle, please; you will drop it,' hurriedly said Miss Bowerhanks, her manner shewing both indignation and shame.

'Eh! be it tha, Martha? Oi shaan't fa' it!' and he guarded the bottle away from her hand, blinking his eyes, as he now for the first time recognised his daughter. 'Bur oi'm roight glad t' see 'ee, wench; comfort un oop, fur ee waants it, daan on his back i' this wey.—Beest ony better?' he added, bending over me.

'I haven't had the fits so long nor so badly to-day, so I think I have the turn,' I answered.

'Hoo, tha'll soon be raand agen, dang 'ee else,' the broad-shouldered farmer sympathisingly replied.

'T' ague be pratty strong, bur soo tha beest. Oi thowt Lunnoners wor bit o' scraps o' men, bur tha t' mak' as good a won as mysen!'

'Un be on'y just aat o' his shaakin's, an' un mun be kep' quait,' put in Nurse Sally, coming forward from the hearth, where Miss Bowerhanks had been whispering in her ear. 'Goo o'er to t' farm, an' let t' missus know yo' be com!'

'Kep' quait, dost 'ee sey? Then dinnot 'ee mak' sich a noise, Sally; us two shaan get on a roight, oi warrant 'ee; shaan't us!' and he turned to me.

'Certainly,' I answered. 'I am much obliged to you for calling, and also for your kind present; looking at the bottle he still retained his hold of.'

'Dost 'ee hear un? Oi tow'd 'ee!' answered the Yorkshireman, turning on the nurse with an air of victory.

'You can come over to-morrow, father, but go

home now with me to mother,' pleaded his blushing daughter. 'She is always anxious to see you on market-days,' she added hesitatingly.

'Doant hur talk foine?' demanded the farmer, in pleasant tones, turning to me, and patting his daughter on the shoulder. 'Howd oop thoy faace, lass; tha't mak' as good a leddy as t' Lunnnon ones; an' th' dey tha beest wedded, oi'll gie tha four thousand pounds daan. Dang me, ef oi doant!' And with his disengaged hand, he began to rummage in his pockets, as if feeling for the money.

'Oh, you mustn't talk in this way,' urged Miss Bowerhanks, and she quite struggled with her broad-shouldered father. 'I have something to tell you; come at once; I want to tell you of Jake,' she continued, lowering her voice, and trying to lead the farmer towards the door.

'Summut t' sey to me? Oi'll goo when oi've townd un aboot our gettin' t' last crops, an' t' wagon gooin' o'er into t' dyke, fur t' want o' a bit o' a road—as oi tow'd 'ee afore,' he added, wheeling round again towards me. 'Bur thot wor rare fun; it'll mak' 'ee laugh, an' thot'll draw a neil aat o' thoy coffin. Tha't look after thot road for us, oi'm sartain,' he went on, growing quite serious; 'it be soo bad fur Martha; noo bridge o'er t' broad dyke, bur a plank, i' windy deys. Oi'm sure tha't see to it, eh?'

'O yes,' I heedlessly answered, for it was not the first time he had talked about this road. My conscience, however, pricked me a moment after, and I felt that I was getting into trouble, for I had no instructions from London to make a new road to Mr Bowerhanks's farm.

'Theer, yo' heer un,' the farmer quickly said, with a queer twinkle of the eyes. 'Un says ee'll doo t' road fur Martha; and the speaker laughed loudly as he looked around for the witnesses to my promise.

'I am very much obliged,' Miss Bowerhanks replied, sinking into a very pretty courtesy. If her father had at that moment asked me to rebuild his farm, I should have assented, but he was occupied in another way. Sally Tebbutt had raised herself on tiptoe to his ear, and was whispering something about Jake.

'Jake be a dommed villain, fur un be a'ways oop to summut. Oi'm sure Chris be right; bur want wor it?' inquired Mr Bowerhanks. 'Woy did Jake tear thoy dress, Martha?' and he knitted his brows, but suddenly smoothened them again, as he added: 'Bur oi con buy 'ee satin, ef tha wants it, wench; glancing again towards me.

'I'll tell you about it as we go home; but you must leave the rum,' said his daughter, laying her hand on the bottle in his arms. 'Some of it can be put into the milk I brought.'

'Bless me! Oi'd quat forgotten t' rum agen, wi' talkin'. Rum an' milk! Thot'll be it, mestur; it'll heat t' watter, thot will. Heer'—and he held out the bottle of spirits towards me—'dinnot tha spare it; ther be moor wheer it comes from. Oi'm daan glad tha'st promised t' mak' t' road, thot oi am. Good-bye, lad; and he shook his big red fist in my direction.

'Good-day, sir,' more correctly said his daughter, her tones softening themselves to the finest accent, as though to check and balance her father's broader style.

'Good-bye, and thank you. I will try to get over to your farm to-morrow; it will be one of

my good days, you know,' I answered, as the couple moved away.

'Ef 'ee canst com', we shaan a' be moightily glad t' see 'ee, fur t' owd woman loikes 'ee—an' then tha canst look at t' road,' he quickly added, turning about in the doorway. 'Dinnot 'ee touch t' watter, an' t' milk'll be a soight bettur fur a good soakin' wi' rum,' he solemnly concluded; and then Mr and Miss Bowerhanks vanished, the former's heavy steps making a noise in descending the stairs suggestive of the falling in of that gable of the old house.

'Martha be ready to boite hur own head off, though it be a pratty un, fur his comin' heer i' thot staate,' said Sally a minute later. 'Bur yo' munnot think owt on it. It be on'y o' market-days un gets a glass too much. Mestur Bowerhanks be th' best managing mon i' a' this soide.'

'It is very kind of him to bring me the rum, and so, also, it is of Miss Bowerhanks to be at the trouble to carry me the milk. Didn't Jake wish her to do so?' I asked.

'Waat! Didn't yo' heer t' row? Oi thowt yo' ud bin off wi' t' shaakin's then!' and she advanced in surprise to look into my face.

'I heard the cracking of the whip when Christopher was flogging him, and I got across to the window.—Why didn't Jake wish Miss Bowerhanks to bring the milk?'

'Becos un be a jealous foo!'

'Jealous!'

'As ef Jake ha' ony roight to speak to hur, who'd mak' as grand a leddy as ony in t' land. Bur un be a rascal, an' oi advise yo' t' keep aat o' his road till yo' be strong agen.'

'He cannot have a spite against me?' I said, questioning Sally's face.

'Ay, bur t' foo' may,' she mysteriously said; 'an' ef yo' goo to t' other farm to-morrer, tak' t' gun wi' 'ee, as ef 'ee wor shootin' ducks,' she impressively added. 'Jake be a coward, an' 'll none com' near till 'ee then. Oi'm gooin' daanstairs na', she wound up; and without more ado, Sally acted on that intimation, leaving me in the little apartment, busy with very curious reflections.

By way of making the narrative more intelligible, I may mention that my calling is that of a surveyor, and some two months previously, I had been sent down from town to superintend some works on one of the crown estates on the Yorkshire coast. It was intended to form a coast-guard station there, for it was said smuggling was going on at that point very briskly. A set of buildings had consequently to be erected, but as yet we had made little way with them, for we had been most inexplicably delayed with a large reservoir I was ordered to construct for the collection of rain-water. I shall have more to add on this point by and by, but I may mention here that such a receptacle was certainly needed; for before I had been on the spot a fortnight, I was attacked by the ague, caused mainly, as the doctor admitted, by the filthy dyke-water we were all compelled to drink, owing to the near vicinity of the sea making it impossible to bore for springs. I was completely prostrated by this frightful disease; but, after eight or nine days, I rallied, as I was informed, very bravely, and was able to go about my work in a so-so fashion. But rather more than a week ago, I had had the misfortune, in returning from Bowerhanks's farm, where I had been to a kind of evening-party, to get overtaken by one of the sudden fogs which settle

down upon that district; and although I was not more than a quarter of a mile away from home, I wandered about in the mist for above an hour ere I reached my lodgings. The prediction with which the doctor had favoured me beforehand, in view of such a contingency, was literally fulfilled—I was seized the next morning with a relapse of the ague, in a still more intense form; and on every other day since then, I had had to retreat to my room, there to suffer indescribable torments.

I had procured lodgings at the residence nearest the site of the works, which happened to be a tumble-down old farmhouse, occupied by a Farmer Sowerby, a widower, whose domestic affairs were managed by Mrs Tebbutt, already mentioned as my nurse. Sowerby's wife had been a Miss Bowerhanks; and, in consequence of this family connection, a close intimacy existed between him and Farmer Bowerhanks, who lived at the next homestead, a dozen fields or so away. Owing to the frequent visits of the families both ways, I had got to be very well acquainted, not only with Mr Bowerhanks, but also with his comfortable, matronly wife, and his handsome daughter. The last named was a fine specimen of Yorkshire beauty, and I had yielded a little, I fear, to its influence, and been about as attentive as I could be, without having the remotest intention of carrying her back with me to London to astonish my old maiden aunt. The conversation I had, however, overheard that afternoon between Nurse Sally and Miss Bowerhanks, together with Farmer Bowerhanks's own conduct later, had startled me by the hints which seemed to be given of intentions of a serious kind existing in other quarters.

Jake, who had so oddly mixed himself up in the affair, was a dark-visaged, clumsy-heeled lout, of about twenty-five years old, chiefly noticeable for a profusion of yellow hair, and a stoop in the shoulders. He appeared to divide his time between the two farms, though he rendered little help at either; lounging about with a kind of authority, on the strength of his being the orphan son of a cousin of Farmer Bowerhanks, and consequently standing in nearly the same relation to Farmer Sowerby, through his deceased wife. He was commonly spoken of as being only half-witted, and his manners and appearance certainly favoured that allegation. I had scarcely been brought into contact with him at all, but I had often seen him dogging Miss Bowerhanks's heels; and it appeared that that afternoon he had taken a whimsical—as Sally Tebbutt said—a jealous objection to her bringing me the dish of new milk, which she was kindly in the habit of carrying over from their farm every day since I had been unwell. That Jake was ill-conditioned enough to set down to my score the horse-whipping his interference had brought upon him from Christopher, I could believe; but, weak as I was, I felt little fear of him, despite Mrs Tebbutt's vague warnings, and her curious advice about the gun.

I did not then know the kind of fellow I had to deal with.

CHAPTER II.

The first occurrence in the way of Jake's revenge befell three days afterwards, when I had the strange privilege of nearly being killed by proxy. It was sufficiently startling, and awakened in me both regret and indignation, but the circumstances were

so queer that it was difficult to avoid laughing at my suffering substitute. I had taken down with me from London, as my principal assistant, a dapper little builder's foreman, named Footitt. He answered excellently, his only drawback being, that his promotion to the post of clerk of the works for this rather important job had made him somewhat vain. The duties he had to perform were not manual, and he was very spruce in his dress; strangers, I fancy, would have taken him for the master, and myself for the man. See him wherever one might, even among the lime-heaps, he always looked as if he had just stepped out of a band-box. I learned that the rough workmen called him the London Dandy. This made what happened the more striking by the contrast involved.

'I am nearly done for, sir,' said a voice which sounded very familiar to me, as I turned into the home-field to go to the house for breakfast on this third morning I am speaking of.

'Bless me, what are you?' I believe I demanded; and if I did start back a pace or two, I consider it no imputation on my firmness. On the other side the gate, leaning against the hinge-post, was a figure that was scarcely human. It had the shape of a man, but dirty straw was sticking out all over it, while the face and hands were of a sooty blackness, and the hair of the head had evidently been singed off.

'Could I go somewhere before the men see me? All the place will be up in arms directly, for the straw-heap is burning like mad,' gasped the figure.

'Is it Footitt?' I asked, for his features seemed to frame themselves underneath the soot, and the voice was certainly his.

'Yes, sir, it is me, if I aren't shrivelled up. That Jake has done it, and it is a mercy I am not roasted. He said, sir, he would serve you the same!'

'Fire!' 'Hilloa!' 'Help!' and a variety of other cries were raised in different quarters, and the workmen and those belonging to the household came swarming in our direction. A column of black smoke rising some distance away behind the stable had attracted the simultaneous attention of several persons. I led Footitt through the excited and wondering people towards the house, none of them seeming to recognise him. After Mrs Tebbutt had got over the first shock caused by his unearthly appearance in the doorway, she brought him warm water, soap, and sponges.

'Not a bit o' eyebrow on this side, and nearly every morsel of hair gone from the temple,' groaned Footitt, looking out of the folds of the towel, his countenance now white with soap and emotion, and, owing to the loss of his carefully-tended hair, presenting the most strangely metamorphosed appearance I had ever seen.

But having ascertained that desperate as Footitt's case had seemed, he was not really in mortal extremity, I hurried out of the house, and, led by a hubbub of voices in the distance, hastened across two intervening fields, and so reached the straw-heap, from which a cloud of whitish vapour was now ascending. The men had been able to get plenty of water from an adjacent dyke, and, fortunately, the straw in the course of years had become so caked together where the fire had been started, that it had not admitted of rapid burning.

'Waot foo' be thot daan yonder?' shouted one of the men.

All eyes followed the direction of his finger; and nearly a quarter of a mile distant, where a break in the dyke embankments gave a glimpse of an open reach of the coast, a figure could be seen on the sands, flinging its arms about, and capering with its legs, in the maddest fashion.

'That be Jake; an' it be un, t' dommed villain, who ha' dun it,' roared Farmer Sowerby, shaking both his fists at the gesticulating shadow, four hundred yards or so out of reach.

Seeing that the danger of the fire was over, I returned to the house at once, anxious to gather the particulars from Footitt. I may explain here, by way of preliminary, that it was a condition of the tenure of the farms thereabouts, that no straw should be carted off the land; and as not more than half of what was produced was consumed either for fodder, manure, or in any other way, a large heap of it accumulated near each of the homesteads. In Sowerby's case, the deposit had been growing for twenty years and more, till it now formed a monster heap. The geese, ducks, hens, and, it was said, some of the sea-fowl, availed themselves of it as a convenient place for their eggs, and for that purpose used the passages which, so to speak, honey-combed some parts of it. These cavities, it was asserted, had been originally made by the rabbits, which overran the vicinity; and several of the holes had from one cause and another become so widened and enlarged that they actually formed galleries, running into the body of the straw-heap for very considerable distances, and would easily admit the entrance of a man in a crawling position. The workmen were in the habit of going to these holes to search for eggs; and that morning, it seemed, Footitt, either at Jake's malevolent suggestion, or by his own unlucky inspiration, had been seized with the wish to add a cheap delicacy of this kind to his breakfast.

'The villain said, sir, he knew there were a lot of nice ducks' eggs in a nest just round the turn in the hole,' resumed Footitt, who, from the absence of the greater part of one eyebrow, seemed to be making a perpetual grimace at me. 'He couldn't stoop, because he had got the rheumatics in his back—so he said, the liar! And as it didn't look far, and was a big hole, I thought I would just go in, if it did dirty my clothes a bit. I went in backwards, because of coming out again with the eggs foremost; and just as I was getting to the turning, it came nearly pitch dark all of a sudden. When I looked up, I saw the murderer was piling loose straw against the opening; and then he put his grinning face in, shouting he wished it was you, sir, saying he would serve you the same yet! My hair stood right up, as he laughed like a fiend, and struck a lucifer-match, and put it to the straw. I had to fight my way out for my life, right through the blaze, sir. Oh, it was awful! Another minute, and I should have been roasted alive, for the smoke choked me; and poor Footitt recommenced expectorating at the recollection.

This was awful, and I began to have some apprehension of Jake's malice, though I did my best to condole with Footitt; for I knew that the half-wit could have no personal spite against him, and must have considered him in some way as my representative.

'I feel sure now, sir, it is this murdering wretch as has spoiled the reservoir,' continued Footitt, feeling after the missing eyebrow.

'Why, how is that?' I incredulously demanded. The reservoir, as I have already mentioned, had given us no end of trouble. We had 'puddled' it, and 'double puddled' it, cemented it, and done everything else that could be thought of, but make it water-tight we could not. There was always leakage in the night-time from underneath, the bottom every morning being covered with salt-water, which must have somehow found a road out of the sea-sand foundation below. As a last resource, I had a day or two before written for a quantity of encaustic tiles, intending to line the bottom with them, laid in a deep bed of cement.

'I was coming to tell you when you were having breakfast, for I hadn't thought then of this thief, and I didn't wish the men to hear, as I fancied it might be one of them,' resumed Footitt. 'This morning, there was more water at the bottom than ever, though we had put in another layer of puddle; and I noticed when the men had bailed it nearly dry, that there were marks of five or six round holes in the cement, about as big as this'—and he held up his forefinger. 'I didn't make a stir then, for I wanted to see you; but from what I could judge, it looked as if something had been driven right through the cement casing, and the puddle as well. And who would do it but this scamp! I don't believe any of the men would.'

'Whew!' I whistled, for this threw some light upon the puzzling mystery of this inexplicably leaking reservoir. 'We must watch it, Footitt,' I added, perhaps with some excitement. 'This must be seen to, for our character is at stake. Have all mended again by night, and I'll sit up with you, and we'll have a couple of the oldest men, for I am rather weak yet, and couldn't help you much.'

'I shan't want much help to tackle him. He has done his best to roast me, and if I catch him at it, I'll drown him in the reservoir,' solemnly vowed Footitt.—'What noise is that, sir?' and he tried to stroke his frizzed hair straight.

It was the workmen, who, returning from putting out the fire at the straw-heap, had recollected the blackened figure they saw me leading into the house; and they had now come, marshalled by Farmer Sowerby himself, to find out who it was, and what connection it had with the fire. Footitt shrunk very much from facing them in his altered condition; and the shouts of rough, unfeeling laughter which greeted his appearance at the kitchen-door furnished sufficient justification for his doing so. What explanations he gave to them of the affair, I do not know; but I concluded that he must have confirmed the farmer's suspicion that the fire was Jake's handiwork, for that individual's name was coupled with obprobria the rest of the day through, both inside the house and out of it. Sally Tebbutt, in particular, sought me out (for this was one of my non-age days), and, with a little triumph in her manner, reminded me of what she had stated beforehand respecting Jake's dangerous disposition. I was not wholly unimpressed by what she said, but I fancy I smiled, for I was entertaining myself with the thought that a lesson was awaiting Master Jake that night, if only we caught him tampering with the reservoir.

Not a glimpse was had of the scoundrel during the day in our neighbourhood, and Miss Bowerhanks, who, as usual, brought me the dish of milk in the afternoon, said, in answer to questions from

Sally Tebbutt, that he had not been seen by any one at their farm since very early morning. I fancied she seemed a little embarrassed on hearing what had happened to Footitt, as if at the thought that it was herself who was the original cause of Jake's vengeful feeling towards me and my belongings. I walked beside her part of the way back to their farm, and in the course of the talk, she archly inquired when I intended to commence making the new road for them. Jake, she added with a laugh, would not dare to play any of his pranks near to their home, for he stood in more awe of her father than he did of Uncle Sowerby. The rich colour on her face, as she thus suggested that I should occupy myself nearer their residence, made her look handsomer than ever. A new road, I determined in my own mind, there should be, instructions or no instructions from London to that effect. She courted, and seemed wonderfully pleased, when I repeated my assurance that there should not be much more delay in getting to work at the road. Her blue eyes gave me a long look at parting, and her hand seemed to linger in mine; and when I looked about again, before turning the corner of the great dyke, she was also looking back, and fluttered her handkerchief in adieu. On my return to my lodgings, I made some mental contrasts between the Yorkshire style of beauty and the less florid types which commonly prevail in the metropolis; and not a few London young ladies of my acquaintance suffered considerably by the comparison. Still, this question of the new road would break in upon my other thoughts, for I really had no warrant for commencing any such works. I had, however, promised both father and daughter, and could I not, to please the latter, brave the old fogies of commissioners in town? Certainly, the road was badly wanted, and I laid that unction to my conscience freely.

Evening, however, was approaching, and my thoughts turned again to the rascal Jake. The workmen had been busy during the day recementing the reservoir, and had left it apparently water-tight when they struck work; but so had they done often before, with the inevitable result of finding hogsheads of salt-water covering the bottom in the morning. To-night would institute a new test as to the reason of this, and I waited somewhat anxiously for full darkness to come on; my intention being to commence the watch the first moment after dusk, so as to make quite sure. I hurried on my supper, and as I was finishing it, Footitt, accompanied by a couple of picked men, put in an appearance. To prevent suspicions in the household of what was afoot, I took my own hired gun, and borrowed another from Christopher, as if we were going duck-shooting; then, I bade the Sowerbys not to sit up for me, as I could let myself in. Sally Tebbutt remonstrated with me, promising me a fresh attack of the ague, which I dolefully thought was not unlikely; but making the best answers I could, we set off from the farmhouse. Instead of going down to the shore, we made a slight *détour*, and soon reached the scene of the reservoir-works, where we at once took up a position in a corner of the stone-masons' shed.

It was a chilly, dull night, and after the first half hour or so, hiding there, scarcely speaking even in a whisper, was not cheerful work. The roar of the sea could be heard in the distance, and the howling wind made strange noises at intervals. I could almost have pitied the half-witted Jake for

being driven from the farms to skulk in the open country, if it had not been for his villainy to poor Footitt that morning; and also, let me add, if my own professional character had not been at stake on the success or non-success of the works he was suspected of injuring. By and by, after another hour of waiting, the moon rose, but the sky was very clouded, and the partial light only made the scene still more melancholy. Nothing, however, in all this time was seen or heard of Jake. I was beginning to despair, and the couple of workmen, wearied too, asked leave to smoke. From sheer tiredness, we began to talk more frequently—all excepting Footitt. His recollections of that morning's indignity made him more relentlessly patient; and at length, without any explanation, he stealthily crept out of the shed, and I dimly saw him go gliding on from one block of uncut stone to another in the direction of the reservoir.

'Make haste! the thief is hard at it!' I told you he would come!' hoarsely whispered Footitt, a few minutes later, almost breathless with excitement, reappearing at the entrance of the shed.

We all followed him as quickly as we could, I, like the rest, getting a stumble or two over the uneven ground, strewn everywhere with fragments of stone. Almost immediately, we were cautiously crouching on the near brink of the great cavity representing the reservoir. Down below, with its feet already plashing in gleaming water as it moved about, was a dark figure, evidently very hard at work doing something. Whoever it might be, was not at all careful about making noise, and it was only the circumstance, which we had overlooked, of the breeze blowing away from the stone-shed, that had prevented our hearing him earlier. Only for Footitt having crept nearer, he might have done his work and gone again undiscovered, in spite of our watch.

'Hush!' I excitedly whispered to the others, for Jake's rough tones could be heard soliloquising below.

'It be daan haard, thot it be, bur t' watter comes faaster na'. Oi'll do it. Wha be t' foo' na'? Ee canna mak' t' cistern, an' ee shaa'n't, ef ee stops six months. Dang it, oi wish oi had him under t' iron'; and the black figure of the speaker bent again to his work.

'He has got a full-length auger!' whispered Footitt, creeping to my side; 'the carpenters missed it three weeks ago.'

'Yah!' grunted Jake, coming to another pause; and I instantly put my hand on Footitt's lips, for I wished to hear all the rascal said. 'It be haarder an' haarder, bur oi'll do it. T' wet comes in faast;' and he chuckled loudly. 'One hole mure. They dunnot know how it be. Wha be t' foo' na'?'

'The men are gone down to the low end, but I'll have a clutch at him!' hissed Footitt, gliding away after a couple of shadows I now saw retreating towards the far corner of the excavation, where an inclination had been left for the convenience of getting in and out the materials.

'Waat mun Matty tak' un milk fur? Hoo, she'll mak' a foo' on un yit!' was the half-wit's next startling observation. 'Bur whoy mun she'—

'We've caught thee at it!' was shrieked in Footitt's weak voice. 'Burn me, eh? I'll drown thee, you villain!' Three black shadows, each uttering a yell, then dashed down the sloping wall of the reservoir, splashing through the water on

the bottom in the direction of the dark figure which seemed rooted to the spot in the middle. Jake's roar of affright, however, the next minute overbore all the others' triumphant exclamations, but it quickly subsided into a gurgling finish, which told that Footitt was really carrying out his threat.

'Don't drown him: bring him up here!' I shouted, fearful how far my deputy's indignation might carry him.

They dragged him, howling, up the embankment, both him and themselves shining with dripping water; but instead of bringing him to me, they took him to the lime and mortar heaps, and rolled him in and over them. At length he got away from them, and running to me, fell at my feet, clinging to my legs, and looking of as ghastly a white in the struggling moonbeams as Footitt had done a sooty black in the morning rays of the sun.

'Hoogh, thoy'll kill me! Oi wunnot foire t' straw agen, ner bore t' cistern. Oi'll doo anything; saave me, mastur;' and he trembled violently.

'I will kill you, you murderer!' screamed Footitt, half beside himself with passion: 'you've disfigured me for life;' and he made another dash at Jake.

It was fortunate that the wind was blowing off shore, since the sound of Jake's yells, Footitt's cries, and the roaring laughter of the couple of workmen, was in that way carried out to sea, instead of in the direction of the farms, the inmates of which would certainly have been aroused.

'Perhaps he has had enough for the present,' I said, pushing Footitt back, as the half-wit, shrieking from fear, thrust his pallid face between my knees, trembling in every limb.—'Will you promise never to interfere with the works again? Why, I believe you might almost be transported for it.'

'Yah, oi'll niver do't agen,' he sobbed, glancing furtively at his assailants, without attempting to rise.

'Nor to try to murder anybody by roasting 'em in the straw-heap?' fiercely demanded Footitt.

'Noo, noo; oi wunnot burn ye.'

'Will you come to me in the morning, and tell me all about this meddling with the reservoir?' I added, for I wanted to have some talk with the fellow.

'Ees, oi'll doo anything,' he whined.

'Then get up, and go for the present,' I finally said.

He slowly rose, watching Footitt and the men suspiciously; but the moment he was fairly upon his feet, he bounded off on the side opposite to where they stood, and uttering a wild exclamation, which was again repeated as the workmen shouted a make-believe cry of pursuit, Jake dashed away in the direction of the shore, and was almost instantly lost to sight.

'He won't come in the morning, sir,' remarked Footitt, not quite pleased, I could see, at Jake's escape.

'Well,' I answered, as we walked away from the spot, 'we know now why the reservoir let in so much water in the night-time, whether it is quite tight or not. But we will use the glazed tiles, now they are come, to make certain.'

Footitt grumbled back some kind of answer, and I shortly afterwards bade him and his companions good-night, as they turned off in the direction

of their lodgings. As I walked alone towards Sowerby's farm, I could not help wondering a good deal what Jake meant by saying Miss Bowerhanks would make a fool of me yet.

INDIAN EMIGRATION.

RETURNING to England after a prolonged voyage, in which I visited Australia, India, and the West Indies, my friends were naturally curious to know what I had been about. 'Oh,' I said, 'I have just been taking a cargo of black people across from Calcutta to the West Indies, for one of the West Indian Islands.' Prepared as I was to expect that the answer would convey but a mythical explanation of my doings, I hardly anticipated so great an ignorance of this subject as the being put through a lengthy categorical inquiry, in order to dissipate the suspicions of some of my friends that I was engaged in impressing slaves.

Let me carry the reader with me in imagination up into the hill-country of Oude, where most of my cargo of so-called slaves were taken from, thence onward to Calcutta, where they are shipped as coolies or labourers, and across the seas, until they are disembarked in the West Indian colonies as Indian immigrants.

The agent for the colony that employed my services, had visited Oude, and selected certain sub-agents, or 'recruiters,' to collect the number of field-hands that he was required to ship to his particular island for that year. The recruiters are seldom, if ever, Englishmen, but mostly Jews, and the lighter shades of half-caste. Going out into the villages and country districts, the recruiter tells most glowing and fabulous tales of the islands to which he wishes to induce the coolies to go, dwelling mostly, and that with justice too, on the 'burra rupee'—plenty of money to be made there. With honeyed words, and a small present or trifling sum of money as a *bricksheesh*, the recruiter at length succeeds in securing his man; and when a sufficient number are collected, he takes them before the presiding magistrate of the district, whose duty it is to explain to the coolies what the engagement is that they are about to enter upon. Should any of the recruits object to go, or should it be proved that they have by any means been compelled to join the party against their will, they are at once set free from their engagement. The terms of the contract—which are, that they engage to serve the government of the island to which they are about to be shipped for a period of five years, at the current rate of wages of the colony, and then again to be returned, free of expense, to India—having been fully explained, and no objections made, the recruiter is at liberty to proceed with his gang of men to the port of shipment. The expenses of conveying the coolies—often several hundred miles—down to Calcutta are, of course, defrayed by the recruiter, who adopts the cheapest form of transit, such as water-carriage; but the agent in Calcutta has to advance the necessary funds, often without any guarantee, and in some

instances becomes victimised. One of these, conveying an amusing incident which arose from an inaptness of speech of the presiding magistrate, affords a rare instance of the people absconding, after once having engaged to go. The magistrate had assembled the intending emigrants in the court-room, and was explaining to them the terms of engagement, and that they were going to dress and hoe sugar-canes in British Guiana; unfortunately, he sounded Guiana *Gihenna*, which, to the native ear, so much resembled their word for hell (*Jehennum*), that the body of coolies, eighty in number, concluded that they were going to be sent to some very unpleasant place. Too much in the habit of feigning subservience in the presence of the white man, the awe-struck coolies said nothing; but, folding their hands submissively, lifting them up in a praying attitude in front of their faces, and bowing their heads at the same time, they declared that the Sahib was right, and that everything was *booth ucchuk* (very good). The moment, however, that the coolies got outside the door, there was a rush for the jungles directly, and away went the eighty men whom the recruiter had taken so much trouble to collect, and with them the money expended in presents and bringing them thus far on their journey.

Even after the recruiter has reached Calcutta with his body of men, he is liable to have them returned on his hands, should they be found either mentally or bodily defective; and, of course, in each case the fee per head, which has risen, owing to coolie emigration, from six to sixteen rupees, is retained. Then, too, he has to run the gantlet of competition—recruiting agents for other colonies trying to seduce his men away, by telling them hideous tales. A common ruse of competing recruiters (and one that was much laughed at by the agent who was the subject of the trivial deformity), was to tell the coolies that vampires and leeches were so numerous in the country they were going to, that the former ate off men's heads, and the latter, portions of their bodies; in evidence of which the recruiter would say: 'You just go and look at Mr So-and-so, and you'll find that the leeches have eaten off his thumb' (a mutilation caused by a gunshot wound).

On arrival in Calcutta, the coolies are lodged and provisioned in the dépôt belonging to that island to which they are to be forwarded. They remain here for a few weeks prior to shipment, to recruit from the long journey, and to be carefully inspected. Certificates are made out stating the name, age, district, father's name, and bodily marks; the last two for the purpose of identification, since there are frequently half-a-dozen coolies of the same name in one ship-load. To these certificates are appended the signatures of the Protector of Emigrants—an officer authorised by the Indian government to superintend everything connected with their embarkation; the agent of the colony to which they are to be sent; the government surgeon of the dépôt, who has had charge of them since their arrival; and that of the surgeon who is to have the superintendence of them during the passage. The coolies are most carefully sifted by two or three examinations; and all who shew any sickness, or have been sick since arrival in the dépôt, or who are in any way weak, or who are over forty years of age, are most scrupulously rejected, since, of all

human cargoes, they are the most difficult to carry free of mortality.

During the late rice-famine in India, it was painful to see the rags and poverty in which these poor people arrived; handsome figures, both men and women, with but a shred of calico round them; and equally pleasant, though at the same time ludicrous, to see the avidity with which, on the morning before embarkation, they cast their ragged garments, and invested themselves in a brand-new eastern suit, the first gift of the humane superintendence under which they are placed. Roused early on the morning of embarkation, the people are marched from the dépôt to the coolie moorings, each man or woman carrying a blanket, a tin plate, and a tin vessel, or *lotah*, for holding water, these constituting all their outfit, having been presented to them with their new clothes.

The reader who has been to sea must not imagine the 'tween' decks of a coolie-ship to be arranged like those for European emigration; on the contrary, they are perfectly clear and unencumbered with 'bunks,' except just abreast the hatchways, where the forethought of the Bengal government has caused a kind of broad shelf to be erected, so that those coolies who are berthed opposite the hatchways may not be exposed to any sea or spray while lying asleep on the deck. Excepting these, and a series of rails made of bamboo, extending from one end of the ship to the other, on which the people hang their blankets when not sleeping, the 'tween deck is free, scrupulously clean, and well white-washed. Little more regard is paid to locating the people, than merely to see that the unmarried men are placed forward, and the married couples, with their families and the young women, aft. On the upper deck, in the centre of the ship, is seen the hospital, with six or eight beds, according to the number of people; in front of it, the cooking-hearths, four in number, arranged after the Indian manner; and further forward than these, one of Winchester's or Dr Normandy's apparatuses for distilling salt water into fresh. Right aft, one of the awning cabins of the ship is fitted up as a dispensary, and usually forms the domicile of that by no means unimportant functionary, the native doctor, generally a Hindu by birth, who has passed three or four years in study at some of the hospitals or medical schools in Calcutta, and who, when he has gone a voyage or two, is really a most valuable coadjutor in managing these people. In case, however, the native doctor may not possess sufficient acquaintance with the innumerable dialects of India, an interpreter is also supplied to these ships, whose sole business is that of interpreting between the coolies and those placed in superintendence over them, so that no defects may arise from ignorance of the language. Caste is well known to be a great obstacle to the management of servants, but even here the humane forethought of the government has provided a remedy, in shipping five or six West Indian negroes as *topasses*, or sweepers, to each ship, who clean the decks and other dirty jobs, the doing which would break the caste of many an Indian native.

Once on board ship, and the sea-sickness over, which affects them far less than Europeans, coolies accommodate themselves rapidly to their new position, probably owing to the circumstance that every endeavour is made that their diet and habits on board should be assimilated as closely as possible to their mode of life on shore. In the morning at

4.30, the sirdar (constable) who has the morning watch from 4 to 6 A.M., rouses the *bundharries*, or cooks, who proceed to light their fires, using wood for fuel, in the calaboes mentioned above. At 5 A.M., all hands are sent on deck (of course, weather permitting), a proceeding which occupies at least half an hour, for though the coolie has nothing to do but fold up his blanket—one, if it is hot weather; two, if it is cold—and hang them on the bamboo-rail, black people, whether of the same species as white or no, are quite as difficult to rouse in the morning. This little proceeding done, a gang of men is taken down by the sirdars, and in company with the topasses, do a preliminary sweeping of the 'tween decks. Meanwhile, other sirdars, together with one or two of the cooks, receive the rations for the day. These are a pound and three-quarters of rice per adult, together with a given quantity per scale of dohl (a kind of pea), salt fish, ghee (butter), turmeric, tamarinds, and several other smaller items, with one gallon of water. Of the last, one-half is retained in a convenient barrel for drinking, while the other is employed in cooking the rice, which the Hindu may boast of being his *chef-d'œuvre*, for he will turn out third-class grain in a pulpy condition, and of snowy whiteness. The other items of dietary are made into curry and chutney, which last is exceedingly palatable, but your appetite for which would be materially impaired by seeing the cook ladle it out to the applicants with his black paw. Twice or thrice a week, fresh vegetables are given to the people; and on Saturday or Sunday, two or three sheep, which are cut up small, and cooked in the curry fluid, instead of the salt fish. As luxuries, every man or woman is allowed some dry leaf-tobacco, which they are very fond of chewing, or, having reduced to a fine powder, of putting it into their mouths like snuff; and some soft, moist compound of the same substance, which they smoke in their *hubble-bubbles* (pipes), a liberal supply of which are also put on board for distribution to the coolies. There are many natives, however, who cannot eat rice, and who fall off and get thin if compelled to do so; these are men chiefly from Allahabad, Benares, &c.: to them an equivalent allowance of flour is issued, which being made into dough, with no other adjunct than water, is beaten out with the hand into thin cakes called *chupatties*, and eaten with dohl, ghee, or chutney. Should the weather prove so boisterous that the cooks are unable to make ready the usual rice and curry, and consequently the people are retained below, dry food is issued to them. This consists of biscuits, sugar, *gram* (a seed like a tare, though larger, which ought to be partially boiled or steeped before being eaten), and *choorah* (rice parboiled and dried, merely requiring to be slightly saturated with water to be edible).

To return to the daily routine, at 6 A.M., at which hour all the people are usually on deck, ladies arranging their hair, and washing out their mouths with water, a proceeding which seems entirely to supplant the external use of that fluid; gentlemen strutting about sniffing the morning air, with their blankets pendent over their shoulders, and fastened adroitly with a piece of tarry-spun yarn into a neat rosette over their heads, or squatted on their heels near the water-ways of the ship, performing that most essential item in the Hindu morning toilet—namely, brushing their teeth. Having supplied themselves with a small

piece of bamboo-cane, they split it up into fine fibres at one end, and thus extemporise a most excellent toothbrush. This scrupulous attention to cleaning the teeth and washing their mouths after meals, together with an abstinence from all hot liquids, gives these people those splendid sets of 'ivory' which are the envy of Europeans. By 7.30, the milk for the children under two years old is ready, and being brought by some of the cooks in a large iron caldron called a *chatty*, to the top of one of the hatchways, is served out by a sirdar or the native doctor. This milk is made from that so well known now as Grimwode's Desiccated. As prevention is far better than cure, sickly and delicate-looking children above two are always included in the list of those on milk-diet; and should any of them be of an age requiring more solid food, soft bread, preserved mutton, biscuits, and sugar are issued to them, whereby many a famished-looking child becomes, by the end of the voyage, plump and well-conditioned.

The first meal is usually served about 9 A.M., and this requires a little management, as when upwards of five hundred people are to be supplied at once, some system must be adopted, if it were only to prevent those that are rogues being served twice. The people are all sent below, and sirdars and cooks being stationed at the three hatchways, the food is brought to the after and middle hatchways, at the former of which the women, and at the middle the men, are served, as they come up from below, while at the fore-hatch a sirdar is placed; for if that were not done, many a man would come up that way a second time, after having washed his tin plate so clean that not even the Hindu method of applying the nose to it would serve to decide as to whether it had had curry on it before. As each individual comes over the hatchway, he (or she) is expected to take off his *koortah* (jacket), and submit it for inspection as to cleanliness; and nothing pleases a sirdar more than the opportunity of chastising some of his black brethren. On the score of punishment, none is allowed; but occasionally, where natives have been caught stealing, it is necessary to instruct two of the sirdars to thrash the offenders with an old slipper, or to tie them to the rail till meal-time is over, depriving them, of course, of their allowance. Coolies are most adroit thieves. I have known them let themselves down a ventilator into the ship's cook-house at midnight, to steal biscuits; and many are not particular as to what they steal to eat, such as dripping, sheep's gram, raw rice, and even raw sheep's intestines, all of which are, of course, most injurious to their health.

Following out the plan I have mentioned, of making these people shew their clothes at meal-times, and hang their blankets in the open air three times a week, coolies become far cleaner than any European emigrants can ever be brought to be; and for a very good reason—they have no beds, no other clothes usually than a *koortah* (jacket); a *dotee*, the long flowing piece of calico which both sexes use, though in a different manner; and in cold weather, a pair of trousers, an article of dress the coolie has a standing objection to; last, though not least, many of them have no hair. It is quite a mistake to imagine that coolie ships are filthy: as long as no epidemic breaks out, they are scrupulously clean; and many years

of experience justifies me in saying, that the cleanest ship and people I ever sailed with was a coolie emigrant-ship to the West Indies. I ought to have mentioned, by the by, that when about to round the Cape of Good Hope, warm clothing is issued to the people, together with a second blanket.

After breakfast, or sometimes before it, if it is late, the great cleaning of the day is done; a hundred or a hundred and fifty men are sent below, and in company with the topasses, and under instructions of the sirdars, they holystone with sand, and afterwards sweep every portion of the 'tween deck; and again, I repeat that if the weather permits these people being kept for twelve or fifteen hours daily on deck, the 'tween deck of these ships may be kept cleaner than even that of one of her Majesty's ships of war. Holystoning is done every day, and only varied by the addition of damped chloride of lime being added to the sand, and whitewashing down the sides of the ship. Should it be warm weather, three times a week bathing is the next operation of the day. By the women and children, this is done in large tubs, supplied with sea-water by a fire-hose, under a canvas screen aft; while the men and boys, ranged in long rows forward, are played on by the fire-engine, much to their own enjoyment. Immediately after bathing, a sirdar goes round the deck with a pail of mustard oil, and distributes a little to each individual, with which they immediately proceed to lubricate their skins, and knead their joints and muscles. Unfortunately, they have a practice of dabbing it into their hair, which, in the case of women at least, destroys their clothes. Being on one occasion anxious to produce these people at a port of call in as clean a state as possible, the oil was stopped for two or three days; but the omission soon made itself painfully manifest in a dry state of the skin, which, when scored with the end of the finger, produced a whitish line and powdered surface, similar to the dust visible on a gray parrot when he has been shaking his feathers. At three o'clock comes the second meal, similar to the first, and after that these people amuse themselves with dances, singing, playing on 'tam-tams' and cymbals, and smoking until eight or nine o'clock, when they all go down below to sleep. Visit the 'tween decks two hours after this, and you will find two long rows of sleepers, stretched on each side from end to end of the ship, and no one stirring but the sirdar on watch.

Immediately on arrival at the port of disembarkation, the ship is visited and reported upon by several officials of the colonial government; the coolies are carefully inspected as to their state of health, and the manner in which they have been treated during the voyage, while the sick and feeble are told off to the hospital, till recovery enables them to join their friends on the plantation they have been sent to.

The day after the arrival of the ship at port, an advertisement appears in the newspaper drawing attention to the arrival of the So-and-so, and requesting that the planters of several plantations, the names of which are subjoined, will send their barge or steamer alongside by such and such a date, and take away the people who have been allotted to them; said planters having previously applied at the government office for the same. Before leaving the ship, a regular contract is filled up between the Indian immigrant and his employer,

I understand that, if instead of returning at the end of five years, they remain over five, they are entitled to a bounty of one hundred dollars each, but no return-passages. During these five years, the employer must keep the immigrant, whether in sickness or in health; and if the former, must find him the necessary comforts, medicine, and medical attendance. Sub-agents of the government are constantly visiting all the plantations, and reporting upon the state of these people, so that a strict system of surveillance insures that the terms of contract are fully carried out between master and man. But what speaks volumes for the good management and humanity of this system of immigration is, that ex-pirees will go back to India, travel hundreds of miles into the interior to their own little village, seek out their brothers and sisters, return to Calcutta, and, quite independently of the recruiter, apply to the agent to be sent as labourers to the same island again. This I witnessed myself in the case of several families. Again, I have known women whose husbands had gone out to the West Indies before them, go to the agent of the colony in Calcutta, and after learning that the faithless spouse had really emigrated, take ship, in the hope of recovering him.

Now, what has been the result of this importation of labour; has it in any measure supplied the loss of the slave? and is it, on the other hand, profitable to the people themselves? We may safely answer both questions in the affirmative, for, according to an extract taken from the *Times* in the year 1865, 5975 coolies from India, and 2758 from China, were introduced into our West Indian and neighbouring possessions. The majority went to British Guiana, above three thousand to Trinidad, and nearly five hundred to Honduras. In the course of the year, 462 returned from British Guiana to their own country, taking with them money and jewels to the value of £11,485; while 514 returned home from Trinidad, taking with them money and jewels amounting to £14,000.

Yet this humane and profitable consumption of the surplus labour of the East, an interchange so beneficial to both parties, is so little understood in many parts of England as to be looked upon as but a shade removed from slavery.

SENT TO GRAN MORFEW.

IN TWO PARTS.—PART II.

WE slept in a mighty room, attended by Emma, who roused us at six next morning, with the news that a post-chaise was already at the door, and the Principal stamping about in a fury at our delay. He was indeed in a horrible humour—scolding and muttering; and though he had breakfasted himself, hardly allowed us time to take a mouthful of milk and water. But his worst behaviour was when Emma, with her bonnet on, and a bundle in her hand, offered to accompany us. He actually stormed at her 'officiousness,' as he called it; and it was only when the stiff butler condescended to beg that she might be allowed to go with us the first stage, that the Principal sullenly gave way.

Once past the lodge, and in the high-road, Mr Pinkerton withdrew, and Pigwigin returned. Out came a little basket of choice provisions. Emma

came. Considering whither we were proceeding, it was as merry a party as you could wish to see—but there was no resisting the Principal's fun. The butler's 'first stage' was wholly forgotten, and Mr Pigwiggin seemed to have paid about twenty post-boys, in jackets of every hue, when he suddenly called out: 'As I'm a living creature, here we are!'

We dashed through a little village—up by a by-road—through a grove—across a lawn—up to the door of a large red building, matted with creepers, and looking more like a comfortable farm, than 'The Misses Hollabone and Skimpin's Seminary for Young Ladies.' A fat spaniel lay in the porch, and did not rise, but uttered a lazy bark, which, being accompanied by a wag of the tail, might be taken as a welcome. As we drove up, a pyramid of faces—all on the broad grin—appeared in one of the windows.

'Ha! she hasn't starved 'em *all*!' said the Principal gravely, as he got out of the chaise.

'Mith' Pigwiggin! Mith' Pigwiggin!' cried Gracie, scrambling out hastily at the risk of her neck.

He turned.

'Now, mind, 'ou don't run away, as 'ou did yesterday,' continued Gracie, lifting her small finger, with a grave cautioning expression.

'Pigwiggin will stay as long as you want him,' replied the Principal with twinkling eyes. 'Here's Miss Hollabone.'

Before our hearts had time to throb at the approach of the terrible schoolmistress, there hopped into the room (for she was slightly lame) a rosy little dame, as broad as she was long—which was probably about four feet two. Her face won us on the instant; and when she clasped us both together in her kind soft arms, the tears of pity standing in her eyes, all misgiving vanished at once and for ever.

'Well, Cousin Dorcas—you terrible ogress—here's another brace of victims for you,' said our conductor. 'Gobble them up as soon as you please; they're in fine condition, eh?'

Miss Hollabone laughed merrily.

'Well, pretty fair;' and she took Gracie on what she called her knee.—'Oh, come in, Sally.'

A neat, plump maiden, who had been hesitating at the door, now entered, bearing a tray, on which were tea, hot cakes, and sandwiches.

'Hollo, cousin, *already*? This won't do, you know,' said the Principal, as if uneasily. 'If Gran Morf'—

'I can't *help* it, cousin,' replied our mistress humbly; 'Miss Skimpin would never forgive me. Tea and toast are *her* department—Sally knows it. I never pumper the children' ['Ahem!'] said Mr Pinkerton; 'but Miss Skimpin insists that, coming off a journey, food, instant food, is essential. So, dears, as the things *are* here'—

And truly, if all three of us did not carry out Miss Skimpin's views, it was not the fault of Dorcas Hollabone.

Just as we had finished tea, Miss Skimpin made

her appearance. She was tall and thin; and evidently the manner-model of the establishment—the responsibilities of that office imparting a slight restraint and stiffness to her movements and conversation. After greeting us kindly, she added: 'The children, my dear, are getting so impatient, that, after fruitlessly entreating them to observe a more tranquil and becoming demeanour, I withdrew from a scene that threatened to become unseemly.—Your cousin, sir,' she continued, turning to Mr Pinkerton, 'has lately inaugurated a custom, which she considers conducive to the general health and well-being of the school—an hour's blind-man's-buff before retiring to rest. I, as she is aware, entertain different views on this—Hark, my dear!' added the good lady hastily, as a buzz from the distant schoolroom reached our ears. 'Do run, I entreat you; and, Dorcas—Dorcas, dear!' (calling after) 'remember, they have lost a good ten minutes already. That must be remembered!'

Although too fatigued to join in the sports, Gracie and I were introduced for a few minutes to the mirthful scene, and made acquainted with many of our future schoolmates. These appeared to number about thirty—all, without an exception, plump, good-humoured, and happy.

Emma undressed us, as usual, and we were on the point of getting into bed, in the cozy little chamber allotted to us, when Miss Hollabone hopped in, followed by Sally, carrying a warming-pan.

'Stop, dears. Let Sally—humph!—I never coddle children; but if Miss Skimpin knew that this wasn't—that's right, Sally—and the night is chill. Comforts their tiny toes.'

She gave us each a warm and comfortable kiss, and bustled away.

Everybody—the Principal and all—was up early next morning, and out on the sunny lawn. This was an institution of Miss Hollabone's (who held that, after prayer, the first moments of the day should be devoted to the enjoyment of its Creator's best gifts), and was opposed in theory, but carried out in practice, by Miss Skimpin, with all the zeal with which those good souls loved to shift upon each other the responsibility of indulgences in which they took an equal delight.

Then followed an hour's quiet schooling, when the sound of a deep mellifluous bell announced breakfast. The Principal met and led us in. Poor Gracie began to look a little grave, for the chaise was already seen coming to the door. To lose her Pigwiggin was bad enough; but Emma—our own dear faithful nurse, companion, friend! We were both crying bitterly, as Mr Pinkerton led us up to a table, behind which two maids were dispensing tea, cakes, muffins, &c., to the hungry multitude. My eyes being blurred with tears, I did not notice *who* gave the breakfast into my hand, till a familiar voice whispered: 'My sweet Miss Milly, don't you see?'

Emma, our own Emma! dressed the very counterpart of Sally; and working away among the cups and plates, as if she had been in the

service of Misses Hollabone and Skimpin twenty years, instead of as many minutes!

This was Pigwigglin's doing. Gracie's look gave him eloquent thanks.

And now this kind friend prepared to take his leave.

'Be good, darlings,' he said, as he walked towards the carriage; 'I shall hear of you often; watch over you always. Never write to Gran; she does not deserve—desire it, I mean—but to Pigwigglin as often as you please. God bless you, my Mildred—you also, my Gracie. I had a Gracie once; you shall surely see her, one blessed day.' He paused, then, with his pleasant smile, called out: 'Farewell, Cousin Dorcas; lots of pupils to you! But twelve pounds a year; board, washing, education, masters, books, feasting, frolic, and blind-man's-buff—how can it pay?'

'It pays you very well!' returned Miss Hollabone, with a beaming smile, as she waved adieu.

And so it did; but the profit made by those dear ladies was treasured in a safe no thief can injure.

It is needless to describe the happy period (nearly five years) passed in this house of peace. As Gracie and I became acquainted with our companions, we soon discovered that one and all of them were, like ourselves, either devoid of a home at all, or dependent upon harsh, unloving relatives, whose only object was to keep them in existence, upon terms as moderate as nature could possibly be prevailed on to accept.

Twelve pounds per annum was the price demanded by the Misses Hollabone and Skimpin, and exacted with an inflexibility that would have surprised their debtors less, could the latter have dreamed that every child of us stood this covetous firm in four times the amount! Miss Hollabone, perhaps, had her own secret reasons for insisting upon her rights in certain cases (I know she never allowed Gran Morfaw a day), yet I have known her forget such debts altogether! All I can say is, it was lucky for Misses Hollabone and Skimpin that they had each an independent fortune of their own!

In spite of the indulgence shewn us, you must not suppose that either idleness or insubordination was allowed to prevail. Under the quiet mastery of love, education in all that was needful for an active useful life went steadily forward, and gave true zest to the innocent pleasures Miss Hollabone (in deference to Miss Skimpin) and Miss Skimpin (in consideration of Miss Hollabone) were never weary of providing.

One only event is worth recording. It was in the third year of our school-life that a gentleman, who stated, incidentally, that he had become resident in a neighbouring town, sent in his card, and begged permission to renew a former acquaintance with Gracie and myself.

'Shew the gentleman into the parlour, Sally,' said our mistress. "'Mr Septimus Slithers, Sol.'—You know him, my dears?'

Know him! That we did. After Pigwigglin, who but Mr Slithers filled the most honoured place, beside the donkey, in memory's hall? In another minute, we were exchanging cordial congratulations, and the frankest expressions of surprise at the liberties time had taken with our personal appearances, since we last met.

Mr Slithers looked sleek and well, and hastened to inform us that he had settled in the county, and

was now his own principal. Seeing Gracie glance at his boot-heels, he casually remarked that his business entirely prevented indulgence in horse-exercise. He then inquired if we had heard lately from—from 'Emma,' was it?—our nurse, we knew?

Being informed that she was in the service of Miss Hollabone—'Dear me!' said Mr Slithers. 'Upon your word now? You don't say so! Why, how incredibly remarkable! I really should—if Miss Hollabone will permit—like to avail myself of this very extraordinary circumstance, and say how-de-do to Emma.'

Our mistress recognising nothing objectionable in the proposed observation, Emma made her appearance, blushing like a rose—her brown rings of curls vibrating in all directions, as if they were ringing a peal of welcome to our friend.

The five-minute bell before dinner, at this instant, compelled Gracie and me to skip away. What Emma replied to 'How-de-do' was never distinctly reported. I only know that she waited at dinner with the traces of tears visible upon a very happy face—and that, three months later, Emma Rusbridger—certain that Providence had raised up for us friends as true and loving as herself—resigned office with many tears, and became Mrs Septimus Slithers, solicitor, of Newton-Collop.

My story must have its end. Out of the warm red sunshine to the gloomy winter of Coldstone Towers.

You will find Gran Morfaw and Mr Pinkerton sitting in council, before a mighty fire—Gran folded in shawls and furs; Mr Pinkerton, with his cravat loosed and his waistcoat opened as far as punctilio permits, in a condition of incipient broil. Mrs Morfaw is older than she was nearly five years since, and no warmer; but the heart, accustomed from birth to the lowest temperature, holds out bravely against outward rigours, and throbs fiercely with hate and disappointed rage.

There is an open letter in her hand, and she beats it with fury, to emphasise her bitter words.

'It comes to this—either this woman has lied to me, or you. You need not start, man. I shall not mince words with you—you, my clerk, my hired servant, who, but for me, would be starving in your clientless chamber, or rotting in jail! Look, you! I will read again: "Florence Lowe, the little orphan whom, at my dear husband's express desire, we have taken to our home, could hardly reconcile herself to parting with her generous protectors. These people must be a marvel! Their school-keeping, it seems, is a mere pretext for obtaining the care of friendless and neglected little ones, their own means being ample for this and other benevolent purposes. Their names are strange, but they are written, notwithstanding, in the book of life, and should be musical in every Christian's ear. I enclose them."—Cant! Sickening humbug! The woman is as great an idiot as themselves!'

She crumpled up the letter, and flung it into the fire.

"Marvels," she calls them. Marvels of lying and swindling! I sent those brats to a place where, you taught me to believe, they would be trained to the duties and the hardships of the station in which I have sworn to keep them. They should have learned to starve—to freeze, as I do—to endure blows and buffets, and heavy toil; and,

thanks to your treachery, they have been bred in luxury—pitied, pampered— But my madams shall feel the difference; henceforth, *this* shall be their home!

Mr Pinkerton noticed the boding snarl, and his heart swelled, but he temporised. 'I will take measures,' he said, rising, 'for their removal— but!'

'I will not trust you,' retorted Gran, hissing it through her great false teeth. 'You have lied to me—lied to me in a thing nearest my—my heart.' Her voice failed, and she pressed her hand on the organ named, as if the mention of it had brought a spasm. 'I have sent for them myself. A solicitor, lately settled in that neighbourhood, has been instructed to pay the women, and prevent the further exercise of their uninvited charity. I sent for you, because I knew it would gratify you to witness their reception. But I trust you no more. You may know something of the law—you have been a decent agent and steward of my property, and may continue to act for me in that capacity, at least for the present—but in other matters, Pinkerton, it strikes me you are a fool—not such a fool, however, as to forfeit five hundred a year. So, take warning.'

'I will, madam,' replied Mr Pinkerton very quietly; 'and, since you have done me the honour to speak frankly, I will do the like. I have been a decent agent, inasmuch as my attention to your interests has added to your annual income no less than four thousand pounds. All that you have bestowed on me has been fairly, faithfully earned. My chambers, however, are no longer "clientless." My professional income is thrice the amount I hold at your pleasure; but for thrice *that*, I would not serve you for another day. Yes, you unhappy lady, these wages, as your pride would call them, that I now resign, leave still an account unsettled between us. I will pay myself *thus*: maltreat these innocent children of the daughter your brutality drove from her home, and I will give them shelter; cast them off, and I will adopt them.'

He rose. Mrs Morfew turned her white spectral face, distorted with pain and malice, towards the speaker, and lifted a bony finger. 'Hark!' she said, listening. 'The wheels! At least remain to see me embrace our darlings.'

She neither stirred nor spoke again, until the double doors swung open, and Gracie and I, attended by Mr and Mrs Slithers, entered the room. I saw the bony hand fly to her heart, as if to quiet some convulsive action, as she gasped out: 'I—I cannot—bear your presence—but for this—for this!'

She clutched at a paper on the table. Mr Pinkerton placed it in her hand. She thanked him with a malignant smile.

'When you—fools—made me believe I was dying—and that—for my soul's health—if nothing else, I should not leave those creatures to beg their bread—I, weaker fool than any, bequeathed them each one hundred pounds. I am—well—now, and wiser—and thus I—I pay—the legacy.' She tore the will across and across. 'Take notice all: I cancel!'

Again the hand went to her heart. A frightful stare came upon her face, and her mouth opened, like one uttering a prolonged scream, but there was no sound at all. For half a minute, we watched the appalling figure, sitting there, motionless, as if changed to stone; then Mr Pinkerton

made a step forward, but instantly turning, caught our hands, and led us away.

'Gran Morfew is gone,' he said solemnly. 'God help and pardon all. He has cared for the orphan. *All this is now yours.*'

IN A WAR PRISON.

I see her walking on the shore
With blowing hair and clapping hands,
Her wild thoughts fled beyond the seas
To me in foreign lands.

I see her sitting on the cliff,
Patient to watch the farthest range
Of tumbling seas that toss and fall,
And mock her by their change.

I see her waiting in the house,
But moving aye from room to room,
And startled at the sudden sounds
That waken with the gloom.

I see her sleepless in the night,
When on the roof pours down the rain,
And through her vacant heart then creeps
A suffocating pain.

I see her when the rising sun
Gleams on her window, rich and red,
Still sadly asking o'er the words:
'Oh, is he false—or dead!'

I see her growing wan and white,
Her eyes enlarged with wild unrest;
I see her, but I cannot soothe
The anguish of her breast.

And thus, ah, thus, for many months,
She waits to have some sign or word,
Then lays her weary down to die,
Heart-sick with hope deferred.

I lose her then. But well I know
The angels lift her far and free,
To a Great Rest, from whence she looks
Past rain, and cloud, and sea.

Past rain, and cloud, and dungeon-wall,
She looks from heaven far away—
She sees the fetters on my feet,
And knows what made me stay.

The Tale of MIRK ABBEY (by the author of 'LOST SIR MASSINGBERD,' 'THE CLYFFARDS OF CLYFFE,' &c.), is now completed, and will be followed on 7th July by an Original Serial Story, by THOMAS SPEIGHT, entitled **BROUGHT TO LIGHT.**

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BARGAINING.

If I were asked to point out the most striking moral difference between man and woman, I should say that the latter is a bargaining animal, and the former is not. Every woman is not devoted (as is generally believed) to Scandal; every woman is by no means, as the poet has declared, 'at heart a Rake;' every woman is not incapacitated by nature from keeping a secret; every woman (at least at the Great Salt Lake) is not jealous of her husband; but every woman that has a shilling to spend, or can procure the worth of it on credit, pursues at all times the occupation of Bargaining with a relish unknown to the foxhunter after a month of frost. It is true that this passion is not altogether confined to the fair sex. There are one or two old bachelors about town who have a morbid ambition to discover the cheapest provision-shops where curry-powder is to be got good and at a penny a packet cheaper than at the usual emporiums, or where olives are to be procured for the same price in bottles that hold half-a-dozen more than the usual quantity; but their case is so exceptional that it may be said to prove the rule. Nor is my position to be impugned by the fact, that, at the sea-side, fathers of families are to be sometimes seen at the market endeavouring (with signal want of success, since they have to deal with females) to cheapen fish; for at the sea-side, after the first week, a man will do anything in order to avert the temptation to cut his throat. For the most part, it is certain, Man has no natural desire for bargaining; or if he has, he soon becomes convinced by experience that he had better not attempt to gratify it.

The Noble Creature is not fitted to practise small economies of any kind, and he knows it; every now and then he takes a freak to indulge his family in some amusement, at a cheap rate, but it is always a failure, and (to do him justice) he never runs the risk when only himself is concerned. Thus, only a few months ago, being about to take my wife and little daughter to the Zoological Gardens, I thought I would save a shilling by using an

omnibus for that purpose instead of a cab. By going along the New Road—the most uninteresting route in all London—and getting out at Park Crescent (about half a mile from the desired spot), the thing could be done at exactly half the price, at the trifling sacrifice of directness and comfort.

'Thus,' said I didactically to my wife, as we stood waiting for the omnibus at the corner of the dusty street (and when it came up it was not the right one)—'thus, my dear, by a slight exercise of self-denial, we shall be able to have twice as many excursions of pleasure such as the present. You see, too, at this time of the day, the 'buses are quite empty, so that you will be almost as comfortable as though we had had a cab, or even hired a brougham.'

'Oh, quite as comfortable,' answered my good wife, delighted to corroborate this view, and the more so as it was rather a new one for me to take. 'See, there is only one gentleman in the vehicle.' This was very true; but the peculiarity of an omnibus when it has only three persons and a half in it (for my daughter is still below the railway adult limit, although I own I never ask for her half-ticket without embarrassment)—the peculiarity, I say, of an omnibus thus insufficiently freighted is, that it seems to lose all its springs, and to take its course over a ploughed field, and that at right angles, instead of the macadamised road. This characteristic is so much more apparent near the door, that we all had to migrate to the other end, where the strange gentleman was sitting, as though we intended to mob him, and pick his pocket. He was a very strange gentleman indeed, with a red pocket-handkerchief tied over his chin, as though self-prepared for interment; and with every shake of the vehicle, he made such a spasmodic movement of his jaw, as to give the idea that his teeth were coming out *en masse*.

'Is the gentleman mad?' whispered my little daughter, naturally a nervous child, and who, by studious application to fairy tales, has placed herself within easy distance of hysterics, if the least necessity should arise for them.

'No, my dear,' returned I soothingly: 'he has

only got a bad toothache; and I dare say he is going to the dentist, who, let us hope, will do him good.

Now, it so happened that this impressionable infant of mine was herself about to 'have her teeth looked to' in the course of the ensuing week; and indeed the present expedition had been undertaken to smoothly forward that proceeding, just as 'the ways' of a ship, the launch of which is expected to be difficult, are plentifully greased beforehand; and no sooner did I associate this unhappy gentleman's appearance with the operation of teeth-extraction, than her imagination presented to her what was likely to take place in her own case at Mr Drawwell's.

'Let us get out, mamma,' cried she, as pale as a ghost; and we got out; and having paid the fare, I took a cab for the same money for which we could have gone from our own door: so that, upon the whole, and not taking into account the inconveniences, the transit cost me exactly a shilling more than if I had not undertaken it upon economical principles. *Ex uno disce omnes.* Let this omnibus-adventure suffice as an example of man's failure in all such attempts. It is what happens with all of us. Fortunately, we have not only no natural passion for cheapness, but are rather ashamed of it than otherwise. It never could have been a man who demanded the proverbial 'glass of water and a toothpick' of the hotel waiter, and then, with unnecessary swagger, damned the expense. It may be urged with some truth, that the reason why we don't 'look twice at a shilling' before we part with it, is, first, because (however moderate may be our incomes) we are too proud to shew our solicitude about the matter (for man is a very proud creature); and, secondly, that we keep the purses of our wives very insufficiently supplied with shillings. Our pride can bear a little economy in that direction, it must be confessed. But when all allowance has been made for this, the fact remains, that ladies love cheapness. Nor are they very particular at whose expense this desideratum is secured. We have known them, while in foreign parts, to impose 'little commissions' upon their friends in England, which involve both time and trouble, merely to save themselves the fourpenny-stamp which a direct epistolary order would entail. Again, we have known them, even in the country, to send a cheque to a friend in London, in order that he may pay their bills for them, solely to avoid the expenditure of so many penny stamps. These, be it remembered, are not the devices of stingy persons: on the contrary, the good ladies who employ them are often remarkable for benevolence and generosity; 'only,' say they, 'they do hate wasting money.' And time not being money to themselves, they are under the impression that it is the same with other people. Nay, sooner than be what they call 'imposed upon' to the extent of a fourpenny-piece, they will put themselves to the most extraordinary expenses: and we have known one of these amiable monomaniacs to engage a brougham at Kensington, for the purpose of recovering a shilling from an establishment in St Paul's Churchyard, where they had on the previous day received, by that much, insufficient change for a sovereign.

But still more dearly than cheapness do ladies love the art of cheapening—Bargaining. No man who has ever sacrificed himself so far as to accompany his wife in a day's shopping, can be ignorant of their weakness in this respect. Nobody

who has listened to the conversation of women among themselves, can be unaware of this propensity. How boastful they are over a silk that cost sixpence a yard less than their neighbour's; and how they will advocate, with an enthusiasm superior to that of any paid agent, the claims to custom of their favourite shops! I am not speaking, of course, of great ladies who have large credits, and who do not care whether a dress costs them six guineas or ten; but yet I by no means confine my remarks to 'vulgar people'; the passion is as common as Vanity, and much more peculiar to the Sex. The indignation which a woman will often express against 'those ticketed shops,' and her reiterated expression of opinion, that 'if you want a good thing you must pay for it,' or that 'nothing is so dear in the end as a low-priced piece of goods,' are, to the student of human nature, only corroborations of the charge she fain would deny. The Tremendous Sacrifices which are so continually occurring in the linen-draper's establishments are instituted solely for the benefit of the ladies. Who ever heard of a tailor resorting to such amazing expedients? The enormous circulars left in our letter-boxes, with *Immediate*, or *By Order of the High Court of Chancery*, upon the envelopes, are aimed at the mistress of the house alone. They are full of the most transparent delusions, but the wily composer is aware that he is addressing readers not merely credulous, but eagerly desirous to be convinced. '*Ruinous Delay! The vast Alterations (previously announced) to these Premises are suspended by Order of the Royal Commissioners to the end of July! Enormous and Incredible Sale in consequence, for Ten Days Only!!! Property, which would have otherwise fetched a Hundred Thousand Pounds, Must and Will (in consequence of this arbitrary measure) be ruthlessly and forcibly sold at One-fourth of the Cost. The Reductions in the Prices are lavished to an extent truly Appalling. And such are the arrangements made for completing the sale, that Nothing on Earth can prevent its accomplishment.*' Then follows a list of the 'marvellous fabrics' thus 'unmercifully depreciated'; and *Materfamilias*, who has long been 'thinking about getting herself a new silk dress,' decides upon purchasing one of 'the noblest and best moire antiques in the world, with water-lines perfect, and the effect of which must be characterised as Magnificent.'

Nor does she drive down to Messrs Poplin and Tabbinet, and ask for the article in question and for that only, as a man would; she understands how to economise her pleasure as well as her money. She is bent upon seeing not only the peerless moire antiques, but the 'zephyr-like grenadines,' the mohairs of 'newest amalgamated stripes,' the 'serviceable poplins,' and even those 'sublime, graceful, and elaborate productions of Persia,' the India shawls at seven pounds fifteen shillings. It is a wonder to me that no haberdasher's apprentice has ever gone stark-staring mad under the torture thus inflicted by female customers. In that little room at the fashionable tailor's which is panelled with glass, so that a gentleman may 'see himself as others see him,' from every point of view, is doubtless to be found sometimes a customer who gives a great deal of trouble; but then he does not haggle about the price; doesn't intend, very likely, to pay for the articles in question at all. But with the lady at Messrs Poplin and Tabbinet it is very different. She revels in pecuniary combat. She informs her victim that his proprietors are charging very much

more than this or that is worth. She assures him that she can get the same thing cheaper at some shop in Pimlico, in a street that is the third or fourth turning on this side of Warwick Square. The poor fellow says he is very sorry, he is sure, and bows and smiles in a deferential manner, though after he has unrolled the fifth or sixth bundle of goods without effecting a sale, there must be murder in his secret heart; nay, he is trusted with that wand, exactly of the dimensions to which the law is said to have restricted the instrument of marital correction, and has never used it, to my knowledge, except for the purposes of mensuration.

You may know, however, that he is not so submissive as he seems by his conduct towards any male who may rashly accompany his spouse on such an expedition. Indeed, no Paterfamilias ever does such a thing twice unless in expiation for some peccadillo, and when I see him doing it, I say to myself: 'What, Mr Caudle, you have been more attentive to Miss Prettyman than you ought to have been, within the last day or two!' or: 'You have come home with the milk in the morning, have you, you middle-aged reprobate!' It is only very simple people, indeed, who set him down as a domestic man and pattern husband.

In the East—or at least in Egypt—Bargaining is a recognised institution, and all purchases are effected upon the auctioneering system. You buy a carpet in the street, according to Lady Duff Gordon, in the following fashion. You look at it superciliously, and remark: 'Three hundred piastres, O uncle.' Upon this, the broker exclaims despairingly to the passers-by, or to the gentlemen sitting outside the coffee-shop: 'O Muslims, hear that, and look at this admirable carpet! By my faith, it is worth two thousand.' And those appealed to give their various opinions at length, and the sale is (to women) a linked sweetness long drawn out—what brokers call a time-bargain. Egypt, then, in spite of its polygamous ways, must be a Seventh Heaven to ladies. But in London, where matters are not so conducted, the notion of Bargaining is abhorrent to the male, and what he suffers when he goes a-shopping with his Mate is something terrible. Of course, at respectable shops no diminution in the fixed prices is ever permitted; but from the printed statement to that effect which you read in many of them, you may know that the attempt is often made. At all events, the lady will not hesitate to express her opinion that the figure is too high. It is then, and only then, that the shopman and the husband have any sympathy for one another: the former throws an appealing glance across the counter to his brother-man, as though he would say: 'You know her, of course; but is not this very embarrassing?' and Paterfamilias smiles grimly in return.

He is not, however, to be easily conciliated by that shopman at whose hands he has suffered various indignities. He has been led through room after room with nothing but female purchasers in them, into perhaps the very sanctuary of the place, the mantle department, where ladies are 'trying on' the newest shapes, and putting themselves into rather unusual ones during the process. They resist this intrusion of Paterfamilias as much as Diana and her attendants did that of Acteon. He does not—supposing he is a modest man—know where to look, for where there is not some attitudinising goddess, there is her reflection in a pier-glass. What with the multitude of mirrors,

and his own confusion, it is more than probable he does damage; treads on some dainty skirt, or walks through a looking-glass, which he imagines to be the portal of another chamber. Moreover, the shopman is his natural enemy, openly endeavouring to persuade Paterfamilias to purchase things which she does not want, or cannot afford; and the manner in which he will sympathise with her upon a question of expense, affords the sublimest example of contempt and security of having the matter their own way at last, that can be met with out of the speeches of Mr Stuart Mill. I have never heard of a husband obtaining any victory in these unequal combats, nor of even a drawn-battle; but I once knew a Paterfamilias to be goaded by the treatment he received upon a shopping expedition of this sort, into an act—or rather a word—of Retaliation. His sufferings had been severe and protracted; his wife, a lady of magnificent presence, aided and abetted by the shopman, had triumphed over and trodden upon him in every possible way. The worm had writhed, but had not ventured to turn throughout the proceedings. Everything had been bought which his wife fancied, or his enemy had recommended, and the bill was being made out.

'Let me give you one word of advice, young man,' said Paterfamilias hoarsely, as he pulled out his purse.

The 'young man' stopped in his compounded arithmetic; his hitherto confident ally exhibited some symptoms of alarm lest 'dear John should say something ridiculous.'

'Let me strongly recommend you never to marry a fine woman,' continued her husband demoniacally: 'that's all.'

Alarmed at his own audacity, though much relieved by this sardonic observation, Paterfamilias would have left the shop, impoverished, but not altogether dispirited; but the shopman, with characteristic persistency, must needs inquire: 'Why, sir?'

Poor Paterfamilias had already shot his bolt, and besides, as I have said, was a little frightened at having done so. 'Because, sir,' said he—'because, as you ought to know, a fine woman requires two and a half more yards of silk in her dress than any other woman.'

It was not at all the ferocious thing that he had originally intended in his rebellious heart, and indeed seems to me to smack something of an anticlimax; but it had this happy effect—his wife has never asked 'dear John' to go a-shopping since.

A GREAT BORE MADE USEFUL.

ABOUT fifty years ago, a sharp-eyed, quick-witted man, ready to draw wisdom from any and every fount, was one day looking at a piece of old ship-timber, which had been ruined by the attacks of the marine animal known as the *Teredo navalis*; and he bethought him of watching the manner in which this worm manages its destructive work. He found that the animal is armed with a pair of strong shelly valves, which envelop its anterior integuments; that, with its foot as a fulcrum, a rotatory motion is given by powerful muscles to the valves, which, acting on the wood like an auger, penetrate gradually but surely; and that the particles of wood, as they are loosened, pass through a longitudinal fissure in the foot, and so upward to the mouth, where they are expelled.

This sharp-eyed man was Mark Isambard Brunel; and the use which he made of his observation, some few years later, was to derive from it the principle of constructing his wonderful shield, with which he excavated the Thames Tunnel. A great work was that. Many ingenious men had tried their skill, long before Brunel took up the matter, in carrying a roadway under the Thames. So long ago as 1798, Mr Ralph Dodd, the civil engineer, made public a plan for forming a tunnel, more than half a mile long, from Gravesend to Tilbury, which he thought he could effect for the wonderfully small sum of sixteen thousand pounds. He had been led to the idea while thinking of the useful services which might be rendered by a similar tunnel under the Tyne from North Shields to South Shields. Indeed, there had really been a tunnel made, by miners if not by road-engineers, under the last-named river; seeing that the workings of the Wylam Colliery had been carried beneath it from the Northumberland to the Durham side. Nothing definite, however, resulted from Mr Dodd's suggestion. Next, we hear of a Mr Vazie, or Vesey, who, in 1802, succeeded in forming a Company (the Thames Archway Company) for the construction of a tunnel from Rotherhithe to Limehouse, not far from the locality of the present Thames Tunnel. He sank a shaft, to explore the ground on the Surrey side, and from the bottom of this shaft, seventy-six feet below high-water level, began a horizontal driftway under the river. But difficulties accumulated in such number that Mr Reunie, Mr Chapman, and Mr Trevethick were called in to report and advise. Engineers differed, directors quarrelled, and the works were suspended till 1807. The workmen then proceeded to dig away, until they had got twelve hundred feet across the breadth of the river. The river broke in; bags of sand and clay were used to stop up the gap; another irruption and another stop-gap; and so over and over again—until, at length, the Company had lost all their money. They made one more move, however: they offered a premium of five hundred pounds for the best plan of continuing and finishing the work. Plans flowed in upon them by scores; and they submitted forty-nine of them to the careful examination of Dr Hutton and Mr Jessop. The report was a discouraging one. The examiners said: 'Though we cannot presume to set limits to the ingenuity of other men, we must confess that, under the circumstances which have been so clearly represented to us, we consider that an underground tunnel, which would be useful to the public, and beneficial to the adventurers, is impracticable.' This decision settled the whole affair; so there was an end of the first great bore. A few years afterwards, in 1816, Mr Hankin obtained a patent for a new mode of making a tunnel under the Thames, by sinking two brick shafts into the river at certain distances from the shore, working from both of these shafts towards the centre of the river, and using the shafts as pump-wells to drain the works as fast as they proceeded. Nothing, however, resulted from this invention.

At length, the era of Brunel arrived. That man of fertile expedients, in 1818, took out a patent for an excavating machine on the principle of his old acquaintance, the *Teredo navalis*. He was urged by some of the promoters of the former scheme to develop some practicable plan on the basis of his patent. He did so; but various cir-

cumstances delayed until 1823 the practical announcement of his plan. A general meeting was held at the London Tavern; a Company was formed; a capital of nearly two hundred thousand pounds was raised; and an act of parliament was obtained in 1824. Forty borings were made at different parts of the river's width; and the borers arrived at a strong blue clay, which was pronounced favourable. Brunel was engaged as engineer, at a salary of a thousand pounds a year; and ten thousand pounds was to be given for his patent, contingent on certain conditions. In 1825, he began work in earnest. Never, perhaps, was engineer more tried by the difficulties of an undertaking. Water and obstinacy were his two chief troubles—water that burst into his excavations as fast as he made them; and obstinacy on the part of some of the directors of the Company, who often thwarted the plans which he wished to adopt. He began at the Rotherhithe side of the river, sinking a brick shaft fifty feet in diameter by more than forty deep. This enormous shaft was built on the ground, and sunk by digging away the ground beneath it. While this was being done, Messrs Maudslay were constructing the *teredo* shield, a wonderful piece of mechanism, which enabled a large number of men to work at once, digging away the ground in front of a number of cells or recesses, and travelling onward as the work proceeded. This shield has been the admiration of all engineers, who regard it as perhaps the most fertile creation of Brunel's fertile brain. 'Beneath the great iron ribs of the shield,' it has been said, 'a kind of mechanical soul seems to have been created. It had its shoes and its legs, and used them too with good effect. It raised and depressed its head at pleasure; it presented invincible buttresses in its front to whatever danger might there threaten; and, when the danger was passed, it again opened its breast for the further advances of the indefatigable host.'

In the beginning of 1826, the horizontal workings commenced, and then also commenced the real difficulties. The story of the Thames Tunnel is a story of irruptions and inundations. Sometimes there was so little ground or soil left between the top of the tunnel and the bed of the river, and the stuff was so soft and loose, that stones, brick-bats, bones, coals, and pieces of glass and earthenware fell through into the workings. A diving-bell was once lowered from a barge above; the diver thrust an iron pipe right down into the tunnel; and Mr Benjamin Hawes made a curious present from the nether world to the world above, by thrusting up a number of gold pins through the pipe to the diving-bell, as a memento of the singular operations. From time to time there were found in the shield a piece of brass, an old shoe-buckle, and a shovel, which had sunk through the soft soil from the river-bed. No one but a civil engineer can appreciate the anxieties which Brunel had to bear during the progress of the works. The lives of such men exhibit a perpetual struggle against difficulties. The water of the Thames made an irruption into the tunnel in 1827, a second in 1828, a third and a fourth in 1837, and a fifth in 1838; these were great irruptions, apart from the less important, but more numerous influxes of water. Let us take the first, as an example of the whole.

The younger Brunel (Isambard Kingdon, who was destined to fame as the engineer of the broad-

gauge railways and the mighty *Great Eastern*, in later years) was one of the assistant-engineers under his father in 1827; and Mr Beamish was another. On the 18th of May, at two o'clock in the morning, Beamish relieved young Brunel in superintending the workmen and workings, a duty which they took alternately. At five o'clock, the tide rose, and the earth in the workings was evidently in a very disturbed state. The men, throughout the day, exhibited much reluctance to go to work. On that same evening the troubles began. Water from the river found its way through the soil, rushed into some of the cells of the shield, and literally washed the men out of them. The water in the finished part of the tunnel was rising fast; Beamish and the men had to struggle amongst floating casks and boards, and to wade back to the shaft as best they could. It was a critical moment. Scarcely had the shaft been reached, when the entire tunnel became filled with raging water—that tunnel which, on the self-same afternoon, had been visited by Lady Raffles and a distinguished party. Even at the shaft, the danger was not over; for the water rose almost faster than the men could scramble up the ladder. At ten o'clock, the elder Brunel, the Tunnel King, heard of the calamity. He hastened to the spot, and spent the night in planning how to meet the difficulties. He descended in a diving-bell on the following morning at a particular spot in the river; and there found a gap in the soft muddy bed, through which the water had entered into the unfinished workings of the tunnel. How to fill up the gap? Brunel obtained a large number of old saltpetre bags, filled them with clay, and dropped them from barges into the gap; hazel rods being so thrust through the bags as to enable them to cling or interlace. For five days, this throwing in of bags continued; and then a raft of timber, laden with a hundred and fifty tons of clay, was sunk over the spot. It was not, however, until thousands of cubic feet had been thrown in, and many hairbreadth escapes encountered, that the gap could be stopped, the water pumped out of the tunnel, and the works resumed. Brunel and Beamish both became ill in consequence of the intense mental and bodily labour and excitement during this anxious period. This conquest over the waters was celebrated by a dinner in the finished portion of the tunnel, the *grandees* partaking of good cheer in one arch, and the workmen in another.

Over and over again, however, did troubles from inundations occur. Brunel had to grieve over the loss of the lives of many trusty men; to invent remedies for every disaster; and to encounter the dissatisfaction of directors and shareholders, who complained that he had exhausted all the resources of the Company. On one occasion, the younger Brunel himself had a narrow escape. 'On the 12th of January 1828,' says Mr Beamish (*Life of Brunel*), 'a strange confused sound of voices seemed to issue from the shaft; and immediately the watchman rushed in exclaiming: "The water is in—the tunnel is full!" They had felt as though it would burst. I rushed to the workmen's staircase; it was blocked up by the men. With a crow-bar, I knocked in the side of the visitors' staircase; but I had not taken many steps down when I received Isambard Brunel in my arms. The great rush of water had thrown him to the surface, and he was providentially preserved from the fate which had already overwhelmed his companions.' Six hapless men were drowned on this occasion.

One of the remarkable features connected with the history of this great work, was the excited state into which the minds of the workmen were brought. The dangers were so many and so varied, that the men were always on the look-out for them, and were prone to believe in them and dream of them even when they did not occur. Watchers were set in the tunnel all night, to report on any appearance of the incoming of water. On one of these occasions, the head bricklayer was heard to vociferate: 'Wedges, clay, oakum! the whole of the faces coming in—coming altogether!' On hastening to him, it was found that he was fast asleep on a bed of clean straw: the exclamation had escaped him in a dream. On another occasion, a panic seized the men; and the engineers were set hastily searching for a disaster which had not occurred. Mr Beamish recorded in his notebook the exact account of the affair given to him by Miles, one of the overseers. 'I seen them Hrishers a come a-tumbling through one o' them small harches like mad bulls—as if the devil kicked 'em. Screech of Murder! murder! Run for your lives! My ears got a-singing, sir; all the world like when you and me were down in that 'ere diving-bell—till I thought as the water was close upon me. Run legs or perish body, says I! when I see Pascoe ahead o' them there miners along as if the devil was looking for him. Not the first, my lad, says I; and away with me—and never stopped till I got landed fair above ground. Then I began bellowing like mad for the rascals to get ropes and throw 'em down, making sure the water was coming up the shaft. Well, sir, we was a-swinging about the ropes, but the devil a one would lay hold. So I looked down, and what should I see? Why, nothing at all, sir—all a hoax!'

So costly and disheartening, however, were the real disasters, that there was a doubt for some years whether the tunnel would ever be finished. By the close of 1828, all the capital was gone, and the 'money-market' declined to come to the rescue. A deputation to the government failed in obtaining any supply, and the shield was bricked up, denoting a total stoppage of the works. In 1830, Messrs Pritchard and Hoof brought forward a plan for finishing the tunnel on a cheaper plan; it was submitted to Mr Peter Barlow, Mr Walker, and Mr Tierney, clerk, for examination; but they could make nothing satisfactory of it, and therefore it was abandoned. Four years more passed away, and then, in 1834, government agreed to advance two hundred and fifty thousand pounds, wherewith to finish a work of which all Englishmen felt proud, despite its misfortunes. The works recommenced in 1835; but even then, eight long years crept away before the double tunnel was finished from the Rotherhithe shaft at one end to the Wapping shaft at the other. It was not till 1843, just twenty years after Brunel had perfected and made known his scheme, that the Thames Tunnel was finally opened to the public—after making a very deep inroad indeed into half a million of money.

Concerning the technicalities of this notable work, we need not say much; most Londoners, and most visitors to London, know it pretty well. The excavation is really a vast one, considering that a large and busy river flows so immediately over it. The actual area of earth scooped away was no less than thirty-eight feet broad by twenty-two high; this, with massive brickwork all round, and still more massive brickwork up the middle,

divided the tunnel into two parallel passages, somewhat horse-shoe shape, each about fifteen feet high, and wide enough for a carriage-way and a foot-way. Arched openings at every few feet lead from the one passage to the other. The whole length of each passage, from the Wapping shaft to that of Rotherhithe, is about twelve hundred feet. The tunnel is not quite level; it is a little lower at the middle than at the two ends, the gradient being quite easy enough for any kind of vehicle.

This, then, is the submarine or rather sub-fluvial tunnel which is now about to be made really useful. It can hardly be said that the Thames Tunnel has been of any great use hitherto; for the descending roadways, necessary for the accommodation of horses and vehicles, have never been constructed; and the penny-passengers across that part of the river have never been more in number than a few ferry-boats could easily accommodate. The people, poor folks, who try to earn a living in this queer place, have but hard fare of it. There is a smell of the earth, earthy, and a smell of gas, and sometimes a dampness on the walls. The penny buns, somehow, don't eat like other penny buns; the purses and trinkets look damp; the photographs are rather weird-like; the cosmoramas are flabby, the camera dinky, the music dolorous. How can it be otherwise? It is doubtful whether even the philosophy of Mark Tapley would make one jolly in such a place. There they sit, those patient traders, each under a gas-lighted arch, hoping that their takings in a day will yield a profit sufficient to pay the rent and keep themselves. A hard life.

The tunnel is now (or soon) to be a railway. On many occasions, during the last ten or fifteen years, the Company have looked out for a customer in this direction; but never until the present time has the proper combination of circumstances presented itself. The Chatham and Dover Company cross the Thames into the city at one spot, and the South-eastern will shortly cross it at another (Cannon Street); this has set the other companies on the *qui vive*; and the Thames Tunnel is pronounced to be a very convenient central bit for a railway ramifying out at both ends. The scheme is the *East London Railway*; an act has been obtained; the capital has been supplied with wonderful readiness; the tunnel is, or will soon be, paid for at a stipulated price; and well-known contractors have engaged upon the operations with an energy which shews that they mean to do the matter well. Let us suppose that the reader knows that part of the Greenwich Railway where the Commercial Dock Station is situated. Within half a mile or so of that spot, the East London Railway will wed itself to all the great railways on the south of the Thames, forming junctions with the Greenwich, the North Kent, the South-eastern, the Chatham and Dover, the old and new lines of the Brighton, and (intermediately) with the South-western. Then dipping down into mother-earth, the railway will reach the level of the tunnel at the bottom of the Rotherhithe shaft. Rails in the tunnel will give an up-line through one arch, and a down-line through the other. Then, from the Wapping shaft, a line burrowing with an upward incline, will pass under the London Docks, Shadwell, Commercial Road, and Whitechapel Road, and will emerge into daylight somewhere in the classic regions of Spitalfields. Next, after forming a junction with a new railway which the Great Eastern are constructing, to shorten the distance on their

Cambridge route, the East London will bend round and find its way to the neighbourhood of Finsbury Circus. If the other companies do all that they promise, there is something like a probability that the East London will ultimately fit in with all the great lines north of the Thames, that is, the Great Eastern, Metropolitan, Metropolitan District, Blackwall, North London, Great Northern, Midland, North-western, and Great Western. It almost takes one's breath away to go through the list.

Pity 'tis that neither of the Brunels is left to us! It would be a glory to the old man, and a satisfaction to his son, to know that the tunnel which they made for one kind of traffic is, after so many vicissitudes, deemed suitable for another of a superior kind. Non-professional people quake a little; but those who ought to know best say that the Thames Tunnel is as sound as a rock, in all essential particulars, and quite fitted to bear the rumbling and vibration of railway trains.

PRISON PORTRAITS.

PRISON literature, in a popular sense, has received considerable contributions, and commanded a great deal of attention, since its existence commenced in Mr Charles Reade's famous book, which it is absurd to treat simply as a work of fiction, *Never too late to Mend*. Society conceived a notion that it was its right to be informed in all particulars concerning those among its members who, having sinned against it, were under its condemnation and chastisement; and from that time forth society has not relaxed in its curiosity, has not abated its desire and determination to know. The great Convict question has been discussed in all its branches; the whole consideration of punishment, in all its aspects, has received every kind of attention—the attention of parliament, of royal commissions, of practical experimentalists, of theorists, of religious and scientific men, of literature, and of the press. Mingled discouragement and hope have attended those wide-spread investigations—discouragement, as society has been brought to understand the tremendous weight and difficulty of the task which the age has set it; hope, as the earnestness, purity of motive, determination, and diligence with which the appointed toilers have, up to this point, conducted their labours, become more patent to observation.

It is pleasanter to think of what has been done than to contemplate what remains to be attempted; but it is well to profit to the full by every opportunity of enjoying the knowledge of the first, and forming a just estimate of the last. Among the most reliable and interesting of the sources of information lately opened to public attention on this immeasurably important subject, are a series of works which carry with them the weight of official authority, and indisputable authenticity. They are respectively entitled, *Female Life in Prison*, *Memoirs of Jane Cameron*, and *Prison Characters, drawn from Life*, and are written by a prison matron. Their details are deeply interesting, and their attractions are many-sided. The latest, or *Prison Characters, drawn from Life*,* throws a strong lurid light on the truth which it is so hard to understand, to take practically into our minds,

* *Prison Characters, drawn from Life: with Suggestions for Prison Government.* By a Prison Matron, author of *Female Life in Prison*, &c. Hurst and Blackett.

that criminals are a race apart, for whom the ideas, the rules, and the aspirations of ordinary life have no meaning, whose war with society is, in most cases, inextinguishable, interminable—whose lives are not so much perverted as inverted; a race, too, whose females are infinitely more unmanageable and inhuman than its males. Society learned with surprise, when *Female Life in Prison* appeared, how terribly arduous and responsible, how much overlaid with physical toil, how depressing in its moral action, is the life of the women, who rule and tend, who live and labour, among the female inmates of our prisons.

It is difficult to discern any brightness, to find any alleviation in the life of a prison matron; indeed, the difference between her existence and that of her charges is less distinctly marked than could be wished. She is not much better fed, and her toil is arduous, monotonous, and tremendously responsible; on the whole, not much preferable to making mats or picking coir. Inexorable routine presses upon her as ruthlessly as upon the prisoners, and the most exciting element in her life is its danger. The male warder of a convict-prison does not run one-half the risks to which the matron of the 'female side' is exposed. 'Breaking out' is an exclusively feminine accomplishment, and is accompanied with a savage desire, and, in many instances, an express determination, to take the unpopular matron's life. Her pay is small, her labours are merciless, her pension mean, and earned, considering its nature, by unreasonably long service. The amount of self-discipline requisite for the fulfilment of her duties is very great, and keenly painful, and the atmosphere of prison-life is for ever about her. The physician is not always in sick-rooms; the lawyer and the magistrate are not always confronted with crime and misery, with distress and punishment; but the prison matron leads the prison-life and no other—a life of constant inspection, obedience to rules on her own part, and the enforcement of such obedience on others, a life of unspeakable monotony and sadness. The moral influence of such a life must be terrible, where there is susceptibility, which comes of education, principle, and those other qualities without which the prison matron is unfit for her post. That the lady to whom we owe this valuable series of works, this 'officer,' as she calls herself, was eminently fitted for her position, and therefore calculated to suffer keenly in filling it, and that she did so suffer, it is impossible to doubt. She reviews it now with all the clearness of reasoning and observation habitual to a strong intellect, with all the tenderness, all the gentle suggestions, all the womanly instincts natural to a kind and feeling heart.

There is a strange mingling of the tragic and the grotesque in the prison portraits which this artist, who had talent and leisure for their study, paints for us. A shrinking kind of curiosity to learn what manner of persons they are who are shut up behind the relentless walls of the grim stone fortresses, past which the tide of busy life flows on, without breaking the stillness of the durance inside, making no mark upon its monotonous routine, is probably a general feeling, but one which few possess the power or the leisure to gratify. The law of variety prevails there, in the stronghold of sameness—the mingling of good and evil; the variation in the power of suffering; here, susceptibility to good influences; there, utter callousness;

now, hopeless insubordination and brutishness, inconceivable ignorance and inbred love of crime; and anon, amenity, malleability, intelligence, and a terrible combination of weakness and misfortune.

Eccentricity is a striking characteristic of all these portraits, not in the sense of the difference between their originals and the rest of the world—their belonging to the criminal classes establishes that at once—but in the sense of queer habits, strange notions of amusement and ambitions, and abnormal methods of rendering themselves troublesome and obnoxious. Of the latter, 'breaking-out' and 'palling-in' are hardly to be accounted, for they are very general, and, in fact, constitute the paramount difficulty of dealing with female prisoners. The inexplicable, objectless violence of the first proceeding, and the unmitigated silliness of the latter, in which the elder prisoners are as ardent and inveterate as the younger, give rise to extraordinary scenes—in the first instance, of panic and danger; in the second, of extreme absurdity, but none the less subversive of discipline. A curious instance of the 'palling-in' system is afforded by the portrait of Cecilia Costello, than whom it would be difficult for any woman to be vainer or plainer. She considered herself remarkably handsome, and was very proud of her proficiency in slang—boasting that she had a 'cramp' or catch-word for every word in the English language; her self-complacency was immovable, and her fickleness extraordinary.

'She was not,' says the Prison Matron, 'without a sense of humour in herself; prison-servitude did not weigh upon her spirits in the least; she worked out her sentence with composure and philosophy, and made the best of her position. An old hand at petty larceny, well known at the London police-courts, and habituated to prison-life in all its varieties, she was not to be dispirited by a long sentence or by her "surroundings." A more aggravating prisoner to a matron of strict disciplinary habits it would be difficult to imagine, for Cecilia would talk, in 'association' and out of it—in the one case, to her 'pals,' entertaining them with stories of conquests; in the other, to herself, complacently soliloquising upon the colour and shape of her hands, the symmetry of her feet, and the 'style' and grace of her walk. She gave every one a nickname, and persisted in applying it on every occasion; and she was great at composing 'stiffs,' and conveying them to their destinations. She would abstract the fly-leaves from the prison books, or write upon the gas-papers endearing letters to her favourite pals, while the reign of each lasted, which she invariably signed—'Yours ever fexashunately Sessilia.' She was infinitely mischievous, and delighted in setting the prison society by the ears, while she preserved an outward appearance of irreproachable decorum. She would make new pals, and suborn the affections of the pals of others; and when jealousy led to rows, then Cecilia would say demurely: 'I've done nothing; I can't help the poor thing's breaking out. I never axed her; and I suppose it ain't the rules to make me answerable for other people's goings on. I only want to be kep to myself, and to be allowed to keep quiet.' There are pleasanter ideals of existence than that of the keeper of a children's school where the pupils are numerous and ungovernable; but such a life must be Elysian in comparison with that of a prison matron whose charges are refractory women—an awful phrase, combining the restlessness

and folly of childhood with the physical and moral maladies, the cunning and the desperation, of womanhood, and including an indescribable flavoured of the diabolical.

Nothing connected with these prisoners is harder for outsiders to realise than their total absence of shame on the score of their crimes. It is so difficult to understand minds which are not affected by detection as detection, but only as the road to punishment; yet such cases are ordinary in the commonwealth of crime; and some prisoners, convicted of the larger classes of crime, pride themselves upon the magnitude of their guilt, and look down upon the lesser criminals with contempt. Thus, the 'life-woman,' who may have ten years of her sentence carried out, perhaps, and will then be turned loose to prey upon society, who has been convicted of murdering, or trying to murder, a man or a woman, will despise her fellow-prisoner who has only 'done for' a child, whether the child be her own or another's, as in the case of Jane Weynnoth, the subject of one of the strangest of these sketches. She was a girl, only sixteen years old, when she deliberately drowned the child of a neighbour who had been left in her charge. The mother, driven no doubt by want to the unnatural deed, deserted the child; and Jane threatened vengeance on the woman who 'put the trick' upon her. 'She was not going to stand it; she would not be saddled with other people's brats;' so, the day after the mother's disappearance (no long trial of her charity and patience), she drowned the child. Starvation was in the midst of the population of the Cornish village, and it was hard to live; harder for Jane, perhaps, than for others, for the people did not like her, and she had a bad name; so there was not much cheer in existence for the fatherless and motherless girl, who 'rented a small room with other girls of her own age.' One would think the prison-life better than such conditions, when, her sentence commuted, she was sent there, 'a girl with little knowledge of right from wrong, not oppressed in any degree by the weight of her sentence—a dogged, resisting, vindictive being.' The cruel crime of her youth was but an index to her character. Of this crime, she spoke constantly as her 'misfortune;' and her prison history is not calculated to render the reflection that she is now, in all probability, alive, and a free agent, reassuring. 'She had a striking face,' says the Prison Matron—'a face that, in its dark significance, has caused more than one visitor to ask her name, and guess by instinct the nature of her crime. A desperate woman before her prison-life commenced—a desperate woman afterwards; resisting authority; lewd, wild, and blasphemous in her conduct, passing from the solitary to the dark cell, and from the dark cell to the solitary; resisting all good advice, and inclined to die rather than give in.' What a terrible picture of a raging, rebel human heart, behind inexorable stone walls, in the power of officials bound by their duty to carry out the inevitable punishment of such rage and rebellion. Dead to kindness, reckless of punishment, a tigress in her moments of fury, and in her best moods, a sullen, morose animal rather than a woman, there was nothing to be done with her; and at last, she achieved so much of a victory over the wearied officials, that they considered it better to pass over her offences when it was possible, than to agitate a whole ward by punishing them. Though she had apparently no faculty of affection or gratitude, she could not

resist the excitement of 'palling-in;' and one of the most striking stories in this book relates to Jane Weynnoth in love and war.

"Weynnoth," was said to her one day, when she was a wing-woman, and had the privilege of sitting at her open cell-door, and conversing with her neighbour, "Tarrant has thrown you over for a new pal, and says you ain't her sort." Weynnoth did not ask for further proof of this fickleness on the part of the treacherous Tarrant, but rose at once, shook herself like a dog, and marched away to inflict condign punishment on the spot. When Weynnoth rushed along in this manner, the prisoners cowered in their seats, and the matron on duty let her pass without an effort to stay her—a wise precaution, that saved her at least from an unequal struggle, in which she must have succumbed. Down she rushed to the second ward, found the unoffending Tarrant, and pounced upon her with the evident intention of dashing the life out of her. Thence arises a commotion in the ward; the matrons mustering their flocks of black sheep, and locking them in, to hinder further mischief; others rushing to the rescue of Tarrant, fighting and swearing her hardest beneath her injuries; the men rung for, and Weynnoth, finally a prisoner, fighting to the last with her captors, and making the walls ring with her oaths, as she was borne off to solitary. This prison heroine wound up her service at Brixton by a desperate attack on the late deputy-superintendent, Miss Brown; and was sent back to the severer restraint of Millbank, whence she was finally set at large. This is a horrid history, full of a miserable truth; yet the writer declares there were many worse women in the prison than Weynnoth—more vicious, more violent, and more utterly heartless.

The stern restrictions, the unrelaxing vigilance of the prison-system, make it impossible for the different dispositions of the prisoners to exhibit themselves in any but grotesque fashions; therefore, many of these stories are grimly amusing; for instance, that of 'Ink-bottle Smith,' sentenced for life for arson, a woman whose capacity for quiet, unpunishable aggravation was unlimited, and whose passion for letter-writing was insatiable; hence her sobriquet. To her wild craving for ink, 'Ink-bottle,' or 'Pen-and-ink Smith,' was ready to sacrifice anything, and did sacrifice her badges. She invariably took her thimble to school, for the purpose of bringing it back, concealed in her hair, full to the brim; and this thimble, inserted in a piece of the crumb of her dinner-bread, formed her inkstand. Coming back from school one day with the other prisoners, the suspicious matron observed her trying to rush into her cell with unusual rapidity, and followed her. She asked the woman several questions, but she put her hand to her head, and made no reply. This scene lasted a few moments, until a small black rivulet began to ooze from one corner of the prisoner's lips, and meander down her chin. Deprived of her thimble, Smith had brought the ink away in her mouth!

'Don't make a report of this,' urged Smith afterwards. 'I've suffered orfully, miss, and nearly pisoned myself. Oh!' she added, with a grin from ear to ear, 'if you'd sent for the doctor, and he'd looked at my tongue, wouldn't he have jumped!' This woman was an inveterate thief, possessing quite a magpie mania for useless acquisitions, and though the 'clear-out' invariably exposed her, by revealing the larcenous accumulations, she

was neither abashed nor deterred. So successfully did she organise and inspire a mutiny against one of the prison matrons, that it was found necessary to remove her, and her health never recovered the shock of the assault to which she had been exposed.

To savage violence, wonderful cunning, and ingenious powers of tormenting the officials, some women add indomitable effrontery when in the presence of the superior authorities, and so actually rule, in a certain sense, notwithstanding their enforced servitude. Mary Mox was one of these women, and made the life of the matron miserable, by the active exhibition of all such qualities, and by a peculiar accomplishment in which she distanced all competitors. No one could pour out so continuous a stream of blasphemy and ribaldry as Mary Mox, and the horrible ingenuity of her oaths would have startled a Mexican. She smashed her windows until calico had to be substituted for glass, and set fire to the calico, until the ward-officer left her sufficiently long in her cell, in the smoke and flame, to terrify her into an abandonment of that pastime. Being confined to 'the dark,' she shammed sickness, and then violently assaulted the doctor; and her constant custom was to howl like a wild beast. One other instance of utter incorrigibility, and we pass to narratives which, if even more sad, are less revolting.

Mary Anne Evans was a woman of the worst class, a 'refractory' and an 'incorrigible,' who, in the expressive words of the Prison Matron, 'fought against her own life, won the battle, and died.' A fragile woman, thin, spare, cadaverous, unspeakably depraved and malevolent, a woman almost inconceivable to minds unfamiliar with the criminal classes, and we may venture to hope, rare even among them. She smashed the windows and the prison furniture; she fought like a beast with the male officials; she was incapable of one sentiment of good, and she resented her own physical weakness fiercely, because it rendered her at intervals incapable of doing and inciting mischief. The one hope of the officials was in her weakness; and she would say, when unable to rise: 'Please God, I shall be well enough to get out of this next week; and once in my ward, I'll have a little life, and set things going again!' She was dying of consumption; she could hardly walk to and from her cell; the rules were relaxed for her, and she resented that; she was gently warned of her danger, and she laughed in the faces of the officials. Sometimes she could hardly speak, but when she could, her blasphemies made her hearers shudder. Indomitable in evil when she could not be active in it, she incited others by every ingenuity within her inventive power; and her last stage of life was marked by threats of what she would do when, 'in spite of the doctor,' she should be out of the infirmary. Her last act was an effort to leave her bed, against the entreaties of the nurse, afraid to resort to personal force, in the patient's exhausted state; and her last words expressed contempt and defiance. A terrible portrait this, and suggestive of how onerous and sad the official life must be, led among a living gallery of similar portraits.

The worth of this book is in its unadorned truth, and in the matter-of-fact view in which the disposition and the experience of the author combine. It is therefore painful in the extreme to find her obliged to bear witness to the inefficiency of the

and to the profound sense of discouragement under which those who labour earnestly and actively for the good of souls thus sitting in darkness are condemned to work. The Prison Matron is particularly earnest in urging that more circumspection should be observed with regard to persons admitted to receive the sacrament. The following passage cannot be strengthened by any comment:

'To one woman who receives the sacrament with a sober, earnest desire to live better in the future, to atone for much that is sinful in the past, there are twenty actuated by an idle curiosity, who take the communion because some one else—a favourite pal, perhaps—is going to take it, or because it is better than going back to the cell, or, worst and least unfrequent reason of all, for the chance of "a drink of wine." (The cant phrase of the prison is, "taking wine with the parson.") I have known women leave the communion-table, and commence quarrelling with each other before they can be locked in their cells; the woman who has been the most anxious to go through the ceremony in the morning, has often "broken out" on the same day, and been carried blaspheming and raving to "the dark." The earnest remonstrance made by the Prison Matron ought to be regarded with respect, and acted upon. The prison chaplains, 'good Christians, ever sanguine of the good seed taking root in the most unregenerate and defiant,' are not likely to be such good judges of character as the officials, whose experience of the disposition of the prisoners is that of constant supervision.

There is a chapter in this book whose mere heading contains a volume, and whose details are infinitely sad and touching. It is that which treats of 'lady-prisoners,' of certain wretched creatures a thousand times more pitiable, and, in the sense of better lights and superior education, far more guilty than their sister-criminals of the 'dangerous' classes; women who are, on the whole, a nervous, morbid, mentally-diseased class, and afford a strange contrast to the bulk of female convicts. No sadder subject for thought can present itself than the lot of these lady-prisoners, on whom their sentences, if more merited, at least press far more heavily; to whom the physical endurance must be terrible; in whom the mere habit of refinement, supposing conscience to be ever so dull and deadened, must produce exquisite suffering. The hardest duty of the prison matron must surely be the inflexible adherence to rule in the case of these prisoners, who are generally inoffensive as such, whatever their guilt as criminals; quickly detected by their fellows, once their inferiors; objects of coarse jealousy and suspicion; and who shrink from observation with eagerness as pitiful as it is vain. One of these lady-prisoners is presented in a touching sketch, which shows us a helpless, timid creature, forty years of age, unfit for manual labour, but a needlewoman of skill, stitching desperately at the work, which she regarded as a boon, always nervously anxious to hide her weakness; hardly knowing how to set about the cleaning of her cell, but wretched when her ignorance betrayed her former station; a woman not quite mad, but a little distraught, and desperately bent upon keeping the little sanity she possessed, lest she might be sent to the lunatic prison, which, above all things, she dreaded. She strove in every conceivable way, one more transparent than another, to pass for a working-

on every possible occasion, in support of that character.

Here is the last portrait for which we have space, a contrast to the other lady-prisoner, and which will be regarded with solemn curiosity. 'She is a life-woman, and a young lady of good family. The sentence of death had been passed upon her, and commuted to penal servitude for life, and she was fully repentant of the crime she had committed. But her new life, and her utter isolation from the old, was an awful punishment to the young gentlewoman, and the thought suggested itself more than once that it would have been more merciful to hang her, for hers is, in all probability, a life-sentence in reality. A grave-faced young woman, who brooded upon the past, and yet looked not forward to the future for pardon; who was seen to welcome the chaplain with a faint smile, but who smiled on no one else; a woman who never looked up, either in the airing-ground or chapel, but walked or sat with her arms crossed upon her bosom, and the expression of whose face seldom varied from its one set gloom. Reticent to a degree, finding a difficulty in answering her officer, with a mind always abstracted, she presented a strange solitary figure to the prison-world to which she had been condemned. Quiet, inoffensive, and submissive, it was hard to realise the jealous fierceness and vindictiveness that had beguiled human life to another, and swept it remorselessly from her path. In the outer world, she was an anomaly; in the prison she remained so, for she was wholly unlike a murderess.'

Such is the mingling of the terrible and the grotesque in the hidden life of which the Prison Matron gives the outside world a glimpse. The lesson of human helplessness, on the one hand, is taught by every revelation of the mystery of sin and suffering; but on the other, that of human responsibility. Such things are, and must be dealt with; then 'no more folding of the hands to sleep.' The age has accepted the charge, has answered to the call, and will go forth to labour, even until the evening, fighting against discouragement, and hoping against hope.

ON SURVEY IN YORKSHIRE.

IN FOUR CHAPTERS.—CHAPTER III.

'WINNOT yo' mak' t' arch a bit woider?' asked Mr Bowerhanks, the day but one after the events last recorded. He was standing with his thumbs complacently in his waistcoat-holes, critically surveying the men at work, building a culverted bridge over a dyke, intended to form part of the new road leading to his farm. I had, at all risks, ordered the men to commence upon the job. 'Ef Martha,' resumed the farmer, a sharp twinkle in his eyes, 'shud meat t' wagon on t' bridge, wheer wull hur be; eh?' But he gave me a slap on the shoulder.

I responded to this appeal by instantly giving orders that the arch should be made two feet wider.

'Beant thot Jake oi seed just na?' my companion asked a minute later, stopping his pleased chuckle to gaze in the direction where Jake had vanished on his arrival.

'Yes, and he works quite hard, doing my errands,' I answered, a little pleased at my reclamation of the scamp.

'Ee be a bad un; moind waat tha dost wi' un.' 'Oh, he shews quite a fancy for me. I don't think he had been properly managed before,' I persisted. 'He is going to row me out to the Devil's Hole this afternoon.'

'Ef tha manages Jake, tha wult be t' fost as iver did 't,' he grumbled, and sauntered away, without any ceremony of leavetaking, for his own homestead.

Jake, contrary to Footitt's prediction, was lurking about Sowerby's house before I was down stairs on the morning following his detection at the reservoir. He was still soiled with the lime and mortar, and presented a most wretched appearance. I had a conversation with him in the yard, in the first instance, and in a shrinking, half-dogged way, he gave answers to my questions; but the dialect in which he spoke, and the apparently muddled state of his ideas, made his replies difficult to understand. I gathered, however, that his tampering with the cistern had been about contemporaneous with our attempts to make it; and, so far, this was satisfactory, as holding out better prospects of success in the future. Much against the desire of Sally Tebbutt (fortunately for Jake, his 'Uncle' Sowerby, and his 'Cousin' Chris, as he always called them, were out afield), I took him into the house, and saw that he had a good meal. During its progress, I once or twice tried to turn the talk upon Miss Bowerhanks, but the scowl which instantly darkened Jake's face, and his sudden obstinate silence, warned me I was to fail in the hope of getting any explanations from him on that point. And after all, what did it signify? His remark, that she would make a fool of me, was doubtless one of his incoherent maundering.

I found the half-wit, on the whole, not quite so idiotic as I had expected, and I finally resolved to make a grand experiment with him, by trying what effect kindness would have upon his rugged disposition. I believe, from what I can now recollect, my breast warmed under the consciousness of the charity of my intentions, till I felt what a luxury Christian feeling was! Jake's deep-set eyes glistened as I told him that if he would act as my errand-boy, I would pay him weekly wages; and, in half-inarticulate expressions, he at once testified his eager acquiescence in my plans. I forthwith promoted him to the post of carrier of messages between myself and Footitt and the rest of the men. For the two days which had elapsed, his conduct had been perfectly exemplary, in spite of the taunts and reproaches he received from the workmen, all of whom now knew of his meddling with the reservoir. Some few blunders he made, but I set them down to his natural dulness, and considered the experiment as turning out very successfully, for nothing could exceed his willingness and attention. He dogged my footsteps like my shadow, and seemed never to be so happy as when doing little services for me. The day through, he would keep within a few yards of me, whenever I was out of doors; and it was only when either of his 'uncles' drew near, or on the occasion of a visit to the Sowerbies from Miss Bowerhanks, that he suddenly became missing. That, however, it was not very difficult to understand. Some time during the second day, the Devil's Hole was again mentioned by somebody in my presence. This was a cavern, reported to be of singular beauty, at no great distance along the

shore in the westerly direction, of which I had heard much previously. I spontaneously expressed a wish to visit it, and Jake, lowering his eyes, as if he thought he was taking too great a liberty, humbly offered to row me to the spot, whenever I liked. I was pleased with this kindly disposition, and at once accepted his offer, fixing the afternoon of the memorable day of which I am now writing for the investigation of the sea-cavern. It was this expedition I alluded to in talking with Mr Bowerhanks, when he repeated his vague warning about Jake. That warning, however, passed me by unheeded at the moment; and three o'clock in the afternoon saw me setting off on my visit to this famous spot in Sowerby's clumsy boat, being pulled by Jake out of the mouth of the back-water dyke, down the narrow channel into the open sea.

'Jake, Jake!' was called out after us, in Sally Tebbutt's rough tones, and looking back, I saw that matron high up on the dyke embankment. 'Woy dinnot yo' tak' t' other couple o' sculls?' she shouted, holding up a pair of light oars.

'Oi con manage,' sulkily said Jake, jerking his yellow hair back on his shoulders, and quickening his stroke.

'Booth on yo' 'n ha' pullin' eneaf to get away from t' rocks, wi' t' toide agen yo' comin' bock,' was borne upon the breeze in Sally's warning voice.

'Row back to the dyke-mouth, and I'll get the oars,' I said. But Jake took no heed whatever, excepting that he bent lower to his work, sweeping further out to sea. 'Don't you hear? Row back for the other sculls, that I may help you.'

'It wud blister thoy honds,' grinned Jake, still pulling out lustily.

'But she says the tide will be against us in returning; and the boat is a heavy one with two in her.'

'Hur winnot be soo heavy comin' bock,' and saying this, Jake again grinned wildly; though I recollected afterwards that his eyes avoided mine.

'Do you mean that the swell will help us? Sally says not.'

'Yah,' was the only answer I got; and Jake's dark visage put on a lowering expression, as if irritated at not having his own way. I saw he was in no humour for talking.

It was a beautiful afternoon, with a smooth sea, for that part of the coast, and what little breeze there was was at our backs. Jake pulled a strong oar, and we swiftly and silently made rapid way. In about half an hour, on rounding a sharp corner of the coast, we got a sight of the reef of rocks running out more than a mile into the water, with a sort of broken pinnacle jutting up into the air at the further extremity, forming the roof of the Devil's Hole. Another quarter of an hour brought us nearly to it. The white-backed, dark-sided waves were leaping and rolling, like living monsters, over and about the partly submerged rocks, and seemed to collect in restless, noisy herds around the base of the tall fragment of cliff in which the reef abruptly terminated. As we got in front of the latter, and could see it clearly, it greatly resembled a tower, surmounted by three unequal pinnacles, not by one, and that to the left hand could not be less than a hundred feet in height. Beneath, was a low but moderately wide entrance, which admitted to the cave; and owing to the conformation of the rock at the sides, the water was comparatively still at the front, so that Jake

had little difficulty in pulling under the kind of archway right into the cavern. It was indeed a singular, and in many respects a beautiful place that we entered. The water, which had a greenish tinge outside, was of a vivid blue colour within; and the pale reflection of this hue upon the walls and roof gave everything a specially delicate appearance. Immediately inside the mouth of the cavern, the roof sloped upwards for a short distance, but then dipped again, and continued to fall as it retreated away into the darkness, until it seemed to touch the water, for a hoarse, gigantic gurgling could be heard from the rear. The cave was not a large one, so far as it was visible in that state of the tide; but to the left hand of the entrance was a second cavity, somewhat larger, as I was informed; and it was indispensable on the part of all visitors to the one to see the other. In the interior recess, which was only lighted by the glimmer it got of the already once reflected light of the outer cave, was a curiously shaped stone, which local tradition set down, on what authority is not known, as bearing a likeness to the Arch-enemy of Mankind; hence the name of the cave—the Devil's Hole. It was considered a test of courage to make the acquaintance of this fearful emblem!

'Yo' be gooin' insoide to see t' Devil?' roughly demanded Jake, who someway seemed much excited, and he at once hurried the boat alongside the shelving ledge, which admitted of a landing on that side.

'Why, I have not seen hereabouts yet,' I answered, glancing admiringly at the pale cerulean shadows flickering on the walls and the roof.

'Yo' 'n ha' toime eneaf afore it be hoigh watter; out wi' yo';' and he forced the swaying boat sharply against the side of the ledge.

'Steady!' I cried, scrambling out, with some difficulty getting a footing on the slippery shelf.

'Do I go round this corner?'

'Hoogh, hoogh, hoogh!' was the reply; and the horrid echoes of the cave gave back the fiendish laughter. 'Wha be t' foo' na?' was mockingly demanded. Turning about in my amazement, I was horrified to see that Jake, the moment I had quitted the boat, had pushed back from the side, and was already a dozen yards away towards the mouth of the cave. Instantly, the recollection of how he had trapped Footitt came upon me, together with the warning given me by Farmer Bowerhanks, and the rascal's own strange conduct in refusing to bring the second pair of oars, as also his curious observation about the boat being lighter on the return-journey. Surely he did not mean to leave me there.

'Tha const na' swim! Hoogh, hoogh! Oi heerd tha sey thot t' one o' t' men; an' t' watter be four toimes thoy deeth there. Hoogh, hoogh!' and as he leaned forward on his stomach to grin, he seemed quite transformed. It was not an idiot, but a fiend I saw! The dull vacuous look was gone from his face; his eyes sparkled, and even his bushy yellow hair seemed to be alive with malignity.

'It doesn't matter whether I can swim or not,' I said, making an effort; 'they know at Sowerby's I am come here, and I also mentioned it to your uncle Bowerhanks this morning. If,' I continued, trying to repress a shiver which attacked me—'if I do not reach my lodgings by tea-time, some one will come in search of me. There are more boats than one, I suppose?' I added, with affected lightness.

'Waat dost 'ee sey?' asked the wretch, stopping in his horrid laughter for a moment at this suggestion, but it very quickly burst out afresh. 'Tea-toime! They un be too laate. Sally wor roight abaat t' toide; it wull be hoigh watter in less ner haafe an hour.'

'But if the tide is against you going back, it will be in their favour coming here,' I quickly said, trying to follow up the first impression I had made.

'T' cave wull be chock-full afore they can get hanfe o' t' wey;' and he jumped up in the boat, waving an oar triumphantly. 'It ha' got t' turn na!'

I reeled till I nearly fell off the narrow ledge as the full meaning of this last observation burst upon me. Clinging to the wet rocky wall by my fingers, I looked about on the sides and up to the roof. All was glitteringly clean, and everywhere shewed signs of having been washed into smoothness by the action of the water. He was right, too, my sickening heart told me, in the other particular; the tide had turned, for the gurgling at the back of the cavern was increasing in loudness.

'For Heaven's sake, bring the boat, and I'll give you what money you like,' I gasped, horrified at the thought of that glassy blue water rising, and still slowly rising till it suffocated me, and afterwards beat my body against the hard rocky roof!

'Hoogh, hoogh! Tha hast got'n t' shaakes a'ready! Tha'rt a coward! Hoogh, hoogh!' he screamed, making the boat rock from side to side as he rolled in it, but never stirring it towards me. 'Tha wult tumble off afore t' watter reaches 'ee, ef tha dost na' moind,' he shouted.

It was true enough. Either the cold of the place, or the mental shock, or perhaps both, had brought on an instantaneous attack of the ague, from which I had been free for days past. I trembled most violently all over, and I had to crouch upon the narrow shelf, to prevent myself from rolling off into the pitiless water, which was fast beginning to get into a livelier motion.

'What is it you want of me, Jake?' I got out, as well as my chattering jaws would let me. 'I'll do anything.'

'Oi waant 'ee t' be drownded!' was the blood-curdling reply, and the blue-lighted face of the fiend as he leaned forward in the boat shewed that it was no joke. 'Waat mun thoy duck me in t' cistern fur? Hoogh! This be a deal better than t' cistern; see how t' watter be gettin' oop;' and he pointed behind him, where the waves were beginning to roll in, briskly rocking him and the boat.

'It will do you no good drowning me, Jake. I have got twenty bright sovereigns in my box at Sowerby's; I'll give them to you when we get home. Bring the boat here.'

'How thoy teeth dun shaake, tha coward! Oi shall hear tha drownin' from t' aatside, when t' hole be full;' and he chuckled devilishly, slowly paddling his boat nearer to the mouth.

'See!' I shouted.—'I have some money here;' and, by a desperate endeavour, I got out my purse, and fumblingly opened it, to shew the money. 'You shall have this now; come for it.'

'Yah! Hoogh, hoogh! Tha waant'st t' leap into t' boat. Na, na. Oi can ha' t' money aat o' thoy pocket after tha beest drownded,' he answered, again roaring with laughter.

The coins and the purse fell from my hand into the swaying blue water, and with them went my last hope.

'Dang tha! Waat hast 'ee dun thot fur?' angrily demanded the wretch. 'Bur oi con fish 'em aat inebbee to-morrer, ef t' toide dinnot carry 'em away,' he added, relaxing into a grin.

'Don't murder me, Jake!' I cried out. 'I will have no more milk from Miss Bowerhanks, if that vexes you.'

'Tha wiinnot see hur ony moor,' he screamed, in a sudden fury of rage. 'Woy mun Chris whip me fur tha? Dang tha! Matty used to talk wi' me afore tha com'st. Hur shaant bring tha noo moor milk.'

'They'll hang you for murdering me,' I shouted, trying to follow after the receding boat along the ledge.

'Bur oi shall sey'—and he stopped rowing for a second—as t' boat oopset, an' soo it wull ef oi doant get aat. T' watter be nearly t' tha na'; an' nobody can com' t' help tha, as they did'n t' Measter Footitt in t' straw-hole. Oi be gooin', bur oi'll stop aatside till t' cave be full, t' hear tha shout.' With another burst of hellish merriment, he now pulled vigorously for the mouth of the cave.

I was paralysed with horror, clinging to that wet, shining wall, and standing on a shelf of rock not two feet broad. I tried to call out another appeal, but a paroxysm of the ague attacked me, and I could not articulate a word. I remember noticing that for a moment the villain had to battle with the increasing waves at the entrance, and I thought one swell would have swamped him; but he rode over it, and just as I at last found my tongue in a cry which made the cavern ring again, the boat turned the easterly corner of the mouth, and then the black shadow it made passed after it, and I was alone!

My first impulse was to throw myself into the water, and try to struggle after the boat; but I could not swim, and the blue water was beginning to curdle into foam as larger waves rolled in. It would simply have been hurrying on my death. Was it possible, next flashed across me, that any portion of the cave was not filled at high-water? I staggered back along the ledge to examine the interior. The gurgling at the back had now changed into a hollow, swinging, tolling kind of roar; and my heart stood still as I saw that the water had already cut off the entrance into the second cave. Whatever chance I might there have had, was consequently gone! But the next instant my professional knowledge sickeningly told me that there was no hope anywhere, for if the water filled the mouth of the cave, the supply of air would be stopped! I reeled back along the now partly-submerged ledge, the highest portion of which was nearest the cave entrance. Already I felt, or fancied that I felt, a difficulty in breathing; and all my past life rose instantaneously before me in a kind of mental picture. A suffocating sensation was choking my throat. At least, I would not be drowned in that hateful cave; I would die in the open water, for surely I should have strength to struggle to the entrance.

'Where are you?' rung through the cavern in a female voice, at the very moment I was closing my eyes for what I knew would be the fatal plunge.

'Keap off wi' tha, Jake, ur oi'll shoot tha!' was added in rougher tones.

'Never heed him; pull quick, now!' next fell on my entranced ear; and underneath the archway shot a boat, in which were seated Miss Bowerhanks and a labouring-man.

'Quick!' she excitedly called, catching sight of me on the ledge; and as the boat came near, she lifted one of the oars she was using for me to grasp: 'Keep the boat from striking the side, or we shall all be lost!' she said without a tremor. 'Now, then, leap!—Balance the boat, Roger, and pull,' she whispered to the man, rather than called out, as I threw myself into the boat. 'Stoop your heads!' she added. There was a moment, which seemed long enough for an age, during which the boat swung round unmanageable in the rough waves at the entrance; but slowly, our heads nearly touching the low archway, we drew out into the white light of the open air.

'Ef tha com'st any noigher, oi'll shoot tha loike a watter-rat,' said Roger, laying down his oar, and snatching up a gun from beside him.

I mechanically followed the speaker's look, and I saw my would-be murderer rising and falling in his boat, not a dozen yards away from us, his face distorted with rage till it was not human; and just as my hearing was leaving me, the breeze brought from his direction a volley of the most terrible curses ever uttered.

'Lie down against the bench; we are safe now,' said Miss Bowerhanks, bending across her eased oar towards me, nearly as self-possessed as if she were on shore.

'It—is—not—fear—but—the—ague—which—makes—me—tremble,' I just managed to get out.

'Lean back more, and I will cover you with this,' she said, taking up a shawl which had slipped to her feet, and drawing it over me.

The sky seemed to darken, and a sudden silence to fall upon the sea; a mist settled down on my eyes, and all strength left me. But the last thing I saw, as I became nearly quite unconscious, was the glowing face of that brave, handsome Yorkshire girl, who had just saved me from certain death. Was it to be wondered at, if it seemed to me to be that of an angel!

I learned afterwards, let me add here, that Miss Bowerhanks, not long after our boat had left, reached Sowerby's, and was informed of my intended exploration of the celebrated cave by Sally Tebbutt. The latter also told her of Jake's queer conduct in refusing to take the second pair of oars; and Miss Bowerhanks, quicker-witted than Sally, recollected that it was not the right state of the tide for a visit to the Devil's Hole. She was luckily inspired with a sudden suspicion that the rascal's intentions were not what they should be; and in hurrying back to their own homestead, which was in the direction of the cavern, she came upon Roger, one of their labourers, shooting wild-fowl. Without delaying further, she, with his aid, at once launched their own boat, and set off for the rocks. At what critical juncture they arrived, has been already seen.

But I did not gather these particulars until the day following. I had, indeed, only the dimmest recollection of the boat reaching the shore, and my being helped up to Sowerby's house; while, subsequently to that, my recollections became vaguer still, for paroxysm after paroxysm of ague-pains racked me all that night most cruelly, leaving no room for questioning those about me.

CHAPTER IV.

Two days passed, and, strange to say, Miss Bowerhanks did not come near the Sowerbies. Milk was supplied to me, but it had lost half its

old rich taste, since it was not of her bringing. Farmer Bowerhanks paid me a visit the first day; for some reason or other, however, he only very coolly received my eulogiums on his daughter's bravery. He swore enthusiastically enough about Jake, whom one of the farming-men, he said, had seen in Hull; and he vowed that if ever the villain came near the farms again, he should be killed outright. But my thoughts, as I had lain in my lonely room, had been running more upon my deliverer than my would-be destroyer; and, in the excitement of my feelings, I was prepared to go any lengths to shew my gratitude to her. Indeed, what was the duty of a man towards a woman who had saved his life at the risk of her own? My maiden aunt could not but see the matter as I did. If Miss Bowerhanks was a rustic, her beauty and her courage were such as all London could not equal. Finding, to my great surprise, all indirect approaches to the topic evaded, I at length boldly asked if I should have the pleasure of seeing her soon.

'Noa,' said the farmer; 'Marther wor ner comin' ower; hur wor busy;' and his manner had a singular dryness in it. 'Thoy wor a' mooch obliged to tha fur writin' abaot Merriman's farm, an' t' steward had promised to get it fur young James Hetherington,' he evasively added. Having mumbled out these thanks in a half-dogged kind of way, the speaker, as was his wont, quitted the room without any leave-taking, and clattered down the stairs.

I was surprised and disappointed at this conduct, which I could not understand; it was so very different from what I expected. Still, my duty towards Miss Bowerhanks remained the same, and I was resolved it should be discharged. I was, however, for the present, too weak to get as far as the other farm, and I could only impotently chafe at the delay in thanking my rescuer with my own lips. But I found myself much stronger on the third day, and I determined that that afternoon should witness my interview with the heroine. This, however, was conclusively prevented in the way and manner I have now painfully to detail. About noon, I was slowly dragging myself back from my first visit to the reservoir-works, where the men had just finished lining the great cistern with the encaustic tiles, there being at length every prospect of success. I sat down on the floodgate of one of the dykes, about half-way on my road back, to rest me, and, little knowing how quickly a turn in my destiny was approaching, I was languidly watching the sea, wondering whereabouts in its depths my body might then have been floating, but for Miss Bowerhanks's bravery.

'Matty, com' back! Oi have follered tha a' th' wey from t' top field, wheer oi seed tha pass. Oi winnot ha' 'ee gooin' t' see t' Lunnoner ony moor,' said a man's deep voice on the other side of the embankment. 'Oi'm gooin' t' ha' t' farm, steward says, an' thoy fayerth ha' got t' road made. Tha shannot goo t' see un ony moor, Matty.'

'I want to see Sally Tebbutt about'—

'Oi sey tha shannot goo theer ony moor,' angrily repeated the first voice. The softer tones I had instantly recognised, without the clue given by the name, as those of Miss Bowerhanks; but who was the other speaker?

'Just as you will, James,' was musically replied. 'You know I don't care for him. He has been very kind, that is all.'

'Oi dinnot waant un t' be koind to 'ee. Com' an' goo bock wi' me. Un wadn't ha' made t' road ner got me t' farm, bur for tha; an' tha shan't goo noigh un ony moor na'. Turn again this wey, wull 'ee? Oi waant us t' settle when we shan get married, sin oi'm t' ha' t' farm, lass.'

'Married! What a hurry you make of it! But you ain't jealous of me, Jim?' was asked in a soft, bewitching murmur, which shot me through.

'Noa, dang tha! Oi'm ner jealous, bur let this soft chap goo bock wheer un comes from.'

'Ay, you needn't be afraid; I never cared for him. I only did as father would make me; but I couldn't let mad Jake drown him, and'—

'Oi knowd tha wert true-hearted, Matty,' he interrupted—'ner to be caught wi' Lunnon poppin-gays, foine as they think'n themselves.' The sound of a kiss now came borne upon the breeze, and weak as I was, it impelled me to my feet.

The voices suddenly became indistinct; the couple were retiring the way Miss Bowerhanks had come. I scrambled to the top of the embankment, and from thence I could see the Yorkshire beauty and a tall, finely-built young man, in farmer's attire, walking side by side with their backs to me, their heads very close, and he with one arm about her waist. I had seen the young fellow before—it was James Hetherington.

My brain whirled round till I thought the ague was coming back, for I could understand everything now. Jake was right, after all. The brave and beautiful Miss Bowerhanks, with whom I had become willing to surprise my ancient relative in London, had, under her crafty father's instructions, been making a fool of me. This young Hetherington, whom, on Mr Bowerhanks's urging, I had recommended for the farm made vacant by old Farmer Merriman's death, was only too evidently her accepted lover; and she had brought me the milk, and paid me the other attentions, simply to secure the making of the new road to their own homestead! I was in her eyes, as in those of all the rest, merely 'the Lunnoner,' out of whom the most possible was to be made. How I got back to my lodgings I cannot well remember, but there I remained in solitude the rest of the day through, enduring the sense of humiliation as well as I could. But there was more of it to come; and if what followed was less sentimental, it was still more crushing.

The next morning, the post brought me the following letter:

WHITTHALL, LONDON, Wednesday.

SIR—The Honourable the Commissioners, in consequence of information they have received, wish to be informed whether or not it is true, as alleged, that you have, in addition to the works you were instructed to carry out, ordered the construction of a wagon-road on the farm occupied by Bowerhanks?

In case this information be correct, the Commissioners will expect to receive your reasons for taking so extraordinary a step, together with a detailed account of the expense incurred. At present, they are loath to believe that any agent of theirs could exceed his instructions in the serious manner asserted; not only ignoring the Honourable Board, but creating discontent among the crown tenants, by what would naturally seem a gross act of favouritism to one of them.

Before adopting any further measures in the matter, the Commissioners willingly offer you full

opportunity of explanation; but I am instructed to say that your answer to this communication must not be delayed in reaching them later than Saturday.—I have, sir, the honour to be, &c.

This was no imaginary trouble; it was a real thunderbolt. Something like a professional catastrophe stared me in the face; for what satisfactory reasons could I give for the making of the road? I could not plead to these white-headed men in London that Farmer Bowerhanks had a daughter who was as fair as she was false, and that I had fallen a victim to her wiles and her father's craft. I almost began to wish that neither she nor Roger had arrived in time at the Devil's Hole; there surely were no Commissioners of Crown Estates at the bottom of the sea. As soon as I could get my thoughts into order, I saw that my best plan would be to return forthwith to London, and urge the affliction of the ague in bar of all accusations, if haply it would be accepted. I accordingly wrote a letter, to be sent by the return-post, announcing that I would elect to respectfully submit my explanations to the Honourable Board in person. There was even a little relief in this determination. I should at any rate escape from that hateful district, where the beautiful women were sirens, luring one to destruction on hard wagon-roads, and the men were—well, let us simply say—were Yorkshiremen!

'Farmer Sowerby, I am going back to town to-morrow; can you drive me to the station in the morning?' I asked, having summoned my taciturn landlord to my room.

'Ees; Chris con goo; bur tha beest off quickly,' he replied, leaning his broad back against the door-jamb, and surveying me. 'Dinnot tha be afeard o' Jake. Oi'll kill t' thief, ef un comes noigh heer.'

'I am not going because of Jake,' I hastened to say; 'and I am not sure that he is the most dangerous person there is about here, after all. Some one has been complaining to the Commissioners in London of my making Mr Bowerhanks a new road. I am going up to explain.'

'Ugh, ugh, ugh!' chuckled Sowerby, his eyes twinkling, as if the whole affair was only a joke, and he enjoyed it exceedingly. 'Oi knowd un wud get t' road aat o' tha, by Matty's pratty faace. Bowerhanks be t' best manager i' a' this soide, thot un be;' and the speaker rolled about as he laughed internally.

'Matty! woy, Matty Bowerhanks an James Hetherington be gooin' to be wedded in a munth!' exultantly cried Sally Tebbutt, who had on both bonnet and shawl; and she forced her way into the room past her master. 'Steward says James shall ha' owd Merry's farm; an' Mrs Bowerhanks just towd me they wull be married to goo to it!'

'Didna Bowerhanks get tha t' write to t' steward fur young James?' put in Sowerby, grinning afresh. 'Dang moy buttons, ef ee don't manage well! Bur oi'm daan sorry tha beest gooin'.'

'Gooin'?' demanded Sally.

'I am going back to town in the morning, and I have many things to see to,' I said as firmly as I could.

'Oo! That be bad! Tha winnot be heer to t' weddin', then?' Sally inquired, with a very queer look on her face.

'Will you send somebody to fetch Footitt for me? I have a good deal to do, and must be alone, if you please.'

At this broader hint, the couple quitted the room together, Farmer Sowerby chuckling loudly as he descended the stairs; and Sally Tebbutt, honestly or otherwise, audibly repeating her regrets at my approaching departure.

I have no wish to prolong this narrative, and I will simply say that, leaving Footitt in charge of the works, I bade adieu to Sowerby's farm before it was well daylight on the following morning, hurrying up to town to put the best face on the matter I could do. Fortunately for me, I believe, the three Honourable Commissioners with whom I had my painful interview at Whitehall were considerably impressed by my haggard appearance. I had also thought it well to be accompanied by a friend, a surgeon, and he gave a learned exposition of the character of Yorkshire ague, the general conclusion he urged being, that those who were prostrated by it, as I had been, were at the mercy of those about them, and would not probably quite know what they were doing or sanctioning to be done! The Board allowed the matter, I am very glad to say, to remain where it was; but I have not since been intrusted by them with any commissions in Yorkshire, nor have I any wish to revisit that interesting district. The women may be handsome and brave, and the men strong and hospitable, but both of them have a sharp eye for the main chance.

But possibly the most startling item of all, I have now to add by way of conclusion. A little more than a week after my return to London, I got a letter from Footitt, in which he announced, not without a touch of satisfaction, that on the morning of the day on which he wrote, the body of Jake had been found floating in the reservoir! The supposition was, that the half-wit had returned to make another attempt to injure the cistern, and knowing nothing of the slippery casing of encaustic tiles it had received since his last visit, he had fallen in, and been unable—as of course he would be—to get out again; and so, in the dark lone night, he had himself met the fate he had intended for me in the Devil's Hole!

THE MONTH:

SCIENCE AND ARTS.

STORMS of war among the spoilers of the continent—a bitter and long-protracted spell of easterly winds—and the hurricane in the domain of finance, have been relieved by picture-exhibitions and flower-shows. As regards the east wind, meteorologists will, we suppose, have to recognise it as the British monsoon, to be looked for concurrently with the return of spring; while moralists will have no difficulty in shewing that the financial havoc has been occasioned solely by the ignoring of sound commercial principles, and by forgetfulness of the precept: 'He that maketh haste to be rich shall not be innocent.' Concerning pictures: the prevailing opinion on the Royal Academy Exhibition appears to be that, while it shews a rise in artistic aim and capability among artists generally, it is entirely wanting in those touches of genius which might have been expected from those who lead the van. The critics complain of the deficiency; but let them exercise patience. Every year cannot be a good pictorial-genius year, any more than it can be a good cherry year, or a good apple year; but it is quite safe to predict that good years will come for pictures as for fruits. One thing is certain—the Academy wants more

room, and must have it. Rumour assigns them a site in Piccadilly, on part of the Burlington estate. We should much prefer to hear that they were to be located at Kensington, where ample space is available, and a somewhat clearer atmosphere than in Piccadilly. That the Academy will have to put up with much inconvenience on the Piccadilly site, is certain; and the public with more, for the obstruction occasioned by carriages during the three busiest months of the London season will block the thoroughfare a dozen times a day.

The advantages possessed by Kensington as a show-place have been most satisfactorily manifested by the National Portrait Exhibition and the International Horticultural Gathering and Flower-show. The portraits are so well hung, and the supply of light is so large, that we may assume no exhibition has ever yet been visited by thousands of spectators with so much comfort as the one now open at Kensington. It offers the further advantage of suggestions for the study of history as well as the study of art.

At the conversazione of the Institution of Civil Engineers some very interesting models were shewn: of a sewing-machine which will stitch the stiffest leather, thick boot-soles, and harness with almost as much facility as woollen cloth. Another sews leather gloves. A hydraulic coal-cutting machine, with a supply of thirty gallons of water a minute, at a pressure of three hundred pounds, will do as much work as twenty men, and with satisfactory economy in the produce of coal as well as of labour. The machine represented by the model is at work in a mine near Leeds; and when once supplied with water, it keeps going, using the quantity over and over again as long as may be desired, making twenty-five strokes a minute, with but little noise, friction, or dust. It runs on the rails laid in the mine, and by the mere pressure of the water, will cut a length of nearly forty feet in an hour, and is so simple in construction that an ordinary miner can work it with but little of the risk to which he is commonly exposed. The cost of labour for coal dug by hand is eightpence a ton; with the machine, it is from threepence to fivepence. Machine-dug coal is of better size than hand-dug, and makes eight per cent. only of slack, while the hand-dug makes thirty-six per cent.: whence the calculation has been made, that in addition to the saving in cost of labour, the machine effects a saving of tenpence per ton on the quantity of coal produced. Considering how important it is to avoid waste of coal, we gladly call attention to this interesting machine.

There was also exhibited a model of the floating-dock which is about to be established at St Thomas (West Indies), the station of the great mail-steamers. With a construction of this kind, the question of dock-accommodation in any part of the world appears to be settled; for by means of it the largest vessels may be lifted out of the water for examination and repair. It may be likened to a huge pontoon, which, when required, will sink to the bottom by opening the valves: the ship for repair is then placed over it; the water is pumped out, and as the dock rises it lifts up the ship. A dock of this kind was constructed a year or two ago at Barcelona; and, by the last mail from Peru, we hear that one had just been launched at Callao, where it will do good service, unless the Spaniards, who are more ready to pay off grudges than their debts, should batter it to pieces.

A remarkable discovery, made by Mr Wilde of Manchester, is full of promise for electrical science, the practical applications of which it will increase to an almost incredible extent. The principle established by this discovery is, that by means of a permanent magnet, fitted up in a particular way, a large amount of magnetism can be developed in an electro-magnet. The latter in turn can be used to excite one still larger, and so on; and with every increase of size, there is an enormous increase of power. Mr Wilde's primary apparatus is what he calls a magnet-cylinder, of brass and iron, less than two inches in diameter, with an armature rotating rapidly inside. To this cylinder, four permanent magnets, each capable of bearing a weight of ten pounds, are attached; but when excited by rotation of the armature, their united power rose to one hundred and seventy-eight pounds; and when placed in connection with a large electro-magnet, the attractive force of the latter was increased to ten hundred and eighty pounds, or twenty-seven times the original amount. From this a notion may be inferred of the advantage to be derived from the use of Mr Wilde's apparatus—an advantage which may be indefinitely increased, as he has himself shewn, by adding still larger and larger cylinders to his apparatus, until he constructed one in which the armature was made to rotate fifteen hundred times in a minute by a steam-engine, and the weight of the whole apparatus amounted to four and a half tons. The effects produced by this electric engine, as we may call it, are amazing. The current of electricity thereby generated will make twenty-one feet of number sixteen iron wire red hot, will melt seven feet of the same wire, or fifteen inches of one quarter-inch iron rod instantaneously.

As may be anticipated, the illuminating power of this intense supply of electricity is equal to its heat power. The effect of the 'intensity armature' is, as Mr Wilde describes, 'of the most splendid description. When an electric lamp, furnished with rods of gas-carbon half an inch square, was placed at the top of a lofty building, the light evolved from it was sufficient to cast shadows from the flames of the street-lamps a quarter of a mile distant upon the neighbouring walls. When viewed from that distance,' he adds, 'the rays proceeding from the reflector have all the rich effulgence of sunshine.' This light, it appears, can be used for photographic purposes: it will darken the ordinary sensitised paper as much in twenty seconds as is done by the direct rays of the sun in one minute. Hence we see that Mr Wilde's discovery may be made available for art as well as science; and as regards its scientific applications, one of the most important will be as a test of the spectroscopic observations of stars and nebulae. Some of the spectra obtained differ from those produced by the sun and terrestrial objects, and it is a question whether the difference denotes the presence of a substance entirely unknown to human research, or whether it is due to the effect of an inconceivably high temperature. Now, Mr Wilde's machine will produce a degree of heat far beyond the highest hitherto obtained; and by fusing substances therein, and examining them with the spectroscope, it is thought that an answer to the question will be arrived at.

Messrs Rice & Co. of Boston (Lincolnshire) have patented an improvement in the wheels of railway carriages, which, as they state, effects a saving of

twenty-five per cent. in the wear of rails on the straight parts of a line, and fifty per cent. on the curves. The improvement consists in giving a free motion to the axle independently of the carriage and of the wheel. At present, as is known to most persons, the wheels are fixed to the axles, and rotate with them, an arrangement which occasions a great deal of friction, and consequently of wear and waste. In the wheel of Messrs Rice & Co., the axle is not fixed, but is free to rotate independently of the wheel as of the carriage, by which, as is easy to see, there will be a great diminution of friction. When an axle as at present constructed bites on its collar, a retardation takes place, which can be overcome only by expenditure, or we may say waste, of locomotive power. But with a free axle, the pressure is at once compensated, and the friction ceases; and when we take into account the large number of wheels in a train, the importance of diminished friction becomes the more apparent. It will of course be more obvious on curves than on straight lines; but apart from economical considerations, there remains the fact, that in proportion as the running along curves is facilitated, so is the risk of accident diminished: and this is a particular which comes home to all who travel.

In the course of his anniversary address to the Geographical Society, Sir Roderick Murchison announced that Mr Whympere, a well-known member of the Alpine Club, intends to make an exploration of the northern coast and interior of Greenland. From his experience gained in the Alps, he concludes it possible to penetrate Greenland along the course of its glaciers, and, judging from the large herds of deer seen in that country, he infers that valleys abounding in grass will be found in the rear of the coast-range. One of the objects of the recent polar exploring expeditions was to discover to what distance Greenland extends towards the north, and this will also be one of Mr Whympere's objects. He purposes to make the attempt accompanied by one well-trained Danish guide only, after having taken a preliminary trip to look at the country, by way of experiment.

SHAKSPEARE.

WHAT fiery tribulation purged thy soul,
Ere thou couldst see that blind forsaken King?
Ere fairy guidance led thee past the goal
Of this dim earth to elfin revelling?
Or deep abyss of struggling nightmare dream
Opened to bring Iago to thy gaze?
And ere from deepest wave of Lethe's stream,
Came Hamlet's voice to tell thee of his wrongs?
Where did that tender music Ariel plays
Beguile thy sorrows amid London throngs?
Did angels nurture all thy stripling days,
Ere a Colossus, with a godlike pride,
This narrow world of ours thou didst bestride?

The Tale of MIEK ABREY (by the author of 'LOST SIR MASSINGBERD,' 'THE CLYFFARDS OF CLYFFE,' &c.), is now completed, and will be followed next week by an Original Serial Story, by THOMAS SPEIGHT, entitled **BROUGHT TO LIGHT.**

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BROUGHT TO LIGHT.

By THOMAS SPEIGHT.

CHAPTER I.—A DANGEROUS PROMISE.

It was pleasant to Miss Spencelaugh to exchange the blinding glare of the hot May sunshine, through the midst of which she had walked up from the town, for the shaded coolness of the morning-room in which luncheon was laid out, with its vista of greenery in the conservatory beyond, and the low musical plash of a tiny fountain hidden somewhere among the flowers; for she had been down in Normanford all morning, assisting at the installation of a new mistress for the school in which she took so great an interest; tempted by the fineness of the day, she had chosen to walk both there and back; and now came in, tired, indeed, but with a heightened colour in her cheeks, and an added brightness in her eyes, which made her look thoroughly charming.

She found her uncle, Sir Philip Spencelaugh, already seated at table, immersed in the *Times* newspaper, which had just arrived by mid-day train, and demanded to be skimmed through before luncheon could be discussed in comfort. He beamed on her kindly through his spectacles, and nodded his white head as Frederica entered the room. 'A splendid day for the peaches, my dear,' he said, and then returned to his reading. Lady Spencelaugh had not yet left her own apartments; and as she was frequently not visible till dinner-time, her absence excited no surprise.

'There's something here that will interest you, Freddy,' said Sir Philip, as, laughing one of his dry quiet laughs, he handed the newspaper across the table to his niece, marking a certain passage with his thumb; and then taking off his spectacles, he proceeded to rub the glasses with his handkerchief, keeping his eyes fixed meanwhile on Frederica.

The passage indicated was among the marriage announcements, and ran as follows: 'At Bombay, on 20th March, Captain George Cliffe Barringer, of the —th Regiment, to Euphemia, only daughter

of Colonel Sir Charles Patterson, of Bryanstone Square, London.' A simple statement enough, but one pregnant with much meaning to Frederica Spencelaugh. She could feel the whiteness that crept over her face as she read, and in her heart a hollow aching pain, as though some vital thread had suddenly snapped, and therewith the gladness of her life had gone out for ever. But without his spectacles, the baronet's eyes were dim, and Sir Philip suspected nothing.

Frederica had a proud and resolute spirit; her uncle evidently expected her to make some comment on the news; and before the pause had time to become an awkward one, she had rallied her strength sufficiently to speak. 'I think, sir, it would have been more courteous on the part of Captain Barringer, considering the trouble you have been at on his account, had he written to inform you of his marriage, instead of leaving you to discover it by accident.' There was a tremulous ring in her voice, which not all her efforts could entirely suppress. Oh, to get away to the silence and solitude of her own room!

'The service, my dear, that I rendered George was nothing as between friends,' said Sir Philip; 'and at his age, young fellows detest letter-writing—at least I know that I did; besides which, he was in love, and therefore not accountable, like an ordinary mortal.'

What could Frederica do but turn over the newspaper, and make-believe to be suddenly interested in the political news; but the words danced before her eyes, and a wild confusion of tangled thoughts rushed madly through her brain.

'Last time I was in town,' resumed Sir Philip, as he helped himself to the wing of a chicken, 'I fell in with my old friend Desborough, whom I had not seen for several years, and who was formerly colonel of the regiment in which

Barringer is now captain. George's name came up in the course of conversation, and I then learned that he was known among his comrades at the mess-table as "Captain Flirt"—a sobriquet which requires no explanation. But Reynard has got caught at last, probably by some one more wary than himself; and will now, let us hope, meet with the punishment due to his transgressions. The rascal's stay at Belair was happily of the shortest, else there is no knowing what damage those languishing eyes of his might have done to thy own poor heart, *ma petite!*

She got away at last, under the plea of a headache, for Sir Philip was inclined to be proxy, and to sit longer than usual over his luncheon to-day—away to her own pleasant little room, which looked out over the great park of Belair, and across the sunny fruitful valley, far into the dim recesses of the hills beyond. She bolted the door, and stood before the window, with clasped hands that fell dejectedly before her, while bitter tears overbrimmed her eyelids one by one. Her proud spirit was broken for the time; she was there, without fear of witness, weeping for her lost love.

Some ninety or a hundred years before the opening of our story, the heir of the Spencelaughs had chosen for his bride a noble Spanish lady of Old Castile; and many traits, both of person and disposition, had come down to Frederica from her lovely ancestress, whose portrait by Sir Joshua was one of the chief ornaments of the gallery at Belair. The oval face, the delicate clear-cut features, the pure olive complexion, through which the rich blood mantled so warmly on the slightest provocation, were common to both of them. Both, too, possessed the same large black liquid eyes, through which looked forth a soul keen, restless, and loving; and the same free proud pose of the small thoroughbred head, crowned with rich heavy coils of raven hair, which, in the case of Frederica, were shot through with a golden arrow, to keep them in their place. Her slender throat was encircled by a heavy necklace of opals, set in dead gold; and her delicately-tinted dress, of some light summer material, set off by its harmonious contrast the full measure of her dusky loveliness.

Frederica's April shower of regretful tears for her lost love was soon over. 'Fool that I am,' she cried, 'to weep for the loss of that which was never worth having!' and brushing the last of her tears impatiently away, she proceeded to light the wax-taper which stood on the table, and from it the heap of fancy shavings with which the fireless grate was filled. While these were still blazing swiftly up the chimney, she went into her bedroom, and taking up a book of Devotions which lay on the *prie-dieu* that occupied one corner of the room, she opened it at the spot where a faded white rose lay between the leaves—a white rose, withered and dried almost to tinder, but which, only one short half hour ago, was cherished as a treasure beyond price. Her lips curved into a smile of bitter disdain as she looked on it now; and there was a dangerous glitter in her eyes, which Captain George Cliffe Barringer, had he been there, would scarcely have cared to encounter. Carrying the open book in her hands as though it held some noxious insect, she went back to the flame, into which she shook the withered rose, looking on in

silence while it dropped to pieces and shrivelled up to white ashes in the heat. She had no letters nor any other love-token than this one poor flower; and when that was gone, she felt as though the last frail tie which bound her to George Barringer were indeed broken for ever. With the same hard proud look still on her face, she rang the bell, and ordered her mare, Zuleika, to be got in readiness, while she proceeded to put on her riding-habit and hat. The air of the house seemed to stifle her; she wanted to be away, out on the great breezy headlands, with the far-reaching sea before her eyes, where it swept outward, unconfined, to the dim blue edge of the horizon.

Down the long avenue of the park, under spreading branches of beech, and chestnut, and strong-limbed oak; through pleasant little Normanford, lying warm and sleepy in the hot afternoon sunshine; away over wide stretches of upland; past great Creve Tor, standing up white and solemn, scarred with the thunders of a thousand years, with the little river brawling far below; along the white chalky high-road, that went zigzagging in and out among the green wooded hills, rode Frederica Spencelaugh swiftly, followed at a respectful distance by Mr Bevis, the groom.

All the pleasant familiar features of the landscape were lost upon Frederica to-day; her mind was far away, living over again in memory that sweet holiday-time of love, that one brief golden episode of her young life, whose story she had ever since been whispering to her heart, but which must never more be told again. How well she remembered that day, but two short years ago, when her uncle, returning from town, brought to Belair a tall, handsome stranger, who was introduced to her as Captain Barringer, the son of an old friend, encountered accidentally in London; and what a different complexion her life had taken from that hour! There had been no lack of suitors for Miss Spencelaugh's heart and hand, either in town or country, for she was the greatest heiress in all Monksore, and a beauty beside; but up to that time she had moved on her way 'in maiden meditation, fancy free.' By what subtle process Captain Barringer had contrived to steal away her heart before she knew of the loss, she herself would have been least able to explain. There were no other visitors at Belair during his stay; and having the whole field to himself, he had set himself down, in his lazy, resolute fashion, *pour passer le temps*, to win the love of the niece of his father's friend.

It was, however, a conquest unsuspected by every one but the object of it, and all the more dangerous to Frederica's peace of mind in that the captain's system of love-making precluded any vulgar confession on his part. A pressure of the hand, gentle but full of meaning; a glance from those wonderful eyes of his, which said, 'I adore you,' with far more emphasis than mere words could have done; a whisper in her ear as she sat at the piano; a voice delicately modulated, which could lend to words otherwise commonplace a meaning intended for her alone—these were the only tokens by which Frederica had learned that she was beloved; but for her they were full of sweet significance.

Captain Barringer's stay at Belair was brought to a premature close by an imperative summons to join his regiment in India. Any but a very observant spectator of the parting between him and

Frederica would have characterised that ceremony as a piece of polite frigidity; but it had occult signs of its own, unnoted by the world, in that tender lingering pressure of the hand; in that one flashing glance of love from the soldier's dark luminous eyes, artfully veiled next moment under their long lashes; in those two little words, 'Dinna forget,' whispered under the breath, and instinct with a precious meaning of their own. And then he was gone.

'Dinna forget!' Would she ever forget him? whispered Frederica to herself. No; never—never!

Two uneventful years had come and gone since Captain Barringer left Belair; but neither the distractions of half a season in London (town did not agree with Lady Spencelaugh's health), nor the quieter pleasures of country-life, had dulled the edge of Frederica's memory. Day after day, she lived over again in thought the words, the looks, the tones of the gay young soldier; and without being in the least melancholy or lovelorn, she clung with all a woman's devotion to the fetish she had set up in her own heart, saying to herself, times without number, that it must be good and true because it was so beautiful. She heard of her idol frequently, but not from him; certain law-proceedings, which the baronet had kindly consented to watch in the interest of his young friend, necessitating frequent communications between the captain and Sir Philip; and the letters of the former never concluded without some message to Miss Spencelaugh, which the baronet always delivered with perfect good faith in their humorous unveracity; but wherefrom Frederica contrived to elicit a deeper meaning than the mere words themselves seemed to convey. In one of his earlier epistles, Captain Barringer had declared his intention of selling out at the end of three years, and coming home to settle; an intimation which, to Frederica's ears, could have but one interpretation—then would his love, hitherto unspoken, reveal itself in words, then would he claim her as his own for ever.

But it was all over now—the bright dream which she had cherished with such tender faithfulness. Love's little comedy was played out; the lamps were extinguished; the curtain had come down with a run; and the chill gray daylight of reality was poured over the scene of so many vanished illusions. In the first sharp pain of her loss, she thought herself more deeply stricken than she was in reality; she knew little of the gentle power of Time to heal far worse wounds than hers; but deemed that all her life must henceforth be as blank and dreary as she felt the present to be. Her woman's pride was deeply wounded to find how easily she had allowed herself to be fooled by one whose only object had been to while away a few idle hours; but she held her crushed heart bravely, and uttered no plaint; and never had her eyes shone more brightly, nor her dark beauty flushed to a rarer loveliness, than on that sunny afternoon when she rode seaward from Belair, with the dearest hopes of her young life quenched within her for ever.

A strong tide was rolling magnificently in when Frederica reined up her mare on the summit of the great rock known as Martell's Leap. She took off her hat, and let the breeze play among her hair, and listened to the roar of the waves as they shivered on the bench three hundred feet below; with eyes that followed dreamily in the wake

of some outward-bound ship, whose white sails gleamed ghost-like through the haze that veiled the horizon a mile or two away. She watched till the ship could be seen no longer, and then turned Zuleika's head inland, and rode gently homeward by way of St David's Valley, and through the fruitful champagne country that stretched southward from Belair. Coming up with Sir Philip in the park, leading his cob by the bridle, which had fallen lame, she dismounted, and took her uncle's arm, while Mr Bevis turned off in the direction of the stables with Zuleika and the cob.

'Your roses are quite brilliant this afternoon,' said the old man gallantly.—'Oh, been as far as Martell's Leap, have you? Far better than dawdling in the house, my dear; only be careful you don't let Zuleika take you too near the edge, or the catastrophe that gave its name to the place might unfortunately be repeated. Let us rest here for a minute or two; I have something particular to say to you, and I could hardly have a quieter spot than this to say it in.'

Frederica's heart sank within her; she foreboded but too surely that it was that her uncle wished to say to her. They had left the main avenue of the park, and had taken a by-path through the shrubbery which would bring them more quickly to the house, and had now reached a little secluded nook among the greenery—a semicircle of softest turf, planted round with evergreens, with here and there a rustic seat, and in the midst a tall terminal figure of Hymen in white marble, placed there by some previous owner of Belair, to make sacred the grove where he had wooed and won the lady whom he afterwards made his wife.

The baronet and his niece sat down on a curiously-carved bench, shaded by an immense laurel from the rays of the western sun. Sir Philip sat without speaking for a minute or two, tapping his boot absently with his riding-whip—a tall, white-haired, handsome old man, but very frail and delicate-looking; with manners that were marked by a certain kindly, old-world courtliness of tone not often met with now a days.

'You remember, Freddy,' he began at last, 'my speaking to you, some time ago, respecting the union which I wished to bring about between my friend Duplessis and yourself? You have not forgotten what passed at that time?'

'I have not forgotten, uncle.'

'That is well. I forbore to press the subject because I saw that it was distasteful to you, but none the less has it dwelt in my mind ever since, and I cannot rest till I have brought it once more before your attention, and—and, in short, done all that lies in my power to induce you to view it in a more favourable light. I am an old man, and my time in this world is short—nay, my dear, it is as I tell you; I say it calmly and seriously. When spring next comes round, I shall hardly be among you; and my medical man, if he chose, could tell you the same thing. You have been as dear to me, Freddy, as any daughter could have been, and I am naturally anxious to see you comfortably settled, and with a home of your own, while I am still here to look after your interests. Lady Spencelaugh and you have never agreed overwell together; and when I shall be gone, Gaston will be master of Belair, and the old house will hardly seem like a home to you. We have no near relatives; and the secluded life which the state of my health has compelled me to lead, has precluded the formation of

many intimate friendships. Under these circumstances, the consideration of your future has naturally been a source of some anxiety to me; and to see you happily married, dear, would lift a great weight from my mind. When your father lay dying, he took me by the hand, and said: "When I am gone, Phil, you must look after my little girl. I leave her in your hands. Bring her up religiously, and when she is old enough, find her a good man for a husband; and may Heaven deal by you as you deal by her!" I loved you at first because you were a wee little orphan and my brother's child, but soon you grew as dear to me as though you were my own; and I have striven to carry out poor Arthur's wishes to the best of my ability."

"Dear uncle!" said Frederica with tearful eyes. "Papa himself could not have done more for me than you have done."

"For the last half-dozen years," resumed Sir Philip, "I have been hoping that of your own accord, and without a word from me, you would pick out some worthy gentleman on whom to bestow your hand and heart—and of such suitors you have had more than one or two to whom I could have given you with every confidence. But time goes on, and still Endymion comes not, and to all others Diana is cold as an icicle."

He took her hand fondly, and stroked it gently between his. "Four months ago," he went on, "my friend, Henri Duplessis, came to me, and asked my permission to address you on a subject very near to his heart. The permission he asked for I gave him readily, knowing no man to whom I would sooner intrust the happiness of my darling than to him. He spoke to you, and his suit was rejected; and in that respect he only met the fate of others who had ventured before him. For his sake, I departed from the course I laid down for myself long ago—not to interfere by word or look in such matters. I hinted to you how happy it lay in your power to make both him and me, could you see your way clearly to do so. My words distressed you, and I told you to consider them as unsaid. But again, to-day, I venture to plead once more the cause of my friend. Do not mistake me, however; I am not here at his request—he knows nothing of this. He bowed unobtrusively to your decision, and from that day to this the subject has never been mentioned between us; but, unless I misjudge him greatly, he is not a man whose feelings readily change. Ah, Freddy, if you could but learn to look favourably on him! He is a gentleman by birth and education—generous, handsome, and accomplished; and although he is not a rich man, that fact would not, I am sure, influence your inclinations in the slightest degree. That he is brave, both you and I have had ample proof, else he would not have risked his life to save mine as recklessly as he did that day in the Pyrenees. When a man reaches my age, he seldom makes new friendships; but my heart seemed to warm to Henri Duplessis from the moment my eyes opened on his pleasant face, bent anxiously over me, in that little *cuberge* among the hills; had it not been for his bold spirit and strong arm, they would never have opened again on earth. Ah, Freddy, Freddy, if you could but learn to like him!"

He was still stroking her hand tenderly between his withered palms. There was a far-away look in Frederica's eyes as she sat, almost as immovable as a statue, gazing out into the violet sky; but there was a bitter warfare going on in her heart.

"Would it make you so very happy, uncle, if I were to try to 'like' Mr Duplessis a little?"

A bright eager light came into the old man's eyes, and his hands began all at once to tremble as he spoke. "Would it make me happy?" he said. "It would take away altogether my greatest earthly anxiety; it would cheer and gladden, far more than I can tell you, the few remaining days that are left me in this world, and crown my life with a happiness which I feel would be far greater than my deserts. Ah, darling, tell me that you will do this, and an old man's blessing will follow you through life!"

"I will strive to do as you wish, uncle," said Frederica.

He drew her face close to his, and kissed her fondly, and then turned away his head, for his eyes were dim, and he wanted time to recover himself.

"We will go home now, uncle, if you please," said Frederica. There was something in the tone of her voice which grated on his ears, and he peered anxiously into her face as he offered her his arm; and his heart sank a little, she looked so passionless and cold, with that stony far-away look in her eyes, as though she had caught a glimpse of the Gorgon's head in passing, and already the blight were falling upon her.

"Were I not as certain as a poor human being can be of anything," urged he, hastily, "that this step will ultimately conduce to your happiness, I would not persuade you to take it. Some day, dear, in the years to come, you will look back and say: 'My old uncle did what he thought best for my happiness, and his judgment was not such a bad one after all.'—Henri will make you a true and loving husband—of that I am sure."

"Pardon me, uncle," said Frederica, "but you are putting a far more absolute construction on my words than I intended them to convey."

He laughed a pleased little laugh. "Well, well; perhaps so," he said. "Only give Duplessis an opportunity of pleading his suit in person, and I will willingly leave the rest to time."

They were close to the house by this time, and as they turned a corner of the shrubbery, whom should they see approaching slowly on horseback from the opposite direction but Monsieur Henri Duplessis himself!

"By Jove!" exclaimed Sir Philip. "Why, here comes our hero in person! I suppose you won't care, Freddy, if— Eh, why, what! where the deuce has the girl got to?"

Frederica, on seeing who was coming, had slipped back out of sight, and traversing quickly a narrow side-path through the evergreens, came, in a few minutes, by a private door into Lady Spencelagh's flower-garden, from whence she quickly made her way unseen to her own room.

Having divested herself of her hat and riding-habit, she flung herself wearily on the bed. Both heart and head ached strangely; and she felt just then that it would be well to die, and so end all this miserable coil that was gathering round her life, and from which there seemed no other mode of escape. "Why does the Great Angel always refuse to come to the weary ones who long for his presence?" she murmured to herself. And then she fell to thinking of the promise she had given her uncle—a dangerous promise certainly, seeing in whose favour it was made. And yet, what did it matter? He whom she loved was lost to her for

ever, and just then she was indifferent to everything except that one miserable fact.

CHAPTER II.—MOTHER AND SON.

On the same afternoon that the events related in the foregoing chapter took place, Mrs Winch, landlady of the *Hand and Dagger*, the principal inn and posting-house in Normanford, drove up to Belair in her little pony-chaise, accompanied by her son Jerry. In the old coaching-days, the *Hand and Dagger* had been one of the best inns in all Monkshire, noted for its excellent accommodation and moderate charges; but with the advent of railways, and the extinction of stage-coaches, its importance had become a tradition of the past; it had now sunk into a common-place country hotel, the ghost of its former self, with now and then a solitary commercial traveller to shudder in the desolation of its great bare coffee-room; or with perhaps a rich family or two for a few days in autumn, who had ventured thus far in search of the picturesque. For the most part, however, it was abandoned to the effete conviviality of the Town Club, which assembled in its best parlour twice a week, to discuss the affairs of the nation in general, and those of Normanford in particular.

Mrs Winch was a widow of many years' standing. Her husband had been landlord of the *Hand and Dagger* during its prosperous days, and she now clung to it in its decadence, all the more tenaciously, perhaps, in that her friends were constantly advising her to give it up, and take a house of less pretensions and fewer expenses; and although these friends were always asseverating—among themselves—that her expenditure was far in excess of her diminished income, and that another year or two must inevitably make a bankrupt of her, Mrs Winch still went serenely on her way, laughing to scorn all such vaticinations, dressing in silks and satins, and taking her pleasure after her own fashion, as though the *Hand and Dagger* were the most prosperous of hotels. She was a person, too, of some consideration up at Belair, and the lodge-keeper took care to touch his hat to her as he opened the gates for her chaise to enter; as did also the footman who answered her imperative ring at the side-door—not the servants' door, if you please, but that convenient entrance generally made use of by the great people themselves when there was no company at Belair, and with which Mrs Jones, the housekeeper, and Mr Bellamy, the steward, had also a daily familiarity.

'Is my Lady at home, and disengaged?' asked Mrs Winch of the footman.

'At home, and I believe disengaged, ma'am,' answered the man in the most respectful of tones, as he held out his wrist to assist her to alight.

'Look after the pony, Jerry; I shall not be long,' said the landlady to her son, as she shook the stiff folds of her silk dress into their proper form, before following the footman into the house.

Jerry took the reins loosely, and nodded at his mother without speaking; he knew that the pony was quite competent to take care of itself, and his mind, just then, was intent on something else—on a waltz which he had heard a German band playing in the market-place as he left home, and which he had been crowning over to himself ever since; there were a few bars, however, which he couldn't

closed behind his mother, than he drew from one of his capacious pockets a long tin whistle, in the management of which he was a great adept, and proceeded to play softly over the tune which was haunting his brain; after several failures and stumblings over one or two difficult passages, he succeeded in playing it through without a blunder; then he flourished the whistle wildly round his head, and gave vent to a loud unearthly screech of delight—a sort of 'Hoo-hoo-hoo!' ending with a bark almost like that of a dog, and which, without further indication, would at once have told a stranger that poor Jerry's wits were not where they ought to be.

Jerry Winch was one of the institutions of Normanford, and known to all its inhabitants both young and old. He was a tall handsome lad of eighteen, with long flaxen hair, and a clear sunburnt complexion; dressed in a suit of homespun gray, with a tall sugar-loaf hat of gray felt, battered and weather-stained, the shape of which added not a little to the strangeness of his appearance. His eyes were deep blue, but from their depths there looked out at you a flickering, impish will-o'-the-wisp—sometimes nothing but the imp of fun and laughter, but in his darker moods one that was ready to do any devil's trick that might come first to hand; while irresolution and want of purpose were just as plainly indicated by his sensitive, loosely-hung mouth, and his pointed chin, in which lurked a dimple that many a beauty might have been proud to call her own. As a rule, Jerry was looked down upon by the people of Normanford as a harmless good-natured fool, ready to do an errand for anybody, but lacking the sense necessary for any but commissions of the simplest kind—a simpleton, who, if his mother had not been able to maintain him, must have been thrown upon the parish as one incapable of earning a living for himself. But there were not wanting a few people in Normanford who prided themselves on their penetration, and who were ready to aver that all Jerry's vagaries were not of such a harmless nature as his friends would have people believe; that the imp by which he was possessed was a malignant one, quite capable of bearing a grudge, and of revenging it, too, in its own stealthy devilish fashion. These detractors would whisper mysteriously among themselves, and ask one another who it was that set fire to Farmer Gubbins's ricks, six months after that individual had laid his riding-whip lightly across Jerry's shoulders, as a warning against turnip-stealing, a weakness to which Mrs Winch's son was much addicted. Who was it, too, these same folks would like to know, that flung the poisoned meat into Squire Wakefield's kennel, and so caused the death of a dozen hounds, a few weeks after Jerry had been bitten in the hand by that gentleman's mastiff, which took that way of shewing its objection to being poked in the ribs with a walking-stick? Who, again, was it, they asked, that coming suddenly behind poor Widow Brown one dark night, pushed her off the high bank into the river, where, but for the merest accident, she would have been drowned, several months after she had threatened Jerry with the penalties of the law for torturing her favourite black cat? These would have been serious questions, had there been any shadow of proof that Jerry was the party in fault; but there being nothing to implicate him

the proportion of fifty to one against his detractors, these ugly whispers gradually died out, and his popularity remained as well established as before.

Jerry's tootlings had scarcely come to an end, when the door was opened, and Mrs Jones, the housekeeper, stepped out, carrying something under cover of her apron. 'Well, Jerry, my man, and how are you to-day?' said the stately old dame. Mrs Winch and she had been bitter enemies for years; but for the half-witted Jerry the housekeeper had always a kindly word.

'His health is quite salubrious, ma'am; with many obligations to you,' answered Jerry, with a tug at the brim of his napless hat. He always spoke of himself in the third person, and delighted, when addressing those he deemed his superiors in life, to make use of the longest words his memory could supply him with—though, as his mother used to say, where he contrived to pick them up was a mystery to every one.

'You could eat a nice cake, couldn't you, Jerry?' said Mrs Jones.

Jerry burst into his wild unearthly laugh, but checked himself midway, and becoming grave in an instant, touched his hat deprecatingly, and gazed with eager, hungry eyes at the housekeeper's concealed treasure.

'What do you think of that, now? Isn't it a beauty?' and Mrs Jones flung back her apron, displaying as she did so a round cake the size of a dessert-plate, thickly sprinkled with currants.

Jerry's mouth literally began to water as he gazed, and his eyes went up to the housekeeper's with a wistful, pathetic expression, which the old lady had no heart to resist.

'Here, lad, take it,' said the kindly old woman; 'and if you eat it all, it will do you no harm. Only I hope to goodness, Jerry, that you have got none of them nasty snakes about you to-day. Ugh!' and the housekeeper shuddered, and drew back a step or two.

Jerry paused in his mastication of the first mouthful. 'He left all his pets at home to-day, that's what he did.'

'I'm glad of it; and if I were you, my boy, I'd chop their heads off.—Bless me, what an appetite the lad has!' and with a hearty good-morning, the housekeeper went back indoors, and left Jerry to the quiet discussion of his cake, who no sooner found himself alone, than he gave utterance to a couple of wild 'Hoo-hoo-hoo' laughs, and then returned, as grave as a judge, to the business in hand, and so went quietly on till the cake was eaten to the last crumb.

Jerry's next proceeding was to partially unbutton his capacious waistcoat, and inserting his hand into some folds of flannel that could be seen below, to draw therefrom, one after the other, a couple of large vipers, which he proceeded to fondle and play with, as though they were the most charming and innocent pets in the world. 'Chop off your heads, my beautiful ones, did the old cat say!' murmured Jerry, while the reptiles twisted themselves about his neck and arms, and seemed to reciprocate his caresses. 'Jerry would sooner chop her head off, any day. Dear to Jerry's heart art thou, O beautiful Mogaddo! and not less thou, O lovely Pipanta! Your master loves you both. And to-night ye shall haunt that old hag's dreams. She shall see you twining about her toes, and feel you biting the soles of her feet, and she shall have no

power to stir. Jerry wills it so! But nothing worse shall happen to her this time, because she gave Jerry a cake—a beautiful cake! and some day she may, perhaps, give him another. Hoo-hoo-eeh!

Then Jerry, placing the vipers on the seat before him, took out his tin whistle, and began to play a sweet, quaint old air in a minor key; and presently the reptiles lifted up their heads, and gradually began to sway their bodies to and fro, as though in unison with the tune.

'What a nice, fat, overlapping neck the old hag has!' murmured Jerry, pausing after a time for lack of breath. 'Jerry's fingers itched to gripe it. It would be nice, on a dark night, to seize it suddenly from behind, and hear it gurgle, and gasp, and choke—a neck, my beautiful Mogaddo, for which thou wouldst make a charming necklace! And now dance, dance, little ones, while the sun is warm, and your master's heart is glad!'

Mrs Winch, passing through several rooms and corridors, with all of which she was well acquainted, came at last to that wing of the great house of Belair in which Lady Spencelaugh's private apartments were situated.

'Mrs Winch to see my Lady,' lisped Mr Plush in dulcet accents, ushering the landlady into an ante-room, the sole inmate of which was Lady Spencelaugh's new maid, seated at her embroidery, who rose and frowned unmistakably at the intruder.

'My Lady is engaged, and cannot be seen,' exclaimed Mademoiselle Clotilde, with a strong French accent.—'And you, sir—to the footman—' never bring visitors here again, without first receiving permission to do so.'

'You say that my Lady is engaged. Has she company with her, or is she alone?' said the widow, still advancing towards the inner door.

'That concerns you not at all. I tell you my Lady is engaged, and will not see any one,' cried Mademoiselle, planting herself full before the sacred door.

'Tush! girl; I know what that means,' exclaimed the undaunted widow. 'She is taking her afternoon nap, and doesn't like being disturbed. But she will always see Martha Winch, let her come when and how she may; so stand aside, and try to remember me when you see me next;' and before Mademoiselle Clotilde knew what had happened, she found herself swung a couple of yards away, while Mrs Winch passed quickly forward into the inner room, and shut the door in her face.

'Remember you, Madame!' muttered the French girl between her teeth, as she twisted her fingers viciously in her black hair. 'Yes, I shall not forget you to-day, nor to-morrow, nor next year. What secret is there, I wonder, between my Lady and you, that you have permission to see her at any hour? That is just what it must be thy business to discover, *ma mignonne*!'

The demeanour of Mrs Winch underwent an entire change the moment she found herself in the presence of Lady Spencelaugh, who, roused thus unceremoniously from her afternoon slumber, started up in amazement, and glared at the intruder. Mrs Winch stood with her back to the door with a deprecatory air, and waited in submissive silence for my Lady to address her.

'Is that you, Martha Winch?' said Lady Spencelaugh sharply. 'I think you might have chosen a more appropriate time for your visit;

you know how greatly I dislike being disturbed at this hour of the day.'

'I should not have presumed to come at this time, my Lady, had I not received some important news, which I felt bound to communicate to you without the slightest delay.'

'I don't care; you might have let me enjoy my afternoon nap in peace: it was unkind of you to disturb me.'

'Important news from America,' urged the widow in a subdued voice.

Lady Spencelaugh flushed slightly at these words, and her eyes had an anxious expression in them as they sought those of Mrs Winch.

'Well, don't stand there, Martha,' she said more kindly than before, 'but come and sit down by me on the ottoman, and let us talk over this news of yours.'

Mrs Winch advanced into the room, and having pressed Lady Spencelaugh's proffered hand with respectful devotion to her lips, seated herself as requested, and opening her reticule, produced therefrom a newspaper and a letter.

Lady Spencelaugh had been accounted a beauty in her time, and at fifty years of age was still very nice-looking, with a white unwrinkled skin, and a clear bright colour in her cheeks, without the slightest suspicion of rouge. Her eyes were large, dark, and vivacious, but somewhat frosty in expression; and she had the good sense to wear her own gray hair without disguise, or further adornment than those exquisite little caps tossed together for her by the deft fingers of little lame Miss Garraway.

Lady Spencelaugh in her younger days had tasted the bitterness of genteel poverty, when, as Peggy Grant, the daughter of a poor Yorkshire squire, she had mended her father's hose, and made the pies and custards, and had a sharp eye after the domestic expenditure. That, of course, was before her rich aunt took her by the hand, and brought her out as a belle in London society, where, however, she contrived to play her cards so much amiss that at eight-and-twenty she was still unmarried, and was herself beginning to despair, when fortune threw a rich widower in her way in the person of Sir Philip Spencelaugh, whom, after six months of patient angling, she succeeded in landing high and dry on the shore of matrimony.

The ambition of Marguerite Grant was satisfied when she became Lady Spencelaugh, and she determined thenceforth to take life easily, and enjoy the full advantages of her position. Several brilliant seasons in London succeeded her marriage—that is, after Sir Philip finally settled in England, which was not till two years later, his regiment having been ordered to India for active service, in consequence of which he was unwilling for some time to sell out. But the rupture of a blood-vessel brought her Ladyship's career to a dismal termination, and confined her for many weary months to a sick-bed; and after her return to comparative health, she never cared to resume her former position in the gay world of London, two or three weeks in the May or June of each season satisfying all her ambition in that way; the rest of the year, with the exception of a couple of months at some watering-place at home or abroad, being passed at Belair, where she never saw much company, the health of Sir Philip, like her own, being far from robust. Thus it fell out that for

many years past Lady Spencelaugh had considered herself, and had been treated by every one about her, as an invalid, and as such had fallen into an easy, self-indulgent way of life, which she was too old to change; so, beyond checking the tradesmen's accounts herself, and keeping down the number of servants to the lowest point of efficiency, she interfered in no way with the management of the establishment at Belair. She liked to be nicely dressed, and to have a well-appointed carriage; she liked nice little French dinners, and hothouse flowers, and her after-luncheon nap, and an unlimited supply of new novels, English and foreign. Grant Lady Spencelaugh but these trifles, supplemented by an intermittent rain of mixtures 'as before,' concocted for her by her favourite Dr Roach, and, for the rest, the world might wag pretty much as it liked, for any interest she took in its sayings or doings. One son she had, Gaston Spencelaugh, the darling of his mother's heart, who had just left Cambridge, and was now in Paris, for the supposed purpose of perfecting himself in the French language.

A word as to the personal appearance of Mrs Martha Winch, and we shall then get fairly underway again with our story. The landlady of the *Hand and Dagger* was a tall, thin, large-featured woman, in reality nearly as old as Lady Spencelaugh, but her light flaxen hair shewed as yet but few traces of age, while her figure was still as lithe and upright as though she were but a girl of twenty. She was a woman of few words, with manners that were grave almost to sternness; and was respected rather than liked by the people of Normanford—a woman of whom it might be averred, that although she had hundreds of acquaintances, it was much to be doubted whether she had a single friend; albeit, as we shall find hereafter, there were one or two vulnerable places in the widow's coldly-beating heart, notwithstanding.

'And now, Martha, for your important news,' said Lady Spencelaugh.

Mrs Winch paused for a moment with her hand on the letter. 'Barbara Kreefe is dead!' she said, in a voice that was almost sepulchral in its solemnity.

'Dead!' whispered her Ladyship, as though she could scarcely believe the news, while a sudden terror leaped into her eyes, and all the warmth and colour died out of her face.

'Your Ladyship has no cause to be alarmed,' said Mrs Winch reassuringly. 'Barbara has died as she lived—faithful to the *Secret*!'

Lady Spencelaugh gave a great sigh of relief, and wiped the perspiration from her brow with her delicate laced handkerchief. 'Go on,' she murmured. 'Whose letter is that which you have got there?'

'This is a letter written by Barbara on her death-bed, after she knew that she could not recover, and left by her with directions that it should be forwarded immediately upon her decease. Accompanying it came this newspaper, which contains the notification of her death. With your Ladyship's permission, I will now read the letter, the contents of which are of so singular a character that I could not rest a moment after reading them, but hurried up to Belair at once.'

Lady Spencelaugh was busily at work with her fan: it was evident that her mind was ill at ease. Martha Winch got up and turned the key of the

door, and closed the French window; and then, going back to her seat, read, in a low and measured voice, the following letter.

STREET-HUMOUR.

THERE are some people so exceedingly genteel that everything that is common or cheap—such as a bunch of violets—is in their eyes vulgar, and not to be written about. They clap their gloved hands in approbation of mincing drawing-room wit, but shrink from humour in its everyday garb. I venture to warn such gentry not to read this paper, which is intended for stronger stom—*I beg pardon*—more robust intelligences. *Nihil humanum a me alienum puto*. I for my part enjoy the quick retort of a Hansom cabman equally well with the repartee of a Chesterfield. I love

The wit that doth not stoop to trench
On the bright shallows of the French,
But dims the laughing eye, and rolls
Its jovial current to our souls.

Of course, the cabman sometimes dims the eye in another sense, as when driven beyond the limits of sarcasm, he called upon the amiable Mr Pickwick to 'come on,' which caused that gentleman to throw himself 'into a paralytic attitude, which he firmly believed to be a posture of self-defence;' but I am about to treat of him in his intermediate mood, exacerbated with his fare to cynicism, but not incurring the penalty of 40s. by any conduct likely to produce a breach of the peace.

It is the cabman and the omnibus conductor who monopolise most of our street-humour; and the reason of which can be philosophically explained. It is Leisure which breeds this sort of caustic wit: and though both these classes are hard-worked, their minds are always free to comment upon their fellow-creatures; their expansive view surveys mankind in the West End and in the City too; and besides opportunity of this sort, the wordy war in which they are constantly engaged keeps their wits sharp; the sword never rusts in the scabbard. Now the postman, who sees almost as many people *per diem*, and converses with far more, is comparatively a dull man, because his attention is always obliged to be concentrated on his work, and does not admit of his encouraging any Sallies (at least of wit). And again, it is a noticeable fact, that drivers of Hansom cabs are vastly sharper than those who preside over the four-wheeled conveyances. These last, indeed, are called 'Grumblers,' I believe, simply because their Jehus do grumble in a sulky and muttering sort of way (no matter what money you offer them), but rarely think of giving intellectual battle, like their brethren upon two wheels. They stand in one's doorway, and ask, with their proper dues in their open hand: What is this for? They terrify one's wife with their bad language, and will bully a poor servant going to her place about the unmis-takable box, for which they want sixpence extra for its ride on their roof; but their 'sauce' is not piquant. None of them was ever known to give

back his sixpence to a fashionable but rather economical fare, with the remark, that 'he is sure he wants it more than him' (the driver); he prefers sixpence to all the wit in the world, and would never indulge in a sarcasm, even if he could, at the cost of a pint of beer.

Only once did I ever hear of a Growler who made himself completely master of the situation, and obtained ransom from the poor creature in his vehicle by sheer intellectual superiority. Young Augustus Ffoljambe of our club—who spells his name with a number of little *fs*—was the victim, and confided the story to me with tears in his eyes upon the very night of the occurrence. The poor lad is very fond of finding his legs under the mahogany of persons of title, and he had been asked to dine that evening with a live marquis, for the first time. Though bent on this exquisite pleasure, however, Ffoljambe had a frugal mind: since St James's Square was only a few streets from his own lodgings, he would not hire a brougham, even for so momentous an occasion, but took a 'grumbler' from the rank. 'The Marquis of Rattatag, No. 999 St James's Square,' said he, in a magnificent voice, and leaned back in the crazy vehicle as though it had been a coroneted chariot with patent springs. The mention of his titled host was quite unnecessary, and as it turned out, cost the poor fellow as much as a brougham would have done, besides much mental agony; for, from his exalted manner, the astute driver gathered that Mr Ffoljambe was about to partake of his Lordship's hospitality for the first time, and would wish, above all things, to enter his mansion in a graceful and unembarrassed manner; and the wretch took his measures accordingly.

On arriving (in about a minute and a half) at No. 999, Cabby put his head in at the window, and demanded *five shillings*. My poor friend, looking in an apprehensive manner up at the stately mansion, exclaimed: 'Nonsense;' but hastily proffered half-a-crown. Hereupon, Cabby swiftly ran up the steps, and administered a thundering double-knock, which summoned three flamingo-like footmen, besides a perfect gentleman in plain clothes. 'You scoundrel!' cried Ffoljambe in a stage-whisper, 'here is your five shillings; but I have got your number.'

'My fare is *half-a-sovereign* now, sir, and I don't leave this house until I get it,' answered Cabby in a most determined tone. And he *did* get it. Ffoljambe paid about a shilling a yard for that little drive; and his Lordship's butler and three lackeys thought him a very mean fellow after all, and quite unfit to be a guest of their master, to be thus disputing with a cabman about a paltry sixpence.

This achievement of Cabby's was undoubtedly a great *coup*; but its conception did not require much agility of mind, and its success was due to dogged determination, rather than to any brilliant parts. A Hansom cabman would probably have recognised little Ffoljambe's character at a glance, whereas this four-wheeled individual was doubtless indebted to Luck that he did not make a mistake in his man. The idea itself was not original. A brother Jehu once tried the very same trick upon a subtle lawyer of my acquaintance, and made the saddest *fiasco* of that affair. My legal friend, although a disciple of Adam Smith, had, in consideration of its being a wet night, offered sixpence

extra, as he emerged from the Grumbler in full dining costume. 'That's not my fare,' cried the Wretch, taking care to let the footman hear him.

'You are right, my friend,' returned the barrister. 'Give me back the half-crown, and—here's a florin for you instead: *that's* your right fare.'

'I'll rouse the house—I'll knock the door down!' exclaimed the cabman furiously.

'With all my heart,' answered the man of law: 'it is neither my house nor my door.'

Whereupon, the disappointed one, who, worse than vaulting ambition, had o'erreached himself, and fallen on the wrong man, drove ejaculating away.

No; the drivers of Grumblers have no wit; their jokes are only practical. A *Scagenarian* writes to the *Times* to say that he was about to cross the street the previous day when an empty four-wheeled cab made at him furiously (which, before, had been going at a foot's pace), and that he very narrowly escaped being run over. The policeman, to whom he complained, assured him that it was a very favourite 'little game' with drivers who could not procure fares. Either they are determined to get them, dead or alive (for, of course, they would take the body to the hospital), or else this practice is merely a vent for the cynicism of their natures, which, in the case of their more intellectual brethren, is expended in repartee.

That both classes do behave exceedingly ill to women and foreigners—to all, in fact, upon whom they can impose—is certainly true. The ideas that the great Teutonic race in particular have imbibed of these men (and doubtless not merely out of their 'moral consciousness,' but from sad experience) are, as I happened to discover, of the most alarming kind. A gentleman of Prussia came over to stay with me some weeks ago, and arrived in a Hansom cab.

'He did bring me safe,' cried he, with his full face beaming through his spectacles, 'and has nothing from me stolen.'

'Of course not,' said I. 'Why did you apprehend any such misfortunes?'

'Ha, ha!' exclaimed he with joyful sagacity; 'I do know them, those cab-drivers of yours; they ill-treat, they rob; but see, I have his name and number rightly taken. *Mappin: 71 Cornhill, City, Ivory Balance Handle Cheese Knives, finest steel.*'

The poor deluded man had copied the advertisement upon the splash-board; and it was difficult to persuade him to abandon his fool's paradise of security, although I assured him that he might just as well appeal to the Prussian Constitution against Count Bismark.

What sad stories of London cabmen must this poor gentleman have had confided to him by suffering fellow-countrymen, before he was driven to take so fruitless a precaution, and doubtless as true as sad. My heart gives a throb of pity whenever I see a foreigner in a Hansom, with that conquering Briton sitting up aloft, hat aside, and with half-shut eye, in vulgar ecstasy, over his unconscious prey. Is it likely such men should spare the Alien, when they lash with sarcasm even their own countrywomen on the small provocation of sixpence less than they expected? And yet, upon the same principle, I suppose, that the sex adores the husband who is a wife-beater, it is certain that ladies are very fond of riding in Hansoms, notwithstanding that the driver is almost sure to apostrophise them afterwards from his

perch with withering scorn. It is in vain for Mr Stockbroker Jones to tell his wife and sister-in-law that it is not the correct thing for them to be seen in a two-wheeled conveyance: they infinitely prefer that description of vehicle; there is a *souper* of innocent 'fastness' about it which takes their fancy; and in spite of his mandate, while Jones is in the City, they often go a-shopping, 'framed and glazed'—like a peripatetic picture—in the cloud-compelling and swift-rolling Hansom.

'They will do it,' says Jones, as certain of that act of domestic obedience being committed, as Bluebeard was of whither Fatima's curiosity would lead her when he said, 'And be sure, my dear, that you do not enter the Blue Chamber.' Yet the penalty, although not so excessive as in that unfortunate young matron's case, is very severe. That ladies never give enough money, is quite a proverb: not altogether an unjust one, perhaps, though it should be remembered that husbands often keep their wives very short of that article, which causes them to 'look twice at a sixpence' before they part with it unnecessarily, whereas their lord and master flings his florins about in a selfishly reckless manner; but from whatever reason the disinclination arises, the British female opens her purse-strings with reluctance, and, in consequence, renders an altercation with her cabman certain. It is at this period of the transaction that she regrets her disobedient behaviour, and would hail her Jones's appearance as eagerly as she lately hailed the forbidden vehicle.

'Your fare is a shilling, my good man,' says she in a quavering voice, and standing on tiptoe to present him with that despised coin.

'A shilling!' returns he disdainfully. 'It's always a shilling, *just* a shilling with such as you. You knows how to lay out your money, *you* do. I'm blest if I don't think you women thinks as you will go to heaven for a shilling!'

Sometimes, on the other hand, these ingenious rhetoricians pretend to an exaggerated respect for the sex, and actually shelter their own extortions under the ægis of a pettecoat. I remember upon one occasion I treated the wife of my bosom to a drive of considerably under a mile and a half in a Hansom, and in order to avoid the possibility of a disturbance, tendered our Jehu a florin.

'This ain't a half-crown, sir,' said he, turning the coin over and over in his hand, as though he could scarcely believe his eyes.

'No,' said I, slightly irritated, 'but it is more than your proper fare, and you know it.'

It was very wrong of me doubtless, but upon his reiterating his extortionate demand, I lost my temper, and called him (let us say) 'a confounded scoundrel': whereupon, hiding his face behind his hand, as though excessively shocked, he cried: 'O dear, O dear, to hear such language used before a lady.' With which parting shot, having from his eyrie perceived a policeman in the distance, he slowly drove away. Who would not be abashed and discomfited at receiving from such a source a lesson in good-manners!

A friend of mine, who happened to have an injured arm in a sling, was once importuned by another of the fraternity for an extra shilling.

'No,' answered he; 'sixpence extra is quite enough; and besides, you drove so badly, grinding against the curbstone at every turning, that you have seriously hurt my arm.'

'Did I indeed,' answered the cabman cynically;

'and a good job too if I had busted it.' (Imagining, I suppose, that the fracture was a boil.)

One of the greatest compliments that has ever been paid to the Church of England, at the expense of the dissenting Body, was delivered in my hearing (and indeed in the hearing of half a hundred people about to start by the North Express from Euston Square) by one of these Hansom cabmen; and it deserves to be recorded as an evidence of the high opinion which that class entertains for 'the Establishment,' as well as for its own intrinsic merit. A High Church Rector (at the very least), with the stiffest of white cravats, M B waistcoat, and upright coat-collar, had just stepped out of this gentleman's vehicle, and given him what was doubtless his proper fare. More was demanded, but an unmistakable shake of the head was the reply. The ecclesiastic, apprehensive of the storm, began to walk as hastily as dignity permitted, towards the booking-office; but he could not escape the winged sarcasm of his late driver.

'Well, if I didn't take him for a Clergyman; and after all, he's nothing better, you see, than a Ranter!'

Surely an admirable stroke of impudence; the expression 'you see' too, as though he were secure of the sympathies of all who heard him, struck me as being particularly happy. I have never known this piece of street-humour beaten except in one case, which, although a well-known one, has not, I believe, been chronicled in print. During the period of the Great Exhibition at Kensington, the omnibuses in that district increased their fares from threepence to fourpence. A Frenchman, averse to imposition, and who had been, I suppose, informed what he was to pay by some person unacquainted with the change in the tariff, proffered a threepenny-piece in payment for the journey.

'Fourpence, mossoo,' answered the conductor, wagging his head.

The unfortunate alien, who could not speak a word of English, still tendered the smaller coin.

'One, two, three, four—*Four*,' cried the other, counting the numbers on his fingers, and roaring at the top of his voice, as though that would render him more intelligible. '*Four! Four!*'

This went on for about five minutes, in the presence of a 'busful of people, who wanted to settle their own little accounts, and enter the building.

'He don't understand nothing,' groaned the conductor, when his store of abuse was utterly exhausted. '*Will any lady or gentleman be so good as to oblige me with the French for a blessed fool?*'

NITRO-GLYCERINE.

THE terrible disaster which occurred a few weeks ago at Aspinwall, a seaport on the eastern coast of the Isthmus of Panama, has naturally led people who are unfamiliar with the recent discoveries in chemical science, to make inquiries regarding the nature of the substance, the explosion of which produced such dreadful havoc with human life and property. The steam-ship *European*, the property of the newly-formed West Indian and Pacific Steam-ship Company, was unloading in the port of Aspinwall, alongside the wharf connected with the

Atlantic terminus of the railway which crosses the Isthmus of Panama, and, without any premonitory symptoms, an explosion occurred, which destroyed not only the ship itself, but fifty or sixty human lives in addition, together with a great amount of property on shore, including the freight-house and the wharf—the former about six hundred, and the latter nearly four hundred feet long. The entire amount of damage done to property is reckoned at one million of dollars. Considering the awful sacrifice of life and property which resulted from the explosion, the violence of which is said to have resembled an earthquake, and, likewise, that there was no suspicion of danger lurking in the breast of any person on board the ill-fated *European*, people may well inquire: To what was the explosion owing; and when the answer is, Nitro-glycerine, they will add the query, And what is Nitro-glycerine?

Everybody knows quite well that *glycerine* is one of the mildest, blandest, and most innocent matters with which manuals on chemistry make us acquainted. The sweet, harmless compound glycerine was first obtained in 1779, by the distinguished Swedish chemist Scheele, while preparing lead-plaster from lard and oxide of lead, and by him called the 'sweet principle of oils.' Chevreul, the French chemist, many years afterwards shewed it to be a constant product in the saponification of ordinary oils and fats. In 1847, M. Ascanio Sobrero, a young Italian, and a pupil of Pelouze, discovered this new compound, nitro-glycerine, while operating upon glycerine by means of nitric acid. It was shewn to be a very explosive body, and became an object of interest to chemists, many of whom have, from time to time, suffered serious injuries while experimenting with it. It is only within the last few months that it has been prepared in any considerable quantity as an article of commerce, and sold for blasting purposes under the name of 'blasting oil.' It was reserved for Mr Alfred Nobel, the engineer of a Swedish copper-mine, to demonstrate its utility as a substitute for gunpowder and gun-cotton in blasting operations, its practicability for which was satisfactorily proved in the course of the year 1864, and especially during last summer, when it was used in the open workings of the tin-mines of Altenburg, in Saxony. Early in the present year, we were informed that it was in use at Hirschberg, in Silesia, being employed in blasting for a railway tunnel. This same substance was that which was shipped on board the *European* at Liverpool, and by that vessel taken out to Aspinwall on her second voyage, which most unfortunately proved to be her last one. It had been brought from Germany to Grimsby, and carried by railway to Liverpool, and there entered in the ship's papers, it would seem, as some form of oil, without the owners of the vessel being apprised of its dangerous character. There were seventy cases of it (probably tin-plate cases). Strangely enough, almost at the same time that we were informed of the catastrophe at Aspinwall, the American newspapers informed

us that an explosion of exactly a similar character had occurred on the 16th of April at San Francisco, whither the blasting oil on board the *European* was destined, thence to be sent to the mines of Idaho, Nevada, Colorado, &c., and that it resulted in the death of fifteen persons, together with great destruction to property. It had been taken to San Francisco by the Pacific mail-steamer, in two oil-stained boxes, each measuring about four cubic feet. The explosion in this instance shook the neighbourhood like an earthquake for a quarter of a mile round, for to that extent it is said that every window was broken.

Only a few months ago—in November last, we believe—an explosion of a very violent character took place at the Wyoming Hotel, New York, which, although somewhat mysterious at the time, now seems to have been due to the spontaneous and sudden decomposition of none other than this remarkable chemical agent. A box containing samples of chemical oils had arrived at the Wyoming Hotel from Hamburg, and, on being lifted and carried into the street, exploded in about thirty seconds with most astounding effects. It was known to have been accompanied by a person named Leers, from Hamburg, where Mr Nobel, the patentee, was bringing it under the notice of the public.

It is obviously reprehensible in the highest degree to impose on shipping and other public carrying agencies articles of so dangerous a character under false descriptions, thus endangering many lives and a great amount of property. Yet we are informed that it is no uncommon thing for gunpowder of a particular description to be sent by railway, labelled 'Glass, with care.' Again, powerful blasting-powder, made from spent tan, has been shipped as 'Prepared Tan;' and other instances could be quoted of persons knowingly playing at the game of 'fast and loose' with life and property.

Nitro-glycerine, as its name would almost indicate, is produced by the action of nitric acid on glycerine, but in practice it is found desirable to employ strong oil of vitriol or sulphuric acid along with the nitric acid. According to Dr Sobrero, the discoverer of the substance, a mixture should be made of two ounces of oil of vitriol, and one ounce of fuming nitric acid, and kept cool by ice applied externally, half an ounce of syrupy glycerine being gradually stirred in. The glycerine dissolves in the acid mixture, without any nitric fumes being disengaged; but in course of time the mixture acquires a cloudy appearance, owing to the formation of a yellowish, oily-looking substance, which gradually collects on the surface. The whole is then poured into a glass vessel containing about fifty ounces of cold water. The nitro-glycerine separates immediately, and, being very heavy, falls to the bottom of the vessel; the acid water is poured off, and the product is washed with water until the washings give no indication of even a trace of acid.

The nitro-glycerine, thus produced, is a light yellow liquid, having somewhat the appearance of olive oil, and of the specific gravity of about 1.6, being therefore more than one and a half times the weight of water—a property which proves of great advantage in the use of the substance. It is inodorous, but has a sweetish-pungent and aromatic taste, and when placed on the tongue, even in small quantity, produces headache, which lasts for hours.

It is insoluble in water, but is soluble both in alcohol and ether.

As already mentioned, Mr Nobel, on gaining acquaintance with the explosiveness of nitro-glycerine, set to work to utilise that property in blasting operations, and succeeded far beyond his most sanguine expectations. He very soon succeeded in securing patent-rights for its manufacture and use, in Sweden, Prussia, France, England, and the United States; and it is already rapidly superseding gunpowder as a blasting material in mines, quarries, and railway tunnelling. Glycerine is obtained from animal and vegetable fixed oils and fats, by decomposing them, and removing the fatty acids which they all contain; but the oily character is not restored by treating the glycerine with nitric and sulphuric acids. With an oil, we generally associate the idea of a harmless and innocuous substance, although there is an exception in the case of the oil expressed from bitter almonds; but then, like nitro-glycerine, it is a *nitro-compound*, and such substances are generally to be regarded with suspicion.

Since the New York, San Francisco, and Aspinwall explosions, much that is false has been written, and published in newspapers, to the discredit of nitro-glycerine. The substance is so peculiarly adapted for the purposes of blasting, however, that it can well afford to be called ill names. It is capable of doing more work, and at less cost, than gunpowder; and we make bold to say, that it is not more dangerous than that substance, if it is *as* dangerous. It cannot explode by simple contact with fire; for on applying a lighted match to it, or by allowing a spark to fall into it, the nitro-glycerine burns quietly away. It will not explode in the liquid state, until it is heated to a temperature of about three hundred and sixty degrees Fahrenheit, and even then there is no explosion if the substance is freely exposed to the air. To explode nitro-glycerine, it is necessary that it should be in a close vessel, or in a confined space: a covering of water is quite sufficient. In illustration of this statement, we would mention one or two of a number of remarkable experiments, instituted by a Swedish commission, consisting of Commodore Adlersparre and several professors of the Academy of Science, Royal Museum, and Technological Institution, Stockholm. A quantity of nitro-glycerine was poured out on a flat stone; the liquid did not catch fire when a red-hot iron bar was drawn along its surface; it did not explode, but only burned quietly when the bar was allowed to lie for some time in contact with it. Upon removing the bar, unconsumed liquid remained on the stone. In another instance, a cavity in a stone was filled with the explosive liquid; a burning stick was plunged into it, and, on being stirred, the nitro-glycerine burned with flame, but without explosion. The burning ceased of itself when the stick had been consumed by the fire. And on this point, the patentee himself says it does not catch fire like turpentine or spirits, but goes out when the match is withdrawn.

The explosion of nitro-glycerine is attended with the production of a very limited amount of smoke, if there is even any; and, consequently, its advantage over gunpowder is very evident, as in the driving of tunnels there is no delay necessary to get rid of the smoke. We are not able at present to say that the vapour of prussic or hydrocyanic acid is not found amongst the products of the

decomposition—nay, we should be inclined to affirm that it is, looking at the ingredients which the compound contains; and yet Mr Cragg, the director and manager of the slate-quarries of the Glynrhonwy Slate Company, at Caernarvon, North Wales, says that, while superintending the firing of some shots in a tunnel, although he was on the spot in every instance immediately after the shots were fired, at a distance of sixty-three yards from the mouth of the tunnel, and without any ventilating-shaft, he experienced no ill effects from the fumes from the decomposed nitro-glycerine. But in open quarries, at all events, there would be no danger to the workmen. It is certain that there is no solid residue left after an explosion of this substance; and hence, in the case of metallic ores, as there is no blackening, there can be no difficulty in tracing the course of the vein; and in the case of rock-salt, there would be no waste.

Nitro-glycerine has other advantages over gunpowder, when employed in blasting. One of the most striking is its great rending and eruptive force compared with its bulk. The expense of boring in ordinary blasting has hitherto been very great, being no less than five, ten, or, in very hard rocks, even twenty times as great as the price of the gunpowder used. The new blasting material requires so little boring that it would be more economical to employ it than gunpowder, even if the latter were got for nothing. The average result hitherto has been a saving of fifty to sixty per cent. on the cost of blasting in quarries, and thirty to forty per cent. in mines.

The carriage, storing, and handling of nitro-glycerine are in every way safe, when only ordinary care is observed. It has been carried many hundreds of miles—all over Europe, in fact—both by water and by land, as ordinary merchandise, without any disastrous consequences ensuing, the most simple precautions being attended to. It has been suggested that the concussion of a case of it falling into the hold of the *European* steam-ship might have caused the dreadful explosion at Aspinwall. But the substance will not explode in this way. Nitro-glycerine has been thrown from heights of fifty feet without effect. In Hamburg, it was thrown up in a rocket, and its fall of more than one thousand feet did not explode it. The Stockholm commissioners, working out the same point, filled several glass bottles with the explosive liquid, and had them thrown with great force from a height down upon a rock below; the bottles were smashed to pieces, but none of the material exploded. In another experiment, in order to satisfy the doubts of some of the observers, they filled three glass bottles with nitro-glycerine, and heated them in hot water to upwards of one hundred and twenty degrees Fahrenheit. The bottles were then thrown violently against a stone; they were shattered to fragments, but no explosion occurred.

Many other interesting facts have been elicited by Mr Nobel and other experimenters. One of these is that nitro-glycerine may be exploded by percussion, when a thin layer of it is spread on an anvil and struck sharply with a hammer. Strangely enough, however, the explosion is localised to the spot underneath the face of the hammer; there may be almost as many detonations as blows struck. Another is, that the explosive liquid freezes and crystallises in cold weather, but resumes all its ordinary properties on melting, which may be

effected by immersing the containing vessel in hot water. Its freezing-point seems to be as high as from forty-three to forty-six degrees Fahrenheit, and at all temperatures under the lowest of these it is probably an icy mass. This is undoubtedly one of its disadvantages.

The mode of using this remarkable material is as follows: Bore-holes are made in the rock, or fissures already formed may be taken advantage of, providing they are not too large. The bores need not be more than an inch in diameter; in many cases, even half an inch is wide enough. If the bore is water-tight, the liquid may be simply poured in; if not, it is rendered so by lining it with soft clay. A paper-plug is then pushed down nearly to the surface of the nitro-glycerine; a fuse is thrust down to the paper, then a handful of gunpowder is thrown in, and the bore is tamped with loose sand or clay. The tamping should not be hard, as that is both useless and dangerous. For shallow bores, cartridges may be used for the nitro-glycerine; but they are not necessary. It is not necessary either to be concerned about any water that may be in a bore-hole; for if the blasting liquid be poured in, it will sink to the bottom, owing to its greater specific gravity. At the extremity of Nobel's patent fuse, a percussion-cap is tightly fitted, the explosion of which is communicated to the gunpowder, and through it to the explosive liquid; or the explosion of the percussion-cap is communicated directly to the nitro-glycerine, when the blasting is done under water. It should also be mentioned that the percussion-cap required is likewise patented by Mr Nobel; common caps not being suitable.

The great mechanical power exerted by nitro-glycerine is due to the fact that, on being exploded, it is completely resolved into gases of various kinds. Gunpowder, in practice, does not become wholly transformed into gases, consequently, the alteration in bulk is not so great as in the case of nitro-glycerine. Not only is there complete transformation of the liquid into gas, but the latter is enormously increased in bulk by rarefaction, owing to the heat developed in the explosion being so very great when compared with that of a gunpowder explosion. Bulk for bulk, the explosive force of nitro-glycerine is thirteen, that of gunpowder being one; taking equal weights, nitro-glycerine does eight times as much work as gunpowder. One pound of the explosive liquid at present costs as much as seven pounds of gunpowder, but then it does a great deal more work; in fissured rocks, the nitro-glycerine is calculated to be from twenty to thirty times more effective than gunpowder.

We see no good reason why there should be so much consternation about the dangerous nature of this new explosive material. New York, San Francisco, Sydney, Liverpool, and other places that have already gained an acquaintance with it, by explosions or otherwise, need not fancy themselves to be resting on a volcano just ready for action, because they may have a few cases of it now and then passing through them towards their destination in the mining regions; and, above all, it is not desirable, in our opinion, that the strong arm of the law should be sought to prevent the manufacture and transport of this valuable material. It has been abundantly demonstrated to be a highly serviceable agent, economising by its use both the labour and capital required in blasting operations. Let its transmission, both by land and sea, as also

its manufacture, be regulated; let its use be carefully superintended; but do not curb and limit the inventive powers of the human mind, for if they can call this powerful substance into being, and apply its pent-up force to advantage, they can also suggest plans whereby its use may proceed without entailing either death or danger on any single person; nay, these are already suggested, and are both known and practised by many persons in both hemispheres, where the use of nitro-glycerine is doing much valuable service in an important branch of industrial enterprise.

A TYPHOON IN THE CHINA SEAS.

Mercy on us!

We split, we split!—Farewell, my wife and children!

Farewell, brother! We split, we split, we split!

Now would I give a thousand furlongs of sea for an acre of barren ground; long heath, brown furze, anything.

Tempest, Act I. Scene 1.

‘WELL, master, what sort of a night are we going to have, do you think? Wind seems to be getting up.’—‘Why, F—, I am afraid we shall have a blow; and I don’t like the appearance of the clouds or that sky at all. Do you notice that pale red and wild appearance about the setting sun? That, I fear, by all accounts, forebodes no good. The China seas are by no means free, you know, at this time of the year, from typhoons and hurricanes.’

This conversation took place on board the —, one afternoon about sunset, during the month of September 1865, previous to one of, if not the severest typhoons ever experienced. The barometer, I believe, has never been known to have fallen so much as it did in this instance. It was about two bells (7 P.M.) in the second dog-watch, on 2d September 1865, that we all remarked what a singularly red appearance the sky presented. The heat was damp and very oppressive, creating a longing for fresh air, as though one was in a raging fever. Repeated flashes of lightning added to the horror of the scene, which, with a fast-falling barometer, fully realised the approach of the dreaded typhoon.

About 11 A.M. of the second day of the storm, the wind increasing in violence, and the sea gradually getting heavier and heavier, the captain took in all sail, for the wind was all round the compass, and never steady in one quarter for any time. We were now under bare poles, and the rolling of the ship was beginning to get very serious—already twenty-four degrees. The force of the wind was twelve, thereby indicating a hurricane; by degrees the wind dropped, until at last we were in a perfect calm, yet with a good sea running. We all congratulated ourselves that we were safely out of it. Large quantities of sea-birds kept falling exhausted on the deck, being blown into the centre, in the same helpless way as we were. We set to work, officers and men, to pump out the ship, taking spells by turns. Whilst the ship is being pumped out, we will take our reader to the different parts of it.

The upper deck was one mass of debris; looking aloft, you saw the rigging all askew—

sails, though furled, actually blown from the yard; yards smashed and adrift. Looking into the mizzen-rigging, you see one of the quarter-boats stove in and blown up aloft, shewing the force of the wind to have moved it from its davits, to which it was firmly secured, as any one may know who has ever been on board a ship, and noticed the way of fastening the boats. On the other side of the rigging, you see the remains of the other cutter, in shape of part only of the stern-sheets, everything else connected with it being entirely blown away. Although ‘man-ropes’ had been lashed all over the upper deck, to facilitate the working of the ship, you could not stand steady during the horrid motion caused by the excessive rolling. In the officers’ mess-room, there was a great quantity of water, the table wrenched off its iron legs, and continually charging up and down the room, as the ship rolled, which, together with casks, cases, chairs, broken glass, and crockery, and other debris, rendered the place highly dangerous to those in search of eatables or drinkables. The screw-hatch, in the after-part of the mess-room, was wholly washed away, thereby causing innumerable articles to be carried down the screw-well into the sea. The stern-ports, although secured with dead-lights, were washed in; so one can easily imagine the quantity of water that kept pouring in with each roll or pitch of the ship.

The cabins fared no better. Bedding and other clothing got quite soaked through; we had to sleep in the same clothes for three consecutive nights, besides wearing them all day; and the water, splashing up from the deck, perfectly saturated us from head to foot as we lay on our swinging-beds, trying to get a few minutes’ sleep—a thing next to impossible.

As concerns the cockpit, lower deck, and other mess-places, they fared no better. The sea-chests in the cockpit were all afloat, rendering the thoroughfare from the deck to the cabin exceedingly unpleasant.

Next day, we again got into the centre of the storm, observing the same peculiarity with regard to the calm and birds as before. During the interval of the second and third day, the barometer actually fell to 27.63, and remained so for sixteen minutes. This was our most critical moment. The sea made a complete sweep over our boom-boats, and drowned all our live-stock. The lee waist hammock-nettings were under water for several minutes. It was then that the captain of the ship asked the master whether he thought it advisable to cut away the main-mast; at the same time giving the order to the carpenter to stand by to cut it away. ‘Shall we cut away now or not?’ said the captain. ‘I’m certain she cannot right except we do so.—All ready to cut away the mast, Mr —?’—‘All ready, sir,’ answered Mr —.—‘Wait a minute longer, sir,’ said the master; ‘I think she is righting;’ and that minute’s delay saved the mast, for she righted, otherwise we must have gone down, as the quantity of water we took in during the time the hammock-nettings

were under water, could not but have told very shortly after. As the third day dawned, the barometer had risen to 28.23, with a hurricane blowing from the eastward. At 6 A.M., we were under bare poles. At this time, we were in the centre for the second time, as I stated above. Greatly disheartened, we set to work again to pump out the ship. Many men by this time had given up hope, and it took all the tact the officers possessed to keep up their courage; but with hard work, enlivened by songs, we got the water under, and steered again out of the centre. The roll of the ship was from 45° to 48°—beyond all description; and combined with the thick rain, dense showers of spray, and the howling of the wind, made our situation really awful. During the fourth day, the barometer had gone up to 29.63, and the wind gradually abated; and at last it appeared that we had evidently steered on the right course. We managed to set a little sail, which put more heart into the men, already done up with the hard work.

Both men and officers fared very badly in the feeding-line: the men had to eat their pork raw, as the galley-fire could not be lit on account of the quantity of water in the ship, although the donkey-engine (steam) was doing its best to pump it out. For two days, the writer could only get two sardines and a little biscuit, and about an ounce of potted salmon; and I daresay the men fared worse. It was very ludicrous seeing the 'spills' some fellows got who missed their hold when the ship suddenly rolled heavier than usual; they not only got a nasty fall, but were wet through with water, and covered with slush, comprised of portmanteaus in a pulpy state, and various other things—old shoes, torn sheets, bedding, &c., all of which were floating about the ship. On the day that the typhoon abated, we managed to get an Irish stew made in a large tin kettle; and being the only meal for that day, it was heartily enjoyed, and we were not particular in helping ourselves with our fingers. All got about half a ration of it, which only tickled the appetite a little. We found some bottled beer, after getting our feet cut among the glass and other broken articles which kept washing up and down the mess-room. On the fifth day, it was still blowing a gale of wind, but we hardly felt it after the force of the typhoon. We got our things up on deck, and had them dried—a mass of worthless rubbish! Everything was discoloured or spoiled. During the next day, luckily, the weather kept fine, so we got our rigging set up, and made new spars, and spliced those that were damaged. But what a wreck we did look! The paint-work washed away, and the cabins in the after-part of the mess-room entirely washed down: the loose rigging and ropes, too, minus their tar, looked very queer. As we got fair and moderate weather, we reached Hong-kong about the middle of the month of September 1865, being in all twenty-three days out from Yokohama—an unusually long voyage.

We learned, after our arrival at Hong-kong, that several ships had got into the typhoon, but had

avoided steering into the centre for the second time, or even the first, as we did. The lowest point their barometer had fallen to only indicated 28.70; and ours shewing 27.63, proves what a fearful storm we must have been in. The clouds seemed to be actually on board, if I may so call it, and you could see nothing but a dense cloud of rain and spray, which not only nearly blinded you, but rendered your mouth dry and parched—the peculiar effect of imbibing sea-water.—Such is the account of one who was witness of that well-known typhoon of September 1865; and the storms of the Indian and China seas are truly awful.

THE CAFÉ.

It is a bright October morning; I have broken my fast, eaten grapes, with cheese as dessert, and done my best to imagine that (as Frenchmen say it does) the mixture gives a pleasure equal to that of kissing the pouting lips of a pretty woman. In my opinion, there is little, if any, connection between the two.

Well, I have done my *déjeuner*, and am going to enjoy a cup of *café noir*, a *petit verre*, and a cigar. Here is the *Café de l'Europe*. I do not want to look at its name, emblazoned in gold letters over the door: that old gentleman, in the felt-hat, the high shirt-collar, and the short unmentionables, sipping his coffee at one of the little marble tables that surround the entrance, is sufficient guarantee that I have not mistaken my way. I know he never frequents any other establishment. In fact, it is matter of doubt whether he does not sleep under one of the seats, for, from the first thing in the morning to the last thing at night, this ancient party may be seen outside or inside the glazed and glittering halls of M. Chose. If he is not taking his coffee and smoking his cigar, he is drinking his *choppe*, and inhaling through a *meerschau*. If he is not playing dominoes or draughts, backgammon or chess, then it is piquet or *écarté* that occupies his attention. It is true that on rare occasions he may be seen when doing none of these things, and then he doth terribly gnaw his white moustache, and look like the lion in his den, or, for aught I know, the Douglas in his hall.

I enter the café. Obsequious *garçon* requests my commands; and soon on a plated waiter, behold, appear the cup and little bottle of cognac! 'Versez!' he shouts, when coffee-pot in hand, enters *garçon* No. 2, who gives me good measure, high up, yea, even flowing over abundantly. And now, having composed myself on the red velvet-cushioned seat, lit my cigar, and taken just one little sip, to give the correct flavour to the weed, I gaze around.

Like the boy's ha'porth of sweets, here are all sorts. And do I not know them? Can I not discern? Am I not able to analyse? Yes, verily. What would the Muse be worth, had she not the art of distinguishing a tailor from an ex-colonel of the Garde Impériale, though their coats be of the same cut, and their hats cocked on one side, at

exactly the same angle? Of what value would be her second-sight, if she could not look through the blue cloth tunic of that gentleman opposite—see the two little sample-bottles of *vin blanc* and *vin rouge*, together with the circulars of 'our firm,' and tell immediately how that he is a traveller in the wine-trade, and hails from Bordeaux? Truly, the Muse knoweth all these things, and as far as space permits, can tell you all about the company.

Let me begin with this group at the next table. These blue-coated, red-trousered, epauletted, decorated, close-cropped, curled, moustached, marked and numbered men—they are officers in the 555th Regiment of the line. No great perceptive faculty is necessary to see that, for there are the figures on their shakos. A famous corps is this 555th, and many the battle in which its serried ranks have brought their bayonets down to the charge. That iron-gray man with the scar on his forehead, who is speaking in such an excited manner, what is he saying? 'Solferino.' Ha! yes, the 555th was at Solferino, I recollect, and he got that scar from an Austrian sabre. Eh? 'Plom! plom! pouf.' I understand you, my dear sir. You wish to infer that you saw stars for a moment, then there was blood in your eyes, and 'pouf,' down you went—very unpleasant indeed. And this dark man with the bald head and moustaches, like a couple of rats with their tails curled up, I must know him—to be sure I do. He it was to whom the Emperor shouted, when a body of Austrians threatened to surround his majesty and his staff: 'Capitaine, enlève moi ça;' and in five minutes the white coats were running pell-mell down the hill, with the gallant 555th at their heels. That bit of ribbon of which he is so proud was his reward. This younger fellow, with the bright black eyes, well-cut features, and downy upper lip, did not get that medal for nothing. A more gallant soldier never drew sword; but for no deed of slaughter was that decoration awarded. When Jeanette, the fair and daring vivandière, fell wounded on the field of Magenta, who was it but the sous-lieutenant, Jean Jacques Dubois, who rushed, mid a storm of bullets, and right across the line of fire of an Austrian battery, to bear the poor girl out of the way of further harm; and no doubt, as he carried the lovely form in his strong arms, he felt a hero, and he was one.

What a queer-looking old gentleman that is, with the green cut-away, the broad-brimmed hat, and the blue spectacles. Unpleasant are the lines with which Time has tattooed his sharp-looking visage; look at those deep ones round the corners of his mouth. There is something intensely disagreeable in the curve they take. But he looks up from his *Débats*. Ho! ho! my friend, I know you. You and I have met before many a long league from here; away, down in the south, where rolls the Guadalquivir's tawny tide in the shade of the Giralda. It was not at a little white marble table I was in the habit of seeing you then; you took your seat by the cloth of green in those days. I

have heard a tale about you and your blue spectacles. You are a wicked old man, I fear, for I know more than one spot in Europe where you would scarcely care to shew that hooked nose of yours. A prosperous rascal are you, it seems, retired from business. You don't intend to run the risk of any more unpleasant discoveries, do you? Those occasions, on which, by bending your back, and making yourself look so very old, you escaped the kicking you so richly deserved. Knave of clubs! knave of clubs! I remember the scene, and how I thought that to brand that same knave on your wrinkled old forehead, would have been a just and fitting punishment.

There, in yonder corner, are a party of German clerks, smoking their clays before going back to the high stool and the ledger at two o'clock. They have their coffee served in glasses, which they keep filling up with water, to make it last out the hour which they have to spare. Economical youths are these sons of the Vaterland, and with their two hundred francs a month, they manage to lead a very enduring sort of existence. Over their dominoes, they talk of politics, and curse Bismark. Ah! my young friend Max, aged twenty, how hurt and annoyed the prime-minister would feel could be but hear you condemning his policy in such harsh terms; could he but listen to those crack jaw-words issuing from your extensive mouth, how humbled would be the first adviser of Prussia's king! Nay, in a country where counts kill cooks, who knows but that a Von's bullet might not condescend to make a hole through you, O indiscreetest of Maxes.

What is all this noise about? Two Frenchmen are quarrelling over their cards, it seems. 'Mais monsieur, &c.' 'Non, monsieur, pas de tout, &c.' 'Je vous dis, &c.' 'Ce n'est pas vrai, &c.' 'Je joue le roi, &c.' 'C'est impossible, &c.' 'Enfin, &c.,' and the storm gradually dwindles to a calm; the one who bawled the loudest, and threw his hands up the highest, having apparently got the better of his weaker-lunged antagonist; and another game is begun, accompanied by mutterings of dissatisfaction from the conquered party.

But the hum of voices is perceptibly diminishing in force, and the busy bees are off to their various hives. Six empty glasses and a broken pipe are the only memorials left behind them by the Teutons. The waiter is at work with his *serviette* where late the two players 'rowed' over their game of piquet. The soldiers have buckled on their swords, and gone off at the quick march. The green cut-away has some roguery in hand which requires his attendance elsewhere; and the old *habitué* being alone, amuses himself by making a little tower with dominoes. But is there nothing left worthy the chronicler's attention? Verily, the gaily-dressed lady-president, and her magnificent counter, must have their place in the narrative. The latter is somewhat in the shape of a pulpit, and is a sight to see, a wonder to behold, a dazzling and imposing structure, which immediately arrests the stranger's attention. Its top is

of white marble, and its sides are adorned by the artist's brush and the gilder's leaf. Like a regiment of Goliaths opposed to a crowd of little Davids, the tall liqueur bottles in their silver-plated tray face the smaller receptacles for cognac, on an equally elegant stand; beneath the shade of the former, the glistening sugar-basins are drawn up in brilliant array, *vis-à-vis*, the shining cigar-holders, and over all, tower two urns of the best electro-plate, on which beats the fierce light of a hundred gas-jets. In the one are put the spoons, which, shewing themselves above the rim, add considerably to its lustre; and deep in the bowels of the other lie the coppers with which the generosity of the visitors has rewarded the exemplary conduct of the waiters. As for Madame or Mademoiselle, as the case may be, she sits behind this effulgent mass, is inclined to embonpoint, has dark eyes and raven tresses, dons a cap which says as plainly as cap can say, that when its mistress's Johnny goes to the fair, he does not forget to buy the promised bunch of blue ribbons; and wears a dress which, fitting tightly, suits admirably the voluptuous development of her figure. The whole is backed up by a glass ten feet by six, so as not to permit a single charm to escape notice; an example worthy of being followed, since, if 'a thing of beauty is a joy for ever,' why should one not be enabled, when possible, to see all sides of it at once.

There is a peculiarity in the café which strongly testifies to one of the well-known characteristics of the Gaul. Turn which way you will, your own pleasing countenance meets your gaze; plate-glass here, plate-glass there, plate-glass everywhere. Monsieur is never tired of regarding the handsomest man he ever saw; and if the facility for doing so were not afforded him, miserable indeed would be his life below. The curl of his moustache demands frequent attention. That off-side lock, which adorns his front, must be kept in position. Those eyes, those beautiful eyes, how he delights to encounter their gaze! That nose, *quelle horreur!*—that nose might possibly have a smut on its tip, which would entirely spoil the effect of its fair proportions. It follows, then, that for him one of the necessities of existence is a mirror; accordingly, in his favourite resort, one finds this great want of his supplied with all the generosity of an acute public caterer, who understands his countrymen too well not to give them the means of gratifying their prevailing weakness—their vanity.

Héin! la belle France, les beaux Français et les belles Françaises. Is there such another nation on the face of the earth? The Gallic cock mounts his perch, and affirms *que non*. His men of genius, his sailors, his soldiers, and above all, those little fellows got up in that mongrel Turkish costume, and to whom he has given the imposing name of Zouaves—are incomparable. As for himself, was ever a bird with such magnificent plumage? Anglo-Saxon! take my advice, and take his word, that there never was. Argue not the point; tempt him not to crow his loudest, for therein lies his veritable strength.

But the cup is empty; the fragrant weed is reduced to ashes; and it is time I bade adieu to the indulgent reader.

D U M B Y.

I ~~SEE~~ the face of the friend I lost
Before me as I sit;
His thin white hands, so subtle and swift,
And his eyes that gleam with wit.

I see him across the square green cloth.
That's dappled with black and red;
Between the luminous globes of lamps,
I watch the friend long dead.

Brow mysterious as the Sphinx;
Eyes that let no secrets out;
When I lay me down a thirteenth card,
And put the foe to rout.

Wily and soft as a tiger-cat,
He watches the sly finesse;
Or the false card snaps with a stately trump,
And a blow beyond redress.

It is only I who can see him there,
With victory in his glance,
As the cross ruff stopped, he strides along,
Like Wellington through France.

I've only to look at the vacant seat,
To see that face again;
A conquering smile in his grave clear eyes,
As of one on a battle-plain.

And ever I see in Dumby's place,
No lonely blank, and no empty chair,
But the calm, wise face of my long-lost friend,
With his wily and watchful air.

He died years past, in the jungle reeds;
But still I see him sit
Facing me with his fan of cards,
And those eyes that beam with wit.

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SUNSHINE.

OF course I had seen it, thousands of times, and you have seen it, every eye has seen it, and yet I had never seen anything like it before. That was my feeling as the train slid out from under the tent of smoke stretched over London into the sunshine. I laid down the novel I had taken to beguile my way, to relish the sensation of sunshine which I could really see, and see through. It was considerably brighter and fresher than the book.

Not that I wish to make any comparison insulting to novelists. I hate the virtue which affects to decry sensational stories. I always take one to read in the train; at least, I don't read it—I haul it lazily through my mind; it comes in and goes away. I don't try to anticipate, I don't pretend to recollect; and this, let me remark, gives excellence to the man who can write anything full of incident and character. The plot, no doubt, is useful to the author; but some of the pleasantest novels—those that are the most permanently interesting—have no plot which absorbs you. They entertain you as you go along. The best light literature might be read backwards. Take *Pickwick*, for instance; you can begin anywhere, and move either way; the part under the eye is sure to delight you. Indeed, I would advise any one who begins to suspect any interest in the plot of a novel, to kill it at once by turning to the end of the third volume, and seeing how the hero is finished off. Then, having cracked the shell, pulled out the thorns, and peeled off the skin of the fruit, eat it at your leisure. If you are eager to know the end, you cannot enjoy the present. A good story is like a life, full of immediate interest; and, as a wise man will not vex himself about what is to be, so a wise reader will not destroy the passing entertainment of his book by permitting his thoughts to travel onwards, and wonder how it will all end. He will extinguish this care at once by looking at the end, and then follow such life as the book may possess.

I know that this is very questionable advice. I am inclined to believe that it is rank heresy; but, nevertheless, it may be true. At anyrate, I have

no call to utter it, since I sat down to write not about novels, but about sunshine. Sunshine is most striking to a Londoner when he travels in the teeth of the wind. If you leave town with the wind, you will find that the smoke does so too, marring the air and sky for miles. You seem to fancy that you cannot get out of it. You are in the country—at least according to Bradshaw—but there is still the same dun cloud over your heads, dirtying the light of heaven and the face of the world. I had seen it some miles from London a few days before, when I took a party of young people out for an afternoon's holiday in the fields. We drove fairly beyond the suburbs. The bright-winged rooks were walking leisurely among the butter-cups on the meadow, the may was thick upon the hedge, the geese bestrode the common, the redstart sat upon the furze, the rabbits fringed the copse, and yet the smoke of London browned the sunshine. It was a beautiful day, as far as the elements themselves were concerned. Meteorologically speaking, the weather was perfect, and the sky clear; but we were to leeward of ten thousand chimneys, and their united breath rolled slowly along in a thin but dirty mist. Thus the air is defiled, sometimes twenty miles from London.

But yesterday we went out of it to windward. A steady breeze was blowing from the east; and the moment we were clear of Spitalfields and its belongings, we came into the first clean sunshine I had seen since the summer before.

A few days ago, I had visited the Royal Academy, and felt inclined to suspect the brightness of some of the pictures as a caricature of light. Six months' fog and smoke had so dulled the memory, that the sharp edges of shine and shade upon the canvas seemed unnatural; but even the flat face of Essex shewed a beauty in the evening sun—we left by a late train—which arose almost wholly from reflection. Everything threw back the sunshine. It poured down upon the green young wheat, and flowing over the fields, burst in golden spray over the hedges; it spotted the rank grass in the plantations, and flashed from the bird upon the wing; it twinkled in the leaves, and gilt the gray

church-tower over the trees. There was not heat enough to raise a shimmer from the soil ; thus the most distant objects—the barn and stacks, and clumps of fir which jagged the furthest line of the horizon, were as clean-edged as the metal of the engine which waited in the siding at the country station. The sense of sight seemed to be intensified. When we got to Manningtree, and the train ran by the foot of the river Stour, then filled with the tide, every crisp little wave shone blue, and the rigging of a smack at anchor far up the channel shewed like white thread. I never saw so bright a day.

Tired with a long winter's heavy work in town, I was on my way for a week's holiday in Suffolk, where I counted on the still rest of the garden, and (let me not be ashamed of it) my fill of sleep, whenever I had a chance, for, let me assure you, that if you are seeking rest, and feel the breath of the dream-god about you, even directly after breakfast, yield at once—sleep when you can and as much as you can. Thus nature knits up not only the unravelled sleeve of one day's care, but goes carefully over the whole fabric of your being, and makes good many a threadbare place which incessant work has left unmended from week to week. Yield to her hand as she feels for the worn spots ; and if you can go to sleep in the daytime, even after a good night's rest, let no affectation of shame hinder your acceptance of the privilege. Lay the monotonous newspaper down, put your legs up on the sofa, and go to sleep.

Well, I had started for an unequivocal holiday, and fear not to confess that I reckoned on some of these by-naps, when I was filled with a seemingly fresh sense of the regenerating power of sunshine. I put my head into it out of the window ; I dipped my hands in it ; I drank it by gallons. There never was so clean and sparkling a day—one so full of light—before. The share of the dirty plough in the field shone as it turned ; the very telegraph-wires seemed to be flashing messages of their own. Had the needle in the busy station in the smoke-clad town been left to itself, it would have filled the telegrams of the day with the repeated word 'Sunshine.'

Sunshine ! How many different kinds of it there are. The pale shine of winter, when light seems to have no warmth ; the white glare of the southern summer, when the house is still, and the lizard runs along the garden-wall, and the toiling fountain among the flower-beds seems to be beaten down by the pressure of the noonday heat—when the fig swells in the warm shade of the leaf, and shews its purple pulp through cracks of utter ripeness—when the fir door-post sweats with beads of turpentine, and the knot-hole in the shutters lets in a round shaft of heat like a white, hot bar of iron. That is sunshine with a vengeance, when you step quickly across the blistering road into the shadow of the house, and even the dogs in the shade lay their bodies out upon the coolest stone.

Then there is evening sunshine, when the face of the cliff glows red, and the shadow of the cow in the field is as that of a giraffe. At such times, moreover, you seem to have unexpectedly met with the hottest hour of the day. If it be full summer, and you go out for your evening walk while the sun is yet above the roofs and trees, you catch its power on the whole surface of your body. Then, for all the protection it gives you, you might wear

a hat without a brim ; and an umbrella only crowns your shadow with a dome which makes it look like a huge walking mushroom.

Then there is the sunshine of late autumn, when the rotting leaves paint the ground, and the low clouds put on the deepest purple of the year. There is a special glory in the sunsets of the last October or the first November week.

I have often wished to see the sunshine of the arctic regions, where the day is six months long ; when week after week the sun only dips down towards the horizon, and it seems as if there were some strange power beyond the edge of the world which will not let him lie down to rest, until at last he slowly toils out of your sight, and goes to bed for half a year. I should like to see the sunshine of the equator, when at noon you might shade a maypole with a soup-plate, and there is no shadow even to a rock ; when, if people had chimneys like ours, the grate would be full of light from above, and you would have fire upon your hearth straight from heaven itself ; when in the broiling middle of the day you might open every shutter and pull up every blind, and yet see no beam of sunshine lie athwart the room ; when, if you dared to stand bareheaded in your court-yard, the focus of a summer would seem to be brought upon your brain, and would fry you into madness.

There, of course, we dread the sun. His strokes are not blessed, but fatal. Here, however, in England, I do not think we appreciate the excellence of sunshine above light. It is very seldom that the former is injurious to us. In many cases, the direct action of the sun's rays upon the bare skin has a marvellously healing effect, and a house which, in addition to cleanliness, is well flooded with sunshine, is almost sure to be a healthy one. True, it takes colour out of curtains and carpets, but it gives it to the cheek. I don't mean tan, but that glow beneath the skin which shews from within. I may add, however, that a capacity to become tanned is a sign of a reserve of health.

Do not be content with light ; get sunshine. Seek the presence of the source of light itself. Let it into your house, into your pores, into your blood. Though it makes the haggard look more haggard, the sun shines upon no one without communicating something of itself. Don't be content with trying to live so that your life may bear the light, but get your very life quickened with that power to which all that is sweet and strong and beautiful in nature has turned for ripeness and growth.

INCH BY INCH.

A WEST INDIAN SKETCH.

ONE fine morning in August, I arose at early dawn, and had just finished dressing myself, when an old black woman put her head into my room, exclaiming : 'Hy, is you dressed, massa ?' and seeing that I was, she went on : 'I bring de coffee and cigars ; how de dis maaning, massa ?'

'Come in, Judy,' I answered ; 'I'm all right. But what is the matter ? You don't look well.'

'I is rader poorly, tank God !' she replied.

Judy did not leave the room, as usual, when I had taken my coffee ; so, knowing that she had got something on her mind, of which she wished to

disburden herself, I said: 'Well, Judy, what is it?'

'Will massa look at de 'rometer bum-bye?'

'Look at the barometer! What for, Judy?'

'I tink we is goin' to hab hurricane.'

'A hurricane! Why, there never was a finer morning came out of the heavens.'

'Dat for true, massa; but we is goin' to hab hurricane for all dat. Massa no go to Paradise dish day.'

'Not go to Paradise! Why not, Judy?'

'Paradise nice place in fine wedder; but him too much near de mountains for safe in hurricane.'

'Well, I'll look at the glass as soon as I have finished my coffee; but as to not going to Paradise, that's out of the question.'

The old woman left me; and finishing my coffee, I stepped out to examine the barometer. It stood at 30.0, and, as I have said, the morning was a splendid one; so, knowing that there was a young lady at Paradise who was expecting me, I laughed at Old Judy's fears, and determined to start.

At this moment, my friend came bustling out of his room. 'How's the glass, Tom? Judy says we are going to have a storm; and she's always right.'

'Nonsense!' I replied. 'The glass is as firm as a rock; and as to Judy's feelings, that's all nonsense.'

'Ah! but I tell you it's no such thing. I've been in four hurricanes, and Judy has foretold every one of them. We may not get it to-day; but she's better than any weather-glass; so, if you take my advice, you will defer your trip to the Gordons.'

'Stuff!' I replied. 'I gave my word, and go I shall! I don't want to drag you out, if you're afraid, but you must not think to frighten me.'

'Ah, my dear boy!' answered my friend, 'when you have had one taste of a West Indian hurricane, you will not want a second; besides, there is not a worse place in the island than that same Paradise of Gordon's. The wind gets between those two mountains, and rages up the valley like mad.'

I was duly impressed with my friend's advice, and loath to leave him, for I perceived that he was really in earnest; but truth to say, there was a certain Mary Gordon at Paradise (the name, by the by, of her father's plantation), for whom, as sailors say, I had a sneaking kindness, and nothing short of the absolute presence of the tornado would have stopped me. Besides, I was in full health and spirits; and it was not likely that I, who had been knocking about in all parts of the world, could sympathise with the feelings of an ancient black woman, or with those of the climate-worn and sensitive old planter with whom I was staying. Mounting my horse, therefore, with a black boy for a guide, I started on my journey.

I rode on at a brisk pace, for there is something in the early breeze of a tropical morning which is peculiarly refreshing, and diffuses a buoyant elasticity into your frame, which is only to be restrained by active exercise. In addition to this, the scenery through which I was travelling was of the most enchanting description; while I, with a light heart, was speeding on to seek a creole houri in a tropical 'Paradise.' I had got about one-third of the way, when I came to two roads; I was somewhat puzzled

which to take, for I had forgotten my guide, and had ridden so fast that I felt certain I had left him far behind. I was about to take the one to the left, when a voice behind me exclaimed: 'Him de wrung way, massa; de lef is de right way.' I turned round in surprise, and there I found my little black guide clinging to the horse's tail. The horse, I presume, being used to this sort of thing, took no notice of it, though the young rascal had in his hand a pointed stick, with which at times he accelerated the animal's movements.

The road, though it proved a very bad one, was wild and picturesque in the extreme. It followed the course of a deep gully, whose sides became more and more precipitous as I advanced, but were covered with a green and luxuriant vegetation, consisting of bushes and creepers, the blossoms on which were marvellously beautiful.

After wending for some distance through the bottom of this ravine, I at last emerged into the open country, at a spot of peculiar beauty. On my right and left rose high mountains, whose peaks, now and then visible through the clouds, seemed to reach the heavens. The whole of these mountains were clothed with a perpetual verdure, while before me was a valley, spreading out in grassy slopes to the edge of the sea.

I had never seen anything so truly grand. I was fascinated, for in no part of the world is the imagination so powerfully affected by scenic effect as in the tropics. The majestic grandeur of the mountains, the mingled beauty and variety of the vegetation, and the deep and sombre forests, were all new to me. Then the strange convolutions of the clouds, which, pressed by the wind against the opposite side of the sierra, came rolling and tumbling over the mountains, now concealing and now disclosing some of the most romantic spots in nature, excited in me such lively and rapturous interest as could not be easily forgotten.

'Massa no get to Paradise dis day, if him 'top looking at de mountains all de maaning,' said my little guide.

Admonished by this, I again started. I had not proceeded much further, when I perceived that Old Judy's prognostics were not without their significance, for a brilliant though ominous scene presented itself to my view. A tremendous bank of black clouds had risen up, as it were, out of the bosom of the ocean, and hung almost stationary on the distant horizon. I was looking at this, when all at once it seemed moved as by a mighty wind; mass after mass of murky vapour rolled up, and spread themselves athwart the heavens.

'Hurricane do come, massa, now for true!' cried my little Cupid. 'Ole Judy always right; and massa no make haste, de rain catch we.'

I did not heed what the boy said, for it was a strange and magnificent sight upon which I was gazing. One half of the heavens was black as night, and the other bright and radiant, the sky without a cloud. Never, perhaps, did the eye of man rest upon a greater contrast, never was a scene of greater loveliness mingled with one of more appalling magnificence. The contrast reached its climax when suddenly from out the dark pall flash after flash of lightning descended into the sea, and the thunder, after growling hoarsely in the distance, was echoed back by the mountains, reverberating from cliff to cliff, and from rock to rock. It was Peace and War personified; but, alas! the blue sky, the emblem of peace, was being fast

swallowed up by the rolling war-cloud, which, in all the majesty of angry nature, was hastening to blot out all that remained of tranquillity and beauty.

At last I turned to go. Both my horse and my guide seemed impressed with the necessity of exertion, and I found myself, as it were, racing with the storm; but before I could reach my friend's plantation, the clouds were flying over my head, and the wind was howling aloft as though a gale was blowing; though, below, there was not a breath of air, not a leaf stirred, and not a ripple ruffled the placid sea.

Paradise now appeared in view; and it well deserved its name, for a more beautifully situated place I had never seen. By the time I reached the house, it began to rain, and leaping from my horse, I dashed up the steps into the hall. I was warmly greeted by Mr Gordon and his two daughters, for though Mary was not quite so demonstrative as Grace, the glance of her eye and the rose upon her cheek told me at anyrate that I was not unwelcome.

'Very glad you are come,' said Mr Gordon; 'though we did not expect you. But how is it the colonel is not with you?'

'He would not come because Old Judy prophesied we were going to have a hurricane. I laughed at her at the time, but I fancy I made a mistake.'

'No doubt of it. That old woman is always right: the glass has gone down like a lump of lead; so let us get our breakfast at once, or we shall be done out of it.—Here's Mrs Seuter and her girls; I think you know them.'

Mrs Seuter was the widow of a Scotch planter, very fat and very fussy; but with the remainder of the party, my story has nothing to do. During breakfast, the wind increased in violence, and by the time it was over, the hurricane had commenced in good earnest. Mr Gordon seeing this, immediately set about making preparations to withstand it. Windows and doors were hastily but strongly barricaded, and the most portable articles of value, together with a quantity of provisions, were conveyed down a trap-door into a cellar, built on purpose for safety during hurricanes.

This was scarcely accomplished, when the field-hands and the whole population of the village came hurrying up to seek for shelter and companionship with their master and his family.

Meantime the whole sky had become as black as night, the clouds as they advanced descending almost to the surface of the sea, which was now lashed into the wildest fury by the gale. Every now and then, flashes of the most vivid lightning burst from the clouds, and descending, were instantly engulfed in the sea; the next moment they reappeared from beneath the white foam, and apparently ascending towards the sky, were met by other masses hovering above.

The thunder burst in appalling crashes over our heads, waking up the echoes of the neighbouring mountains, and shaking the house to its very foundation; the rain, too, descended in cataracts: it seemed as though the flood-gates of heaven were opened, and the eternal waters were pouring down upon us. To add to the awfulness of the scene, it gradually became as dark as pitch, the wind every instant increasing in intensity.

About eleven o'clock, the noise of the gale was something I had never before heard, and yet every moment it seemed to wax stronger and stronger, till it increased to such an overwhelming roar,

that the strongest efforts of the human voice, in closest proximity, were quite unheard.

The building began to shew by its quakings that it was time to get below into a place of greater safety. The negroes were therefore roused from their stupor, and by signs desired to go below.

The house by this time had become little better than a rocking vessel, whilst a shower of shingles and tiles was every instant swept from the roof. Very soon all, save Mr Gordon, were safely conveyed below, Mary and I being the last to descend. As we did so, a loud crash proclaimed that something had fallen; and I darted back to see if any accident had happened to my host. When I got back to the room, I found him uninjured; but a sudden break in the clouds and a gleam of light disclosed an extraordinary sight to me. The air was filled with missiles of all descriptions—branches of trees, huge stones, beans, and all sorts of movables, which were driven along with incredible speed.

Suddenly, a violent shock was felt, sending a thrill through my heart, for I expected to see the whole house come falling upon us. The clouds had once more closed up, and darkness again covered the earth, the rapidly repeated flashes of lightning only rendering it more impenetrable; while the roaring of the wind, and the crashing of the thunder, made up a hideous tumult such as appalled the heart, and almost annihilated the mind.

I have but a very dim recollection of what afterwards transpired, till I found myself descending the ladder with Mr Gordon; but I know that before we closed the trap, the storm had resumed its empire, and the vibration of the walls told me they could not stand long unless it abated. When we had done this, though the sounds from above were every now and then startling and appalling, we were in comparative quietude, and were enabled to relieve our dumb-show by the interchange of thoughts and feelings. To hear the sound of our own voices, and communicate our thoughts by words, after the overpowering din by which we had for the last hour been encompassed, was a comfort which words cannot express. The relief to poor Mrs Seuter must have been immense, for now she could hear herself speak, and listen to her own groans.

'The Lord preserve us!' she exclaimed; 'but this is awful. I shall die with fright. If I had never left Aberdeen, I should never have—Gracious powers, what's that? We shall all be swallowed up!'

At this moment there was a report, and then a rolling crash over our heads, which made the earth shake beneath us.

'That's the house gone,' said Mr Gordon quietly. 'I expected it would not hold up long.'

This was followed by a wail among the negroes, and a young girl rose up exclaiming: 'Eh, me Gad! I lef me piccaniny sleep: warra I do now? Tan away der—tan away; let me go fetch him.'

'Chough-body!' replied an old woman; 'you is mad; you lef you senses wid you piccaniny too. Tan till. Garramighty take care ob piccaniny now—nobody else can.'

This, however, did not seem to afford much comfort to the poor girl, who did nothing but sit and wail.

My mind had hitherto been so occupied that I had not time to take in the peculiarities of the

scene by which we were surrounded. Immured in a large dark vault, lit only by the feeble rays of two candles, and a lamp which hung from the ceiling, there was just sufficient light to give everything, except those within the radius of these lights, a grotesque or diabolical aspect. The negroes in the distance, most of whom were huddled on the floor, appeared the very personification of spirits of darkness awaiting their condemnation; one old negro, tall and spectral, in the background, looking like a malevolent demon glowering over their fall.

During more than an hour, we remained in a state of incertitude as to what was going on above us: all we knew was that the noise of the storm had sensibly diminished. At last, I could hold out no longer, and mounting the ladder, I endeavoured to open the trap, that I might see what was the state of things above ground. I undid the latch, and essayed to lift up the door; but my strength was not sufficient to lift it. I called up Mr Gordon and one of the negroes; but our united strength failed to move it; and at last, after repeated efforts, we were fain to give over, for it became clear that the ruins of the house had fallen over us, and till assistance could be obtained from above, we were prisoners. Our position was by no means an enviable one, for we had no idea when, even if ever, we should be released, and our stock of food was very scanty. But this was not the worst evil we had to encounter, for presently, as we sat, a low mysterious rumbling came from the bowels of the earth. A few minutes elapsed, and then the noise increased—reached us—the earth rose under our feet—the whole edifice reeled—the walls cracked—and the ladder leading to the trap split into fragments, and fell among the negroes, whose wild and despairing cries rent the vault. It was a moment of intense agony. We all stood transfixed with awe, for we expected nothing less than that the earth was about to open and swallow us up.

No sooner had the earthquake passed, than a new danger menaced us. Through one of the cracks in the wall, water was flowing rapidly, and the floor of the vault was already covered some inches deep. At first, neither Mrs Seuter nor the negroes seemed to comprehend this; but as the water rapidly increased, Mrs Seuter became alive to her peril.

'Why,' she exclaimed, starting up, 'we shall all be drowned!—Is there no means of escape? Can you think of no way of extricating us?' she asked of me.

'None whatever,' I replied. 'We are in the hands of God; He alone can help us, if it is His good pleasure.'

The old lady's countenance became ashy pale, and then she threw up her arms, and shrieked: 'I can't die—I won't die! Will nobody save me? I'll give anything.—I'll buy your freedom, and make you rich,' she continued, turning to the negroes.

'Ess, ma'am, we save you if we can; we no let buckra ladies die if we help it; but negger life as good as anybody's, and bum-bye, when de water come ober de head, we no help ourselves: we all be like den—we all be free, and rich too, de Lord be praise!'

As the water rose, it was quite a study to watch the faces of those about me, particularly of the negroes. The gradual transition from anxiety to fear, and from that to the wildest despair, would

have been ludicrous in the extreme had not our situation been so appalling.

While all around were crying and wailing, however, Mary and Grace were perfectly quiet. Their courage did not fail them for an instant, though the water had now reached above their knees. In the faces of these two girls might be read that uncomplaining patience, that high and enduring fortitude, which is a special characteristic of Anglo-tropical women. The contrast between their calmness and the wild despair of Mrs Seuter and the negroes was very noticeable. It was a time to try the courage of any one. Mr Gordon I knew was not wanting in courage, but his fortitude seemed to have forsaken him. His looks were wild; the muscles of his mouth twitched and quivered, and now and then he muttered something that I could not hear.

Inch by inch the water rose till it reached my waistcoat. One by one the buttons disappeared, as each minute our enemy gained upon us. Still I was loath to relinquish all hope. Meantime, not a word had been uttered or an exclamation made by Mr Gordon or his daughters. Mrs Seuter had ceased her cries, for she had persuaded a tall negro to hoist her upon his shoulders, where she sat grasping one of the candles with great satisfaction. She was in a fool's paradise, for she did not remember that the instinct of life was as strong in the negro as in herself, and that the moment the water rose high enough to endanger the life of the negro, he would in all probability leave her to her fate. No, there was no help or escape for us, and all we could do was calmly to wait the approach of that death, which was slowly creeping upon us. A moment of more awful suspense could not be contemplated. I have been through many perils, but never anything like this. A man may be brave when his blood is hot, and the tide of battle carries him on; but to stand still and see the grim destroyer coming nearer and nearer, minute by minute, and inch by inch, requires a very different sort of courage.

The water had by this time reached almost to our shoulders, and I felt my fortitude giving way: I wanted to call aloud, to shriek for help; there was something so horrible in the idea of being thus drowned, like rats in a cellar, that I recoiled from it. All this takes little time to describe; but the rise of the water was so slow, that more than half an hour had elapsed since it first entered the vault. And now again came the rumbling of the earthquake, and the sickening sensation of its shock. The place shook, the water was agitated, and partially subsided. For a time I could not believe my eyes; I expected to see it rise again; but I watched it closely, and found, to my great joy, that it was rapidly diminishing. It was certainly a moment of intense relief, though our danger was not all over. We were saved from immediate death; but how were we to be extricated from our living tomb? how were we to make our situation known to others?

For several hours we remained in this state—part of the time with the additional horror of darkness, for the lights had burned out, and we had no others to replace them. I can't tell if I or any one else slept, but I know that after a time we all appeared in a state of stupor, for not a word was uttered. At one time, I fancied my senses were leaving me, for my brain was filled with strange

unearthly visions. From this I was suddenly aroused by the most appalling shrieks.

'What is it?' asked I. 'What is the matter?'

'The water coming in again! Don't you hear it?' cried Mrs Seuter.

I listened. There was a noise certainly, but it did not appear to be that of water; then it ceased. I felt about me; but my senses were so numbed, that I could not tell if the water was rising or falling, or, indeed, if there was any water at all. I listened again, and most certainly there were sounds, and that they came from above was unmistakable. At first, they were indistinct, but each moment they became plainer, and at last I could distinguish the blows of picks, then the noise of shovels, and these at last were mingled with the shouts of human voices. Help was truly at hand. The sense of reprieve from such a situation was more than the most stoical could have borne with indifference, and we all joined in the shouts of the negroes to their comrades above. A few minutes after this, to our inexpressible delight, the trap opened, and a gleam of sunlight burst in upon us.

I shall not attempt to depict our feelings or the wild joy of the negroes both above and below; nor shall I be able to give any correct notion of the manner in which Mrs Seuter conducted herself, so frantic was her joy. I only know that Mr Gordon and his two daughters embraced me in their excitement, and that I thought the latter experience very agreeable.

Our final deliverance was delayed for some time for the want of a ladder. While one was being procured, the negroes and people above were very anxious to know if we were all safe.

'Dar Massa Gordon,' said one.

'And dar Misse Grace and Mary,' exclaimed another.

'And de leetle buckra, Massa Onzon' (the nearest approximation to Spunyard a negro could make), 'he all right too.'

'Me piccaniny, me piccaniny!' cried the poor young mother from below.

'Ah, Psyche,' answered a man's voice from the trap, 'you is bad girl. You lef your child in de bed, and you tink nothing ob him, but run way and take care ob yourself; but he all right, tank God.'

It is singular, but nevertheless true, that amidst the wreck of the negro-village, the child was found unhurt, and, a few minutes after we reached the ground, was in the arms of its mother.

The first thing we did on arriving at the surface was to look round to see the devastation which the hurricane had produced.

The scene of destruction which our eyes fell upon was something which baffles description. The whole face of the country was, as it were, changed. It looked as though a burning blast had traversed the island, for, where yesterday everything was green and luxuriant, all was now bare and black. So marvellous a transformation in so short a time I had never seen: vegetation, human habitations, and animal life had all vanished.

Paradise itself was a mass of ruins, and the sugar-works were greatly damaged; but Mr Gordon bore his loss with great equanimity.

Our rescue was due to a party of hands employed at a cove about a mile and a half distant from the house, where Mr Gordon had a landing-place, and who, although they had been exposed to the full fury of the gale, escaped uninjured, and at day-

break, started to look after the safety of their master. We were immured in the vault for more than twenty-four hours—the longest day and night, by far, that I can remember.

RESOURCES AND PROSPECTS OF AMERICA.

A MOST valuable work on the Resources and Prospects of America* has just appeared from the pen of Sir Morton Peto. In a volume of moderate size, he presents us with a great mass of statistical information, carefully compiled from the bulky Reports of the Commissioners of the Census of the United States, and from other sources not easy of access to readers in general. The work is, however, far from being a mere compilation; on some parts of the subject, the author writes from personal observation, and on every part he freely offers his own opinions and reflections.

Sir Morton Peto begins by referring to the remarkable fact of the prosperity of America even during the trying time of the Civil War; for this he accounts by attributing it to the 'wonderful elasticity of the resources of the United States.' The national debt, which was only sixty-five million of dollars at the commencement of the war, or thirteen million pounds sterling, is now almost three thousand million of dollars, or six hundred million pounds sterling; but such is the confidence of the people in the resources of their country, that they expect it to be all paid off in thirty years, or even in a shorter time. 'From the President at Washington,' Sir S. M. Peto says, 'down to the humblest agriculturist in the Far West, I found but one prevailing feeling respecting the debt.' He was referred to the experience of the past. He was told 'that the debt entailed by the war of 1812 was wholly discharged from the ordinary sources of revenue in a period of nineteen years; and that practically the burden of that debt had never been felt by anybody, though, considering the difference in the numerical population, the capital, wealth, and the future prospects of the country, it was almost as great a debt, in proportion, as the present.'

Chief among the natural resources of the country is its fertile soil, of which more and more is every year brought into cultivation. The extremely rapid increase of the population is in part due to the facility with which the means of subsistence and of comfort are obtained by all who are capable of work, but in great part to immigration. The population of the United States was only 5,305,925 in 1800, and in 1860 it was 31,429,000; but it is calculated that 'of the whole population in 1863, the immigrants of the present century and their descendants number more than twenty-one million, or two-thirds of the whole.' The immigrants are derived from all countries of Europe, but in greatest numbers from Great Britain and Ireland. Many Chinese have recently settled in California. The encouragement afforded to the settler is very great. If he is the head of a family, or twenty-one years of age, he receives from the government, substantially as a free gift, one hundred and sixty acres of land; and each of

* *The Resources and Prospects of America, ascertained during a Visit to the States in the Autumn of 1865.* By Sir S. Morton Peto, Bart., M.P. for Bristol. London: Alexander Strahan.

his children, on attaining the age of twenty-one years, receives the like. If he chooses to pursue his trade, or to seek employment as a labourer in any of the large towns, or in the more densely-peopled parts of the country, he finds wages much higher than in Europe, and the necessities of life comparatively cheap. The high price of labour generally compels the settler who becomes a farmer to depend on himself and his family for the cultivation of his farm, but he can confidently reckon on produce more than sufficient for his support. The increase of population in some of the newly-settled districts has been extremely rapid. Minnesota, in 1849, had a population little exceeding four thousand; in 1860, the population exceeded one hundred and seventy-two thousand; and in 1864 it was estimated at three hundred and fifty thousand. Wisconsin had only 5318 inhabitants in 1830, and in 1860 it had 775,881. Indiana had a population of 4875 in 1800, and in 1860 a population of 1,350,428. The annual produce of wheat in this state is now nearly ten million bushels, and of Indian corn upwards of seventy million bushels.

The prosperity of California began with the discovery of gold, but it is already a wheat-exporting country, and seems likely to become the granary of the Pacific. The rapid prosperity of the states is generally due to their agricultural resources. Sir S. M. Peto says: 'I hope I shall not wound the national esteem of my American friends when I say that I regard their country as essentially agricultural, and by no means essentially commercial or manufacturing. But I think their own records establish my position. Of about 8,217,000 heads of families and other individuals whose occupations were recorded at the period of the census of 1860, it appears that upwards of three million, or more than one-third, were directly occupied in the tillage of the soil. . . . On the other hand, the number of merchants and clerks in America is only three hundred thousand. . . . The population engaged in manufactures does not assume a very large proportion to the whole population.'

The American estimate of American manufactures, and of the number of people engaged in them, is only reached 'by including all the fishermen, blacksmiths, carpenters, tailors, shoemakers, mantua-makers, seamstresses, painters, varnishers, printers, hatters, masons, mariners, millers, sawyers, lumbermen, and handicraftsmen of every sort in the community.' Manufacturing industry, properly so called, is almost entirely confined to a few of the northern states.

The extent of improved land in farms in the United States, according to the census returns of 1860, was 163,110,720 acres; the extent of unimproved land included in farms was 244,101,818 acres; and the uncultivated territory not yet included in farms was 1,466,969,862 acres. The rapid progress of agriculture is shewn by the fact, that whilst the cash value of the farms under actual cultivation in 1850 was estimated at 3,271,575,000 dollars, it had risen in 1860 to 6,645,045,000 dollars—being an increase of no less than 103 per cent. in these ten years. The amount of agricultural produce has also increased even during the war. In consequence of the high price of labour, the farming is generally very imperfect; yet, mainly from the advantage of climate, the American farmer is able to produce

a bushel of wheat at much less cost than the most scientific farmer in England can. The wheat, well protected by the deep snow in winter, comes rapidly forward in the cool weather of spring, and the bright sunshine of the summer months brings it to great perfection. Wheat and Indian corn are the grains principally cultivated in the more northern parts of America. Rice is grown in some parts of the south. Indian corn supplies the principal part of the food of the people, both in the north and in the south. It is of extremely easy cultivation, and its productiveness is far beyond that of other grains. Pease and beans are largely cultivated in America. Potatoes are produced in great quantities in the northern states, and sweet potatoes in the south. Turnips are little cultivated, the climate being too dry. The dairy produce, both of butter and cheese, is large. The improvement of quality in American cheese since it began to be imported into Britain, has attracted the notice of almost every consumer. It is accounted for by the establishment of a great 'cheese-factory' system in the dairy districts of the state of New York and neighbouring regions. 'Each farmer sends his milk to the dairy, and is credited for the quantity supplied. Skilled persons are employed at the factories to make the cheese, and it has been found that these factories turn out an article of far better quality than used to be made in private dairies.' The prices of grain and dairy produce in America depend mainly upon the prices in London. The exports of grain from the United States in 1863 amounted to 77,396,082 bushels, of which 47,082,026 bushels were sent to Great Britain and Ireland. The grain-trade was rapidly developed after the opening of the Erie Canal in 1825, and of late years it has increased with wonderfully accelerated rapidity; much grain produced in the north-western states finding its way eastward by the Erie Canal, much of it from the lake-ports by the St Lawrence, and much of it by the railways. Milwaukee, in Wisconsin, which was scarcely inhabited twenty-five years ago, and which exported only 4000 bushels of grain and flour in 1841, exported 18,712,380 bushels in 1863.

Wool is not yet an important article of produce in the United States, although in some places there are fancy-farms, where great attention is paid to the breeds of sheep; and merino sheep of unsurpassed, or perhaps unequalled, excellence are to be found in Vermont; but California is expected soon to become a great wool-producing country. The climate of the Atlantic states is not suited to the silk-worm, and attempts at silk-culture there have failed; but it is supposed that it may succeed admirably in the Pacific states.

Nowhere in the world is the feeding of swine so important a branch of rural economy as in some parts of the United States. Cincinnati has long been celebrated for its trade in pork. The hog is killed, cut up, and packed by machinery. Cincinnati kills and exports four hundred thousand hogs per annum. Chicago has, however, lately acquired even greater importance as a pork-exporting town. A million of hogs are killed annually at Chicago. It is now, indeed, not only the largest market in the world for pork, but also for corn and timber, although it was but a mere Indian trading-station till 1830, and its pork-trade began in 1835 with the 'packing' and exportation of three hundred hogs.

The high price of labour has stimulated invention,

and no people have so abounded as the Americans in mechanical contrivances to supply the want of human hands. Many of these machines—as the sewing-machine—have been brought to Europe, and some of them are extensively used in Britain, although less important to us from the comparative cheapness of labour. As might be expected, many of the American inventions are intended to facilitate the labours of agriculture.

Of the textile manufactures of America, that of cotton is by far the most important, but the number of spindles is not much more than one-sixth of that employed in Britain; moreover, much of the cotton spun in America is spun in the cotton-producing states, to be used in the form of cordage, or made into cotton bags and packing-cloths. Notwithstanding the duties imposed in the United States, great quantities of cotton goods of British manufacture are imported. The linen manufacture is inconsiderable. Sir S. M. Peto does not hesitate to condemn the whole system of protective duties by which American manufactures are unnaturally fostered as injurious to America itself and to the world. As to the protective duties on cotton goods, he says: 'Not only are the Americans thereby unnaturally raising the price of an article of the largest consumption among every class of their own community, but they are actually raising this price at their own expense as growers and exporters of the raw material from which these articles are made; and all this for the protection of an interest which cannot compete with its rivals in its own market, and cannot produce anything like the quantity required for the use of its own population.'

Sir S. M. Peto is very zealous in his advocacy of free trade. He expresses his confidence that as the people of Britain refused to be taxed for the exclusive benefit of agriculturists, so the people of America will ere long refuse to be taxed for the exclusive benefit of manufacturers. The whole question has a special importance at present in view of the commercial relations between the United States and the British provinces in North America. It seems almost impossible that any other system than that of free trade can long prevail between countries so situated as those on the northern and southern banks of the St Lawrence. Under an opposite system, smuggling cannot fail soon to become an evil of most formidable magnitude on the long line of the frontier.

The mineral wealth of the United States is very great. Gold is found in some of the eastern states, particularly in Virginia, the Carolinas, and Georgia; and the gold-producing region of the West—still very partially explored—includes the states of California and Oregon, and the territories of Utah, Nevada, New Mexico, Dacotah, Washington, Colorado, Montana, and Arizona—an area of more than a million of square miles, extending from British Columbia on the north to Mexico on the south, and from the eastern slope of the Rocky Mountains to the Pacific Ocean. Silver-mining may be said to be only in its infancy, although in New Mexico and Arizona, which were acquired from Mexico in 1848, silver-mines have long been worked. In the hands of another race, and under a better government, they will now probably soon become greatly more numerous and productive. An immense lode of silver ore, known as the Comstock Lode, has been discovered in Nevada, and nearly one hundred different companies have

obtained the right to work parts of it. A fine city, called Virginia City, has sprung up in close proximity to these mines, with a population already of more than ten thousand; and the whole of Nevada is rapidly increasing in population, whilst new silver-mines are continually being opened in different localities.

Iron ore exists in great abundance in the United States, and is widely distributed. Perhaps in no part of the world is it more abundant than in the state of Missouri, where great hills are entirely formed of it. Little, however, has yet been done to turn the iron ore of Missouri to account. The district is deficient in coal, and the railway system is too incomplete to supply this want. Another district, extremely rich in iron ore, but hitherto almost unproductive, lies in the northern part of Georgia, passing into Alabama. It is in Pennsylvania and New Jersey that iron ore is at present most largely worked. There are iron-producing districts also in New England, New York, Ohio, Virginia, and both the Carolinas; and during the last ten years, a considerable amount of capital has been invested in iron-mining in Michigan, on the southern shore of Lake Superior. But the iron-masters of America can hardly hold their ground, as yet, against competition with imported iron. The vast supplies of iron ore which America possesses are rather to be regarded as a store for future ages than as a source of wealth to be largely developed in the present. There are very rich mines of copper on the shores of Lake Superior, near Kee-wee-nah Point, where masses of native copper of extraordinary size have been found. Copper-mines have also long been wrought in New Mexico. Lead is wrought, but not to a great extent, in Missouri, Wisconsin, and Iowa. Quick-silver has been found in California, but the produce is not yet very considerable.

The coal-fields of America are the greatest in the world. They are computed to be thirty-six times the extent of those of Great Britain and Ireland. They are chiefly situated in the basin of the Mississippi and its tributaries. The whole annual produce of coal, however, does not yet amount to much more than fourteen million tons, or about one-fifth of that of Britain. Wood is the ordinary fuel for domestic purposes, and is even employed for steam-engines, whilst the Americans dispense with steam wherever they can, and avail themselves of their 'water-privileges.' The abundance of iron, coal, and limestone in America, however, is suggestive of great expectations concerning the future, when the country shall be more densely peopled, and able to make use of its own mineral treasures.

Sir S. M. Peto devotes a chapter to petroleum, or rock-oil, and gives a most interesting account of the American oil-wells. The oil which flowed from oil-springs was merely collected by skimming it from the surface of water on which it floated, till 1858, when a well was sunk in Pennsylvania, and at once began to yield 400, and afterwards 1000 gallons a day. Great excitement ensued, and a search for oil began throughout the whole district. Many of the experiments were unsuccessful, but when oil was struck, the fortunate adventurer was suddenly enriched. Some of the wells yield oil without the trouble of pumping; it flows from them in a copious stream. Some wells yield 2000 barrels, and one even 3000 barrels daily. Towns have sprung up in the oil-district of Pennsylvania;

and in Oil City, business is now transacted to the amount of £3,000,000 annually. Other parts of America have also been found to be rich in oil. It would be out of place here to do more than merely allude to the oil-wells of Canada; but there are oil-fields in several parts of Pennsylvania, in Ohio, Kentucky, and Virginia, whilst it is said that indications of oil have been found in many other states. There are no statistics of the quantity of rock-oil produced in the United States. The quantity exported in 1865 amounted to 42,273,508 gallons—about four times the quantity exported in 1862.

Our limits do not permit us to follow Sir S. M. Peto in his account of American commerce—the foreign trade, the coasting trade, and the internal trade on the lakes and rivers—to which he devotes a section of his work. One fact claims particular attention, that no less than one-half of the export trade of the United States is to Great Britain; next to this is the export trade to France; but the third largest export trade is to the British provinces in North America, whilst the exports to other British possessions are very considerable. From this may be seen the vast importance to both nations of constantly maintaining friendly relations. No war could be so disastrous to the interests of mankind as a war between Great Britain and America.

Sir S. M. Peto devotes another section of his work to railways. The rivers of the country, great and numerous as they are, are utterly insufficient for the purposes of its internal commerce. The railway system of America is great and rapidly extending; but most of the railways are as yet mere single lines, and their construction is so imperfect, that the rate of travelling is far less rapid than in Britain. Sir S. M. Peto enters very fully into the whole subject. He visited America, indeed, in the capacity of chairman of the London Board of Control of the Atlantic and Great Western Railway, and his suggestions on the construction and management of railways will scarcely be received by the Americans as those of a stranger, but with the respect due to one whose interests are identified with their own, and whose experience gives value to his counsel.

The south is treated in a section by itself. Differing from the north in its climate and in its productions, it differs still more in consequence of slavery, now happily abolished, but so recently, that the results of the great change have scarcely begun to appear. There are, as yet, few lines of railway between the north and the south. The southern planters, in the times now past, did not wish to have them, for they were afraid of the use which might be made of them to carry away their slaves, and of the influence of much communication with the north. The southern states have for a long time been nearly stationary in population. Immigrants did not flock to them, for the white man labouring with his own hands was despised both by the slaveholders and by the slaves. All this must now be changed. There is much land in the southern states which invites settlers. Even in Virginia, the 'improved land' amounts only to 11,437,821 acres, whilst 19,679,215 acres are 'unimproved'; whereas, in New York, the improved land is more than double the extent of the unimproved. Much of the uncultivated land in the south is adapted for the cultivation of cotton and other strictly southern products, but much of it also is well suited to wheat. Of the products

of the south, the most important—besides cotton, rice, Indian corn, and tobacco—is sugar. The cultivation of the sugar-cane is limited to the most southern regions, and has of late decreased; but the sorghum or sugar-grass recently introduced from China is admirably adapted to the climate, not only of the south, but indeed of almost all parts of the United States, and its cultivation has rapidly extended, especially in the north-western states.

Sir S. M. Peto's work is so full of information, that what we have been able to extract is but a little portion of it. The spirit in which it is written is also excellent. It is the work of an Englishman, who loves his own country and her institutions; but who regards America and Americans with the most kindly feeling. It is calculated to dissipate prejudice, and to promote good feeling on both sides of the Atlantic.

BROUGHT TO LIGHT.

CHAPTER III.—A DEAD WOMAN'S LETTER.

MULLINSTEAD, MASSACHUSETTS, U. S., April 5, 185—.

MY DEAR SISTER—When this letter reaches you, I shall be no more. I write it—with much pain and difficulty—on my death-bed; and I shall leave instructions for it to be forwarded as addressed, together with a newspaper containing the announcement of my death, as soon as possible after that event shall have taken place. The painful malady from which I have been more or less a sufferer during the last dozen years, has struck me down at last. But it was not to write of my own sufferings that I began this letter, but to perform an act of justice—of reparation—which may no longer be delayed. The confession I have to make is a painful one, inasmuch as he who began the deception which I am about to reveal was one whom, in spite of all his faults, I loved—my husband; a deception which I have unwillingly been obliged to keep up; and I charge you to make known the contents of this letter to Lady S— without delay, as what I have to put down here concerns her more nearly than it does any one else.

I need not detail the circumstances which induced Jeremiah and me to leave England, seeing that they are as well known to you as they are to myself, and that you were as deeply implicated in the affair which led to our departure as any one. You are aware that on our arrival in this country we took up our residence in one of the western states, at that time but thinly populated, and at no great distance from the Indian frontier. Here my husband began to practise as a surgeon, and here we continued to live for seven years. But Jeremiah gambled and drank, and we were obliged at last to seek another home in a place where we were unknown. An opening having offered itself in a small town in the state of New York, we proceeded thither; and there we remained for ten years, leading a miserable existence, for Jeremiah's old weaknesses increased upon him, and one by one his few American friends were alienated. I do not write this as imputing blame to the dead, but simply because a plain statement of the truth is now necessary. Our next move was to the spot from which I write this letter, and where my husband died two years after our arrival. I had three dollars in the house the day he died, and owed three hundred in debts; for all the money

that had been sent us was gone—who can say whither? Jeremiah himself could not have told. Every remittance, as it came to hand, was required to meet debts that never seemed to decrease. The thought that I should be left destitute preyed heavily on my husband's mind as he lay dying, and he bound me by a solemn promise not to reveal, till after my own death, the deception that had been practised by him for so many years. This he did in order that the income derived from a certain source might be continued to me, and that I might thus be enabled to live in comfort after his decease. That promise was weighed heavily on my conscience ever since it was made, but I have not felt myself justified in breaking it. Since my husband's death, I have lived on the proceeds of my needle, and the sums remitted to me lie untouched at the bank; and I have taken steps for having the total amount forwarded to you after my death, for repayment to the sender.

According to the arrangement made before leaving England, my husband was to write to a certain person, through you, three times every year. This portion of the agreement was faithfully carried out by Jeremiah as long as he lived, and by me after his death; and once in every four months a statement was sent you, embracing such particulars concerning the Boy as it was thought you might feel interested in knowing.

The whole of those statements for the last eleven years were false in every particular.

Let me briefly recapitulate their contents. Up to the time that the boy was nine years old, the reports sent you were simple statements of facts. You were duly informed of our safe arrival in the country, and our settlement at Willsburgh; you had ample particulars sent you respecting the child—his health, his stubborn temper, and the progress he was making at school; and every letter gave you the assurance that the recollections of his former life were gradually dying out of his memory, and that with the progress of time the Secret was becoming less difficult to keep. This went on till he was nine years old, but after that time the reports sent you were purely fictitious. You were led to believe that the boy, after remaining at school till he was fifteen years old, was put as assistant into a store, where he stayed till he was quite a young man; but that, growing tired of this life after a time, he joined an exploring expedition that was being formed to search for a new pass across the Rocky Mountains, and that he was never heard of afterwards.

Long before the boy was nine years old, my husband began to chafe under the burden that was laid upon him, well paid for the duty though he was. There were various reasons why this should be so. In the first place, Jeremiah was, in reality, a man of timid disposition, despite the daring scheme which, under the influence of a strong temptation, he had so successfully carried out; and so long as the lad continued to live with us, he trembled lest some untoward accident should bring the deed he had done home to him—exposure before the eyes of the world being what he dreaded beyond everything. Then, the lad's temper was most stubborn and obstinate; and, despite all the efforts of Jeremiah and myself, he persistently refused to address us as 'Uncle' and 'Aunt' (the degree of relationship decided upon before we left England), but would stamp his foot, and turn white with passion, when urged on the point; nay, he

would cry that we were no relations of his, but his enemies, who had stolen him away from his beautiful home across the sea; and that when he should grow to be a man, he would have us put in prison for it. As the lad grew older, there was no lack of busybodies in the little town to pick up his words, and try to patch them up into a case against Jeremiah. But the boy remembered so little of his former life, and the evidence against us was so weak, that, for my own part, I think we might have defied it with impunity; and that if Jeremiah would have given up insisting upon the relationship, the lad would have gradually tamed down, and have settled by degrees into the trammels of his new life, and little by little have forgotten all that his memory retained of old days, till his recollection of that time became an utter blank. But Jeremiah was too nervous and faint-hearted to carry out such a scheme; and he hit on another plan, after a time, which would at once relieve him of the boy, and still enable him to draw the extra amount allowed for his maintenance and education.

My husband gave out among his friends in the little town, that the lad's relations had sent word for him to be sent back home to England, and that he was going to take him to New York, and see him safely on board ship; and one wintry morning, he and the boy set off on their journey. My mind misgave me, I knew not why; and all the time Jeremiah was away, I could do nothing but wait, and listen, and weep to think of the poor lad's unhappy fate. I had grown to like him, far better than I knew of, till I lost him for ever. He was so handsome, so generous, so brave, that it was impossible to help loving him. Let me say this much now in defence of his memory—poor, ill-fated child!

At the end of a week, my husband came back alone. I demanded to know what had become of the boy. He refused to tell me. 'You have murdered him!' I exclaimed, struck with a sudden fear. 'Not quite so bad as that, old girl,' he said with a laugh. 'I have not put the young imp out of the world, but only got rid of him; take my word for that. Believe me, once for all, when I tell you that he is quite well and hearty; but further than that you will never know, so you needn't bother more about it.' And he kept his word. I did not know then, I do not know now, what was the fate of the boy. When my husband lay dying, I questioned him on the point, but even then he refused to tell me. 'I did not hurt a hair of his head,' he said; 'but what became of him, I will never tell to anybody.' And so he died.

I wish to palliate nothing. I say again, that the object of Jeremiah Kreefe in acting as he did was to get rid of all danger of having his misdeeds brought home to him, and, at the same time, to receive the double allowance from Lady S—. But I must do his memory one piece of justice, which you will not fail to represent to Lady S—, when you lay this statement before her. However much he might forget himself in some things—however recklessly he might ruin his worldly prospects—however foolishly he might dissipate the sums sent him from a certain quarter, he never, by word, deed, or look, gave intimation to the world of the dark secret that lay like a dread shadow on his mind. In so far as that goes, he carried out with strictest honour his part of the compact. Let Lady S— be further assured that I, too, shall die with my finger on my

lips. Her secret is safe with me, even at this dark hour. *It will never be brought to light.*

You now know the truth, as far as my knowledge goes, respecting the fate of poor Master — What was I going to write? It is, indeed, time to conclude, for brain and hand are growing feeble alike. Let me again set down, while my mind is clear on the point, that I know absolutely nothing of the poor child's fate from the day my husband took him away, at which time he was just turned nine years of age.

And now farewell. Present my dutiful respects to Lady S—. I trust that she is well and happy. It may be, Martha, that you and I shall meet again. To Infinite Mercy, nothing is impossible. Till that time shall come, dear sister, adieu. —Affectionately yours, **BARBARA KREEFE.**

The two women sat in silence for a minute or two after Martha Winch had finished reading the letter. 'Poor Barbara!' said Lady Spencelaugh at last; 'I am sorry that she is gone; and yet, Martha, I cannot help experiencing a feeling of relief that you and I are now the sole living depositaries of that ugly business. Poor Barbara! she was faithful to the last; so, for that matter, was Jeremiah also, while deceiving me so wretchedly in other things. I would much rather have paid him double the money, and have known the truth. I wonder what he did with the boy. But my rendering myself miserable on that point, would do no good to any one. I daresay the young man is well and happy, and filling some inferior position in life to the satisfaction of himself and all around him. I am sure that my best wishes are with him wherever he may be.—You will burn the letter, of course,' said Lady Spencelaugh after another pause.

Martha nodded assent, deliberately proceeded to re-fold the letter and newspaper, and place them in her reticule, and then rose to take her leave.

'By the by, Martha,' said her Ladyship, arresting the widow with a motion of her fan, 'I trust that you have thought over what I said when I saw you last, and have given that odious person his *congé*?'

'I have not, as yet, given him any decisive answer, my Lady.'

'You have not! What am I to understand by that? You surely do not contemplate making yourself ridiculous at your time of life.'

The widow's thin face flushed, more in shame than anger. 'Oh, my Lady, your words are very hard!' she said, turning appealingly to Lady Spencelaugh.

'I certainly gave you credit for more sense, Martha Winch,' said her Ladyship, as she rose from her seat, and began to pace excitedly about the room. 'I tell you again, as I have told you before, that it is for your money alone that this man is seeking you. The scheme is preposterous; and once more I repeat that, from the day you are married, the secret will be ours no longer.'

'Oh, my Lady, cannot you trust me after all these years?' protested the widow. 'I was a wife for twelve years, and when my husband died, he died in ignorance of the hidden bond existing between your Ladyship and myself; and could you not trust me again?'

'But cannot you see, simpleton,' responded Lady Spencelaugh, 'that this Brackenridge is an altogether different sort of man from honest, simple-minded Job Winch, who cared for nothing so long

as the little hoard at his banker's kept increasing from year to year? This man will force the secret from you, whether you are willing or no, and trade on it afterwards for his own purposes.'

'The man is not born that will force it from me against my will,' said the widow with energy. 'I may like Mr Brackenridge—nay, I do like him, and may as well confess as much at once; but your interests, Lady Spencelaugh, have always been, and will continue to be, paramount with me. If the telling of what I know were the price of my marriage with him, I would sacrifice him twenty, ay, a hundred times over, rather than give utterance to a word that could by any possibility compromise your Ladyship. In this thing, pray have faith in me.'

'I have every faith in your good intentions,' said her Ladyship. 'You have been the truest friend, Martha, that ever woman had; but you have never been tried as you will be tried if you marry this man. I tremble when I think that there is even the faintest possibility of the secret becoming known to him. But leave me now; I am unequal to further conversation. Come up to Belair this day-week, and we will discuss the matter again. Ah! how I wish that man had never made his appearance in Normanford!' Lady Spencelaugh sighed wearily, and her arms fell dejectedly by her side: she looked for the moment ten years older than she had done half an hour before.

Mrs Winch drew on her gloves. 'Has your Ladyship heard lately from Mr Gaston?' she asked. She knew that Lady Spencelaugh would brighten up at the mention of that name.

'Ah, yes, Martha; I had nearly forgotten to tell you that I had a long letter from the dear fellow yesterday. He seems to be enjoying himself thoroughly in Paris. But I feel it hard that I do not see him oftener. We shall scarcely have him at Belair before Christmas; but when he does come, I hope he won't leave us again till after his birthday. Such a day as I mean that to be at Belair, Martha!' There was a glad smile on the mother's face as she said these words, and while the brightness still lingered, Mrs Winch kissed Lady Spencelaugh's hand respectfully, and took her leave.

CHAPTER IV.—LADY SPENCELAUGH'S HIDING-PLACE.

'No thanks, my dear boy,' said Sir Philip Spencelaugh, as he shook Mr Duplessis warmly by the hand. 'I confess that I know no one to whom I would intrust my darling sooner than I would to yourself. And now go and inform Lady Spencelaugh of your good-fortune. She will be pleased to hear of it, for you are a great favourite with my wife. Don't forget that you dine with us to-morrow;' and after another hearty shake of the hand, the baronet turned and left Mr Duplessis standing alone on the terrace, where the two had been walking and talking for the last half hour.

Mr Duplessis paused for a moment after he was left alone, a bright, confident smile lighting up his handsome face. 'At last!' he murmured to himself. 'The prize for which I have so patiently laboured is coming slowly within my grasp. I shall win it and wear as my own before the world. Beautiful Frederica! you do not love me yet, but you shall learn to do so before long, unless my tongue has lost its cunning!' He turned off the

terrace, and walked musingly through the shrubbery towards the side-entrance on his way to Lady Spencelaugh's apartments. Mrs Winch was just climbing into her chaise as he turned the corner of the house. Halting behind a screen of laurels, he saw the widow take her seat beside Jerry, resume the reins and the whip, and then drive off at a rapid pace down the park. 'Why does that woman come here so often to see my Lady?' he said to himself as he emerged from his hiding-place. 'What can be the nature of the bond that exists between the exclusive Lady Spencelaugh and this commonplace landlady of a country tavern? This is one of those cases where my little Clotilde may prove a useful ally. There may be nothing in it, or there may be much.'

A tall, thin, handsome man of eight-and-thirty, this Monsieur Henri Duplessis; with a low broad forehead, aquiline nose, and long drooping tawny moustache; with an ever-ready smile, which displayed to advantage his large white regular teeth; with accurately arched eyebrows, educated to express much either for or against a proposition—an advantage to an economist of words; and having an undoubted air of fashion and distinction. By birth a Canadian, but descended from an old French family, he could boast a pedigree that would bear the most critical investigation.

Yes, my Lady would see Mr Duplessis—(he was rarely called 'Monsieur' at Normanford or Belair)—so said Mr Plush; and preceded by that functionary, the Canadian was ushered into the sitting-room of Lady Spencelaugh. Mademoiselle Clotilde was in the anteroom, busily engaged with her embroidery, as Mr Duplessis passed through, and a meaning look shot from the eyes of the latter, which the French girl was not slow to understand.

'You must lay the blame of my intrusion on Sir Philip, my dear Lady Spencelaugh,' said Mr Duplessis as he bent respectfully over her Ladyship's hand. 'He insisted on my coming to communicate a certain piece of intelligence, which he was kind enough to say he was certain you would be pleased to hear!'

'Pray, make no apology,' said Lady Spencelaugh in her most cordial manner. 'You are among the few friends, Mr Duplessis, to whom I am always at home.—You are admiring those roses? Yes, they are certainly very fine. But Jennings always succeeds better with his flowers than his fruit.—And now for this news of yours. I suppose I ought not to say that I am dying to hear it; but in a dull place like Belair, where news of any kind is a rarity, the expression would be almost excusable.'

Her Ladyship was sitting on a *caneuse*, cutting the pages of a magazine as she spoke. Mr Duplessis had not sat down, but was still bending over the stand of roses on the table. When he spoke, it was in a low clear voice, in which, however, there was a ring of triumph, which Lady Spencelaugh did not fail to detect.

'My news is this, that, thanks to the kind offices of Sir Philip, Miss Spencelaugh has agreed to look more favourably on my suit than she has hitherto done; that she has, in fact, consented to give me time and opportunity to plead my cause in person.'

'So that all there is now left for you to do is to go in and win the race,' said my Lady. 'Well, I heartily wish you every success; but I warn you

that you have still some awkward running before you. However, my best wishes, and any little assistance I can render, are sincerely yours. Frederica and I have hardly been such good friends as we ought perhaps to have been, though where the fault lay, I am sure it would be difficult to tell. But I will say this in her favour, that if you succeed in winning her, you may consider yourself a happy man. Whatever little faults of temper or disposition Frederica may have, are as nothing when weighed in the scale with her youth, her goodness, and her beauty.'

Now, in all this Lady Spencelaugh was quite sincere, for despite the polite feud, of many years' standing, which existed between herself and Frederica, she still wished well to the latter in a general, indefinite sort of way—for Miss Spencelaugh was far too rich and important a member of the family to be ignored outright; Mr Duplessis, too, having the good-fortune to be a great favourite with her Ladyship, and Sir Philip having so evidently set his heart on the match, and it being desirable that Frederica should quit Belair before Gaston should bring home a bride, and her Ladyship having an inherent weakness for anything that smacked of match-making: all these reasons, I say, combined, induced the baronet's wife to yield gracefully to the force of circumstances, and to make a merit of giving her aid to a scheme, to oppose which would have been both bad policy and labour in vain. 'If Gaston were only a year or two older!' she would sometimes murmur to herself—he was but twenty-one, whereas Miss Spencelaugh was four years his senior. 'If the disparity between their ages were not quite so great, they might perhaps have come together of their own accord; and with her fortune and his own, and the baronetcy at no very distant date, what might not my boy have aspired to!' These, however, were but vain day-dreams, as no one knew better than Lady Spencelaugh herself, and she put them from her with a resolute hand.

Mr Duplessis, in a few appropriate phrases, expressed his gratitude for her Ladyship's kindness, and then went on to say that there was one feature of the case which he felt some diffidence in mentioning, and which yet he could not pass over entirely. He would say at once that the point in question was neither more nor less than the great disparity of fortune between Miss Spencelaugh and himself; a disparity which, among many people, might lay him open to the imputation of fortune-hunting. It mattered little, he added, what the outside world might say or think in the matter; but he did hope that her Ladyship would believe in the sincerity of his affection for Miss Spencelaugh, and not attribute his suit to a merely mercenary motive.

'Yes, Frederica is certainly very well off,' replied Lady Spencelaugh musingly, without heeding the latter portion of the Canadian's little speech. 'It would have been better for her, of course, in one sense, to have married a man of means equal to her own. But Frederica's opinions are very peculiar and independent, and as she is entirely her own mistress, she must please herself in this matter as in others. She has already declined several most eligible offers, and I believe that money and rank go for so little with her, that she would wed a pauper out of the streets, if he only took her fancy in other respects. Absurd, of course, but a fact nevertheless.'

Then there was a little pause, during which Lady Spencelaugh turned over the leaves of her magazine in an absent sort of way. The conversation was beginning to trench on dangerous ground, and Mr Duplessis felt that a change of subject was desirable.

'By the by,' he said, as if suddenly inspired, 'I had nearly forgotten to ask whether your new *femme* is likely to prove more serviceable than your last one.'

'Clotilde suits me very well indeed,' replied Lady Spencelaugh. 'She is docile and good-tempered, and remarkably clever with her needle; in fact, I have had no one at all comparable to her since Wilkins left me three years ago; and I am really much obliged to you for the trouble you must have been at to procure me such a treasure.'

'The trouble is not worth mentioning, Lady Spencelaugh. I am glad to find that Clotilde suits you.'

'French girls are generally so unequal; but, so far, your protégée seems an exception to the rule,' said my Lady. '—You are, I believe, somewhat of a connoisseur in precious stones, Mr Duplessis. Examine this emerald, and then tell me what you think of it.'

Lady Spencelaugh opened a small satin-wood casket as she spoke, lined with white silk, in the midst of which gleamed an unset emerald of remarkable size and brilliancy. Mr Duplessis took it out of its resting-place, and examined it in silence for several moments.

'Except among the crown jewels, I have not seen a finer stone than this for many years,' he said at last. 'It must be worth a little fortune.'

'It cost something very considerable, certainly,' said her Ladyship with a smile. 'I have a liking—a weakness many people would call it—for precious stones, as I daresay you are already aware. My collection of diamonds and rubies has, I think, been seen by you more than once.'

'Your Ladyship has so far favoured me,' answered the Canadian. 'Well, if the hoarding of gems be a weakness, it is at least one that has been shared by many royal and distinguished personages, especially where the fear of some future "rainy day" has haunted their minds.'

The Canadian glanced up at Lady Spencelaugh's face as he spoke, and he was startled to see how suddenly it blanched at his words, and what a dark troubled meaning shone for a moment out of her eyes. 'Does she fear that the future holds some "rainy day" in store for her?' he asked himself, and then fell to examining the emerald again.

Lady Spencelaugh recovered herself instantly. 'That may be,' she said with a little harsh laugh; 'but I do not mean to abdicate my throne at Belair, till I leave it for the family vault.'

She shuddered as she spoke. Was it because of the natural dread which human weakness feels at the contemplation of the last great change? or did it arise from some terrible recollection known to herself alone?

'Such treasures as this should be kept in safe custody,' observed Mr Duplessis. 'I hope that your Ladyship's collection is in good keeping.'

'In the best of all keeping, Mr Duplessis—in my own.'

'Do I understand your Ladyship to own that all the valuable gems which I know you to possess, are kept about you personally—that is to say, in your own apartments, and not intrusted to the custody of your banker?'

'That is precisely what I wished to convey. I have a secure place of deposit in my own apartments—a hiding-place discovered by me, and known to myself alone; not even Sir Philip is aware of its locality; where I keep all my little treasures of gems and jewellery, and where they are hidden from every eye save my own. If I kept them at my banker's, I could not see them so often as I might wish to do. They are quite as secure where they are, and ready to my hand at any moment. This hoarding of precious stones is my hobby, Mr Duplessis; and you must not laugh at an old woman for the indulgence of her whims. It is not, perhaps, quite so sensible as putting one's spare cash into a bank; or buying scrip with it, and getting a good percentage; but so long as I please myself, it is a matter of small consequence to others, and Sir Philip is good enough never to interfere in such trifles. The gems will be there for Gaston after I shall be gone; and when they are his own, he can either sell them, or have them set for his wife. I am glad you like the emerald; the colour seems to me particularly deep and brilliant.'

The emerald was put back into its resting-place, and the tiny casket deposited by Lady Spencelaugh in her *sacbet*. Her Ladyship's detail had been listened to by Mr Duplessis with much attention.

'I need hardly say,' resumed Lady Spencelaugh, 'that what you have just heard has been told you in the strictest confidence. It would never do for it to be generally known that the mistress of Belair has such valuables concealed about her apartments. There are plenty of bad characters in the neighbourhood, who would think little of murdering me for the chance of obtaining such a treasure.'

'I give you my word of honour,' said Mr Duplessis earnestly, 'that no syllable of what your Ladyship has said shall ever pass my lips to any one.'

After a little airy gossip, just dashed with a piquant spice of scandal, touching their common friends and acquaintances, Mr Duplessis took his leave. He found Mademoiselle still busily at work in the anteroom. She rose as he entered, and putting her finger on her lips, signed to him to follow. There were no prying eyes about, and they reached Clotilde's own little sitting-room without being seen.

'Your eyes ask me a question that I hasten to answer,' said Mr Duplessis, playfully pinching the girl's ear. 'Antoine is quite well, and if he did not send his love, it was simply because he did not know that I was coming to Belair.'

The Canadian spoke in French, and the girl answered him in the same language.

'Ingrate that he is!' said Clotilde passionately. 'I wrote to him two, three weeks ago, and he has never yet answered my letter. Speak of him no more, Monsieur; I tear him out of the heart which he has wounded so cruelly. Let him marry that English miss, with the yellow hair and the cat's eyes—for me, I care not!—Will Monsieur say why he wants me this morning?'

'In one moment, Monsieur will say. But I tell thee, little one, that Antoine does love thee, and that all in good time thou shalt become his wife. He cares nothing for the English miss; thou alone hast his heart. So get that tigress look out of thine eyes; and when the letters come to Belair to-morrow, see whether there be not among them a billet for thee in a writing that thou knowest.'

The girl tossed her head disdainfully, but she could not keep back the glad smile that crept over her face as the Canadian spoke.

'And now tell me,' resumed Mr Duplessis after a pause, 'how go affairs at Belair?'

'We are all very good, but, oh! so terribly dull,' said the French girl with a little shrug and a half-suppressed yawn. 'There is absolutely nothing to tell. Madame eats, and sleeps, and reads, and drives out, and has her little fits of *migraine*, and all is told as far as she is concerned.—Of Mademoiselle, I see scarcely anything. She and Madame seldom meet till dinner-time; between them there is no cordiality. Mademoiselle has a *triste* and weary look in her eyes—a look, my faith! which I know well, and for which there is but one remedy.'

'And what is that, Clotilde?'

'That I must leave Monsieur to discover for himself,' said the French girl archly.

'As for the doings of that poor dear Sir Philip, Monsieur knows as much or more of them than I do. But Monsieur does not know how dull it is for a poor French girl to live here, who was born in Paris, and has seen the world.'

'Patience, little one! Antoine must cure all that. But see now: this morning there was with my Lady a woman whom I want thee to watch—Mrs Winch of Normanford.—Ah, I see by thine eyes that she is not unknown to thee.'

'My faith, no!' said Clotilde viciously.

'Well, watch and listen every time she comes here. Try to ascertain why she comes, and what Lady Spencelaugh and she have to talk about.'

'I had my eyes and ears open to-day when she came,' said the French girl; 'but she locked the door, and drew the curtain before it, and closed the window. She is very cunning, that Madame Vinch.'

'Such precautions merely serve to confirm my suspicions that there is some secret bond between Lady Spencelaugh and herself. Be quiet and watchful, next time she comes to Belair, and, above all things, try to propitiate her. Never turn any one into an enemy, my child, whom it is possible to gain for a friend. And now go, and leave me here alone for ten minutes. I have some papers that I wish to look quietly over. I will punch the head of that pig of an Antoine if he does not write thee a long letter this very night.'

As soon as Mr Duplessis found himself alone, he drew from an inner pocket of his coat a flatly-folded sheet of parchment, yellow and mildewed with age and damp, which he proceeded to spread out on the table before him. 'I little thought,' he murmured to himself, 'when I took down that old moth-eaten copy of the *Essays* of Michel *Seigneur de Montaigne* from its shelf in the library the other day, that I should find such a treasure as this between the leaves.'

The treasure thus found and appropriated by the Canadian was endorsed, *Private Plann of Belair House, drawn for y^e particular service of Sir Richard Spencelaugh, Bart., by his faithfull and devoted Servant, Jonathan Bindloss. Aug^t. 1690.*

Mr Duplessis was puzzled for some time to reconcile the discrepancies between the house according to the plan and the house as he knew it, a great part of Belair having, in fact, been altered and modernised, and some portions entirely rebuilt. But the east wing had been left unaltered, and in that wing were situate the apartments of Lady Spencelaugh; and the Canadian's knowledge of the position of the different apartments soon

enabled him to lay his finger on the suite now occupied by her Ladyship; and his eye following his finger as he traced the different rooms one after another, halted at last at the one now used as a dressing-room, attracted by two words written in a very minute but clear hand. Those two words were *Secret Closet*, and the face of Mr Duplessis flushed as he read them. A star in the margin drew his attention to a foot-note, where he read as follows:

To open the Secret Closet, press gently the fifth marble button from the top on the left-hand side of the mantel-shelf, and at the same time turn thrice to the left the small brass knob which will be found hidden behind the central scroll-work.

'That must be the place where Lady Spencelaugh hides her jewels and precious stones,' murmured Mr Duplessis below his breath; 'a piece of knowledge which, in the case of certain eventualities, may prove of service to me. Should all go well, and my marriage with Doña Frederica duly take place, I shall be in a position to dispense with this information; in that case, I shall reform, and live strictly on the square. But should the worst come to the worst, why, then, I may be compelled to make use of it. A sad alternative indeed, but if society permits a gentleman to starve, he must revenge himself on society as best he can. Lady Spencelaugh little dreams by what a simple accident her secret has become known to me.—But that emerald! my mouth positively waters when I think of it.'

CLERICAL ANA.

It has been maliciously observed, by those who deny to the Scotch much sense of humour, that their funny stories are invariably about a laird and a minister; and that, in particular, without the ministers, there would be no fun to be found in all North Britain. Upon the other hand, it might be retorted that the clergy of England do not contribute their fair quota to the general stock of amusement in that country. I am an English parson myself, but must needs confess that this is the case, nor do I see any excuse for it. There are many humorous incidents in the experiences of all of us, which, without the least irreverence to our sacred functions, might be communicated to the world to great advantage, since it would swell the store of innocent mirth; but we have no Dean Ramsay in the South to collect clerical *ana*.

Once a year, it has been my custom to visit the north, as the guest of a reverend brother, who has an Episcopal church in a certain Scotch city, and I always leave him laden with laughable anecdotes of the Cloth. They may not be new; but they are new to me, and have never, I believe, appeared in print; so I subjoin one or two of them.

My friend, who is on the best of terms with the Presbyterian clergy, happened, when conversing with one of them concerning his spiritual experience among his flock, to inquire whether he did not find certain proceedings somewhat embarrassing. 'Now, with us Episcopal ministers,' said he, 'it is not usual to ask individuals to join in prayer with us, unless upon particular occasions of sickness or distress: whereas with you, I understand it is customary to do so at all times and seasons. Is not the introduction of this matter sometimes a little awkward?'

The Presbyterian, a most excellent and pious

man, protested that he did not experience any such feeling; 'but,' added he, 'I confess that when I first entered the ministry, a little unpleasantness did arise from the custom of which you speak. Finding myself alone with a member of my congregation—an honest but rather subservient tradesman in a small way of business—I seized the opportunity of improvement, and asked him to unite with me for a few minutes in devotional exercise.'

"Certainly, sir," returned he: "*if it's the smallest gratification to you.*" Which was, I confess, exceedingly embarrassing.

Again, in a certain district in the far north, where the elders ruled the church, and the clergy played second-fiddle, there was an able young minister who determined, if possible, to throw off the yoke, and declare his independence. Accordingly, in full convale of his foes, he gave them to understand that their government had not been productive of good effect, and proposed that another sort of authority should be substituted; and this he did with such vigour and eloquence that he had almost carried his point, if not persuaded his audience. But after a short pause, there arose a mighty elder with twinkling eyes, and thus delivered himself. 'I am afraid, my friends, that I must say of the speech we have just heard, that there's a good deal of the *young man* in it, and a good deal of the *old man*; but varra varra little of the *new man*.'

It was one of these same elders, I think, at whose expense, upon the other hand, the following story was told. Some young gentleman from his part of the country had emigrated to the city I have in my mind, and was practising therein as an advocate. After some time, one of his old friends, once in spiritual authority over him, visited the same place, and expressed his opinion that the lad would 'get on,' for that his character was a peculiarly moral one.

'I am not quite so sure of that, I am sorry to say,' returned my friend, who had good grounds for a contrary opinion.

'Ah!' interrupted the other, with the greatest *sang froid*, 'I dinna mean drinkin' and fleertin', but gamblin' and sic things as you lose money by.'

Scores and scores of stories such as these have I heard in Scotland, in all of which the minister is more or less directly concerned; but in England we parsons are not so communicative, albeit we see of course as much of human nature, which has always its humorous facets. I propose, therefore, to remedy this defect to at least some trifling extent, by recording my own limited experiences as curate and vicar.

The first great astonishment that I received after entering upon the duties of my profession, was when baptising a male infant.

'Name this child.'

'Nero,' replied one of the godfathers, with the greatest gravity.

'My good man,' said I, 'I do not know whether I am justified in positively refusing to christen your infant by such a name, but I adjure you to pause before you give it him. Nero was a vile and cruel tyrant, and persecuted Christian folk.'

'I don't know about that, sir,' replied the father of the child, scratching his head; 'but I should like him to have a Bible name.'

'But the name of Nero does not occur in the Bible.'

'O yes, it do, sir,' and with that he produced a copy of the sacred volume which had been presented to him by my own wife; and certainly the word 'Nero' was to be found there, though printed in the margin and in diamond type.

This fondness for conferring Bible names upon their children without any reference to the principles or conduct of those who originally bore them, is very general among the agricultural poor. I had once to baptise a child by the title of Sadoc, which I confess staggered me not a little.

'Are you sure you don't mean Zadok?' inquired I.

'No, sir, Sadoc. It's a Bible name, ain't it, sir?'

'But why Sadoc?' asked I, not liking to commit myself by saying it was not to be found in Holy Writ, although I confess I could not call it to mind.

'Well, sir, it's not that I admire his *carakter*; but he was the father of Achim, you see; so I should like my child to be named Sadoc.'

Which was accordingly done.

I have only heard one christening story to beat the above. The rector of a parish bordering upon my own was once requested to baptise a *male* infant by the name of Vanus.

'Venus!' cried he to the godfather very sharply, for he is of a choleric temper, although as kind a soul as breathes—'stuff and nonsense! In the first place, Venus is not a man's name at all, but a woman's; and, secondly, it was the name of an infamously bad woman. You ought to be ashamed of yourself to wish that any Christian child should be so named.'

'Grandfeyther was christened Vanus,' returned the sponsor doggedly.

'Your grandfather was christened Venus, sir! Impossible! Is he alive? Where is he?'

At these words, an exceedingly ancient person, looking as little like Venus as can possibly be imagined, tottered slowly forth from the congregation, for the christening was taking place during the afternoon service.

'Is your name Venus?' inquired the clergyman.

'Well, yes, sir; they always calls me Vanus.'

'And do you mean to say that you were christened by that name?'

'Yes, sir: at least I believe they write it out *Sil-vanus*, but they always *called* me Vanus.'

It is very troublesome to a young curate, particularly if unaccustomed to the particular dialect of his parish, to catch the exact name which the sponsor wishes to be conferred; and this difficulty is increased when the word happens to begin with a vowel. A young girl once came to my house to have her name entered in the list of the students for confirmation.

'Very well, my good girl; what is your Christian name?' and I waited, pen in hand, to set it down.

'Anner, sir.'

'Is it Anna or Hannah?' said I.

'Anner, sir.'

'Please to spell it. I want to know whether there is an H in it.'

'Yes, sir: H, HA, HEN, HEN, HA, H.'

There were six.

I have heard it said that one must be an editor of a newspaper in order to appreciate to its full extent the dulness of mankind; but there are surely depths of ignorance far beyond those which are exhibited by persons, however ill-informed, who

have a desire to rush into print—an ambition which itself betokens some scintillation of intelligence. I think we clergy meet with more stupid folks than even editors do. It has annoyed me more than once to see some high-flying young curate, who has just taken orders, brought face to face, for the first time, with the material with which he has to deal. I hope I have not lived in my present vicarage for more than a quarter of a century altogether in vain; but when my High Church brethren come to see me, and complain about the absence of wax-candles in my church, or the want of a gold fringe to the reading-cushion, I am tempted to tell them what was the state of things I found here upon my first arrival. The record may seem to some almost as strange as Lord Macaulay's account of the clergy in Queen Anne's reign; but it is quite true, and such things were common enough in other parishes about me at that time.

As I entered the village for the first time, I met the parish clerk driving over to a neighbouring race-course with the communion cloth over his gig-seat, in order to give that vehicle a holiday appearance; nor was he the least conscious of having committed an irreverent act.

On the first occasion of my interring a parishioner, the sexton had made a mistake in the dimensions of the grave, and during the service in church, this same clerk coolly came with a piece of tape and measured the coffin, exclaiming to me, by way of apology for the interruption: 'I want to see how long er be.' He came again a few minutes afterwards, and repeated this operation, nodding even more familiarly than before: 'I want to see how broad er be,' said he. But even these most unseasonable interruptions were in vain, for when the body was carried into the churchyard the grave was still too small for its reception. I of course waited for the arrangements to be completed, and endeavoured to look as unconscious as I could while the clerk confidentially exhorted me in a broad whisper to 'Go on wi' it, bless yer. Why can't ye let us have er when ye ha' done wi' er.'

I dare say it will surprise some folk to learn that this man is parish clerk still, although, it is true, with greatly improved manners; and I wish one half of the folk in my parish were as honest and kindhearted as he, or as zealous in securing to the Church her proper dues. There is a certain cobbler in the village who, although a worthy fellow, entertains unorthodox opinions, and with whom the clerk is therefore always at variance; and the latter gives me this curious account of his failing to obtain from the son of Crispin our Easter dues.

'I am come for your Easter offering, Mr Last,' observed the ecclesiastical official, looking over the half-door behind which the little cobbler sits cross-legged at his work.

'And what is an Easter offering, and why should I give it?' inquired the sceptic.

'Well, never you mind about that; only give it, that's all.'

'Won't you step in and take a bit of bacon with me, Mr Clerk, for I am just a-going to have my dinner?'

'No, thank yer: I want your Easter offering.'

'Well, then, take a drap o' summut warm; I've got some ale yonder upon the hob.'

The clerk could not help looking wishful, but he replied stontly, as before, that he only wanted the Easter offering.

'At least you will take a pipe,' insisted the cobbler; 'here is tobacco and the box of lucifers.' The clerk resolutely shook his head.

'Very well,' observed the cobbler with a chuckle, 'I've tried ye with a meat-offering, with a drink-offering, and with a *burnt*-offering, and now you will have no other sort of offering from me, I promise ye.' And he kept his word.

The most singular reply, however, I ever listened to, was made to me last summer, upon the occasion of our school-feast, by a carter-boy of about fourteen. Everybody had exhibited a tolerable appetite, but this boy had eaten to repletion, so that when I saw him suddenly turn very pale, and attempt to rise from the table, I began to fear that he had made himself ill.

'What's the matter, my good boy?' inquired I, while a sympathising throng of philanthropic ladies, who had been acting as waiters upon the company, gathered around the sufferer. 'Do you feel unwell?'

'My stomach aches, sir,' replied the boy with great distinctness.

'Dear me,' said I (almost suffocated with my endeavours to repress laughter); 'don't you think you had better go home?'

'No, no, sir,' replied the lad with determination. 'It will ache a precious sight more afore I ha' done wi' him.'

And I am bound to say that he did not submit to the threatened dictation, but devoured two slices of cold pudding in addition to his previous supplies, as well as an enormous hunch of bread and cheese.

DAISIES AND VIOLETS.

WHEN high in sunshine poise the hawks,
The daisy spreads his snowy rays,
Until the shadowy Evening walks
Through meadows green and village ways;
And then the rosy tips arise
A fence around their golden prize.

The violet, purple-hooded nun,
Bends by the ash-tree's pillar gray,
Close in her leaves, and fears the sun,
Breathing a fragrant prayer all day;
Then hears the field-bird sweet in bower
And dies a pale and open flower.

How might these silent children tell
A tale of unproclaimed design,
That in creation round them fell
The golden dust of Thought Divine;
And hint to all that smiles or moans
Of Care unseen that loves and owns!

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THINGS THAT I REMEMBER.

MY HOME.

THE things that I am now committing to paper have been lying at rest in my memory for years, and they come out like stars at night, as I look into its deep recesses; like stars, too, they come out not in order. I will try to describe my home. A large old rectory-house, the outside covered with creeping things, literally *covered* from the ground to the roof; the ground-work ivy, over which grew roses, honeysuckle, passion-flower, clematis. A light wooden porch to the front door, a perfect arbour of creepers and sweets. A bright green, well-mown lawn in front, with a narrow border of flowers, outside which was a green wooden railing. The gardens were at the back of the house. There had once been a moat, but it had long since been almost entirely filled up; there were, however, two ponds left, which divided the flower from the kitchen gardens. These were like two tiny lakes, joined together by tiny straits, which had a pretty bridge across them, leading from one garden into the other. One of these ponds had an island in the middle of it, and it was one of our amusements to throw a ladder across the water so as to form a bridge between it and the mainland. We used to find a way by this means to the many wild-flowers which grew amongst the tangle on the island. But this was not our most favourite means of crossing the water. Our great delight was boating in brewing-tubs: we had a narrow piece of board for a seat, and battle-doors for oars, and we used to have tub-races, which were doubly delightful because they were dangerous. If any of you, my readers, would like to know the amount of danger, I request you to try for yourselves. I remember several mishaps. On one occasion, one of my sisters, who was by no means an over-adventurous one, was tempted by a young gentleman-visitor to an excursion of this kind. Not quite understanding the danger of the slightest movement from the centre of gravity, she upset the tub, which unfortunately got on her head, acting as an extinguisher:

and but for the timely assistance of her companion, the consequences might have been serious.

One of our sentimental friends used to row herself and guitar into the prettiest part of the pond, and there sing, reminding one slightly of a siren. O mothers of the present day! what say you to this? True, quite true! And yet our mother was not only a loving mother; we thought her extra careful, and very nervous. Our garden was a paradise for children and young people; full of arbours, shrubberies, long walks arched over with boughs of trees, from which hung wild hops, raspberries, and honeysuckles, and the ground of which was carpeted with moss, gemmed with bright-eyed blossoms. Never, never again shall I wander amid such sweet loveliness. For hours have I sat in such nooks, working or reading, and listening to a chorus of nightingales, which sang there all the day long, answering one another from tree to tree. There was one walk, a kind of raised green terrace, which we called the lovers' walk. It was open on one side, and not quite private; it led into another, narrower, and closed on both sides with trees and shrubs. This we called the 'engaged walk': when our lovers frequented *that*, we suspected their fate was sealed. Once I remember that the 'awful question' was being 'popped' to one of my sisters in the lovers' walk, whilst a younger one, who was rather a 'tomboy,' was seated among the boughs of a cherry-tree which overlooked the spot. Their surprise was great and not agreeable when they saw the agile young maiden jump out of the tree and run into the house, spreading the interesting news far and wide.

But for the house. It was, as I have said, old and rambling, nothing remarkable in any way excepting one room, which was said to be haunted by no less a personage than the Evil One himself. There was living in our village an old woman—she was *always* old in my eyes, and I don't remember that she ever grew older—who was quite a storehouse of tales, traditions, and anecdotes. Her ostensible occupation was needle-work of a rough and tailor-like description, but her real position in our house was that of 'story-teller.'

When any of us were ill or out of sorts, my mother used to send for this old woman: we used to call her 'Mother Gilbert.' She was the widow of an old soldier, and her favourite tale was of her own trials. Her husband, she told us, had been abroad for some years, leaving her with two daughters, one an idiot and a cripple. The old woman used to say she was 'sinny-tucked' (I think she meant that her sinews were contracted). Poor creature! I often saw her with horror and alarm. She used to lie under the table, always chewing a dirty rag. Well, one day some soldiers passed through the town where Mother Gilbert lived, and they had in charge a baggage-wagon. It was a cruel cold day, and the women and children in this vehicle looked frozen and hungry. Mother Gilbert took compassion upon them, went out and brought the poor starved creatures into her fire, fed and comforted them, and then discovered, to her never-ending grief, that they were a second wife and family of her own faithless husband, just returned from a foreign station.

She was a wonderful woman. She knew the *Arabian Nights* by heart—not the new and proper editions, by any means. Our young minds were filled with these marvellous tales. The names of the characters were certainly not quite correct, but otherwise they were faithfully told, and I don't think we understood the harm.

The old woman used to put her needles into her sleeve—it quite shone with them—and her pins into her mouth. It was a work of time to get it sufficiently emptied to admit of tale-telling. This old woman was my authority for the legend I am going to relate of the haunted room in our 'home,' and of other traditions which I shall hereafter transcribe. This room was called the 'Bachelor's Room.' It was a small, dismal-looking place, in an out-of-the-way corner. Oh, the horrors of that room! From my earliest childhood, I hated to pass it; and as to sleeping in it, I was compelled to do so for some nights by my mother, when I was nearly grown up, under the mistaken idea that it would cure me of my foolish fears. It brought on a long nervous illness, and has rooted in me a certain vague dread of dark nothingness.

Once upon a time—so Mother Gilbert's tales always began—a very wicked man dwelt in the rectory-house. It was then simply a substantial farmhouse; afterwards, it was bought and enlarged for the rectory. This said wicked man determined to raise the devil, which may be accomplished at any time, it seemed, by repeating the Lord's Prayer backwards; and by this means the desired object was attained. The devil appeared. The wicked man was seized with horrible dread, and endeavoured by every means to get rid of his terrible visitor; but all in vain. He continued to haunt the room in which the sinful deed was done until the wicked man was dead; then his visits became less frequent, but did not altogether cease until he was laid by twelve parsons reading him down! I don't remember precisely how this was effected; but I have a distinct recollection of the manner in which a certain ghost was laid who frequented a lonely spot not far from our home. Mother Gilbert told me this story also. A man died some centuries ago, and, for some unknown reason, could not rest in his grave. He constantly appeared in various places. Twelve parsons undertook to lay him: they read him into a bottle! In the first place, they drew a large circle, in the

midst of which was placed an empty bottle; the twelve parsons stationed themselves on the line composing the circle. Here they read and read, I don't know what. After a time, the ghost appeared within the circle, as, indeed, he was compelled to do by the charm. Nothing daunted, the parsons read on, lessening the circle by degrees; and after much reading, the ghost became a fly, and eventually flew into the bottle. The parsons, or one of them, corked the bottle well down, and threw it into a pond not far from the rectory. But, alas, what mistakes the wisest of us sometimes make! When they threw the bottled ghost into the water, they said: 'We commit you to lie there for a hundred years.' They ought to have said a hundred years *and odd*. He would then have remained there for ever; but, taking advantage of the omission, after a hundred years had come and gone, the fly once more became a ghost, and the ghost again became a nuisance; he confined himself, however, to the neighbourhood of the pond, which, I remember, was a dangerous and dreaded object to me, and to many that were older and should have been wiser.

There was another pond in a contrary direction, haunted by a woman who carried her head under her arm; but I do not remember to have heard why she indulged in such an abnormal practice.

What tyrants we were, and what patience poor Mother Gilbert exercised. She has been dead now many years; and her remaining daughter is an old woman, living in the almshouses of my native village. My mother had a great many dependents. Her father and forefathers for some generations had been large slaveholders in the West Indies. Descended from an old and distinguished Scotch family, they had left Scotland for political reasons, and become very wealthy West Indians. My grandfather, however, returned to England in his youth, with many others of his family, and settled here. My mother inherited many slave-owning propensities. She loved slavery, and thought the abolition of it a most unjust and cruel proceeding, both for the slaves and their masters. That she should consider it unjust to the masters, need scarcely be wondered at, seeing that some of her own family were reduced by it from great riches to absolute penury. A cousin of hers, whose father had possessed forty thousand a year, died in a small lodging, having lived for many years upon the charity of friends.

One of my mother's dependents called herself the needle-'oman,' and so we called her. She was from Devonshire. My mother herself was born in Devonshire, also my eldest sister, and our dear old nurse; so we loved Devonshire, and we loved the old needle-'oman. I wonder whether everybody was old then, excepting ourselves; they seemed so to me. I never knew any other name for our friend. She travelled the southern counties of England with needles. We would suffer any difficulties rather than buy of any one else. She carried them in a basket that was very dirty, and smelt of brimstone. In those days, I remember that everybody and everything that came to the back-door smelt of brimstone: I fancy it came from tinder-boxes. We all bought needles. Our old nurse used to lay in a large stock, though they were very dear—six for a penny of common ones—but darners were double that price. Old 'mother' preferred a short dumpy kind, which she called twins. The needle-'oman always had her dinner, and was very warmly

welcomed. She was accompanied in her travels by a little gray terrier dog; she called it 'Rot,' meaning, I think, 'Rat.' Of course, Rot was a great favourite with us all. One day, the old lady looked very knowing, and asked us if we should like to have a dog like Rot. With joy we said, 'Yes.' Some weeks afterwards, a tiny hamper was brought. It had for a direction, 'Lady Tomkins, Rot's pup.' My mother was simply 'Mrs.' When the hamper was opened, there appeared within a little shaggy likeness of Rot. It was considered so much to resemble an old servant of ours, named Sally, that we gave it her name; and throughout her life, Sally was one of our chief favourites.

Another protégé of my mother's was a travelling fiddler. I am sure he *was* an old, old man; he had long, gray, waving hair, and a nice refined old face. He, too, smelt very strongly of brimstone. There was a shout of welcome through the house when he arrived; the kitchen was cleared; all the servants were summoned with clean faces and white aprons, the footman included. The fiddler sat in the chimney-corner, with a jug of beer at his side; and then the dance commenced, children and servants joining, their superiors looking on. I daresay there may have been other visitors of a like description, but I only remember these two. I don't remember when they disappeared, or how we have come to our present ideas about, and feelings towards, tramps. I suppose the new Poor Law has helped to produce the change. I only say such things were.

I should like to say here a few words about tinder-boxes. I remember tinder-boxes. I have often seen our old nurse making tinder by burning old linen rags. She coveted rags of all kinds, and kept stores of them; but linen was sacred in her eyes. I have the same feeling: I don't believe in cotton; I don't think it is nearly so good for burns, &c.—at all events, it would not make tinder, or *did* not, I can't say which.

The old woman hated darkness, and so do I; she said the devil lived in darkness, therefore she always kept a rushlight burning in a tall lantern, with holes up the sides, which made long ghastly shadows on the nursery floor. Sometimes the rushlight went out, then the tinder-box came into requisition. What a long process it was! One had time to fancy all kinds of things before the light was kindled. First, the tinder had to be adjusted quite close to the flint; then the flint struck with steel until the tinder was lighted; then the match applied to the tinder. It required a steady hand and cool nerves, quite beyond me, I am convinced. I am often afraid to light a Vesta, lest the imaginary burglar should be too quick for me.

My mother had many stationary dependents: the butcher's wife and widow for one. I can remember her as long as I can remember anything. She always came to the rectory, which was a mile from the village, on Friday evenings. The footman used to come to the drawing-room and announce her arrival: 'Mrs Saunders, mum.'—'Very well; tell her to sit down.' Half an hour would elapse; then the maid appeared: 'If you please, mum, have you forgotten Mrs Saunders?'—'No,' replies my mother (she never owned to forgetting anything); 'she can wait.' Another quarter of an hour would elapse, and my mother would get up and go to the encounter. 'Your servant, madam,' greets the butcheress; and then the business of the evening

commences. First the week's order for the rectory larder—a large order always; for the house was noted for its hospitality, and groaning tables were the fashion in those days.

My father farmed a part of the glebe: the butcher bought the cattle, and paid for it with meat. My mother, too, always lent this woman money when she wanted it; so the reckoning took some time. When that matter was settled, the village news and gossip of the last week had to be retailed. My mother was a great woman in every way; large in body, larger in mind; nevertheless, knowing that knowledge is power, she listened to the good woman's recitals. This is not the way we do business with our butchers now a days; but I must own that in this case it led to an abuse; for once, when our parents were from home, and a brother was left in charge of the farm, a cow was to be sold; my brother desired the farm-servant in command to take her to market. He objected to this, and gave as a reason, that it would be sold to Mrs Saunders for a better price, 'because, you see, sir, she lives under *bondage*.' But my mother's slave-owning propensities came out strongest in her dealings with the servants; she scarcely ever thought of dismissing them. We had one woman for years, who had dreadful and frequent epileptic fits. It never struck my mother that she could rid herself of this evil, as we rid ourselves now a days of much less serious ones. In sickness, she nursed them; in sin, she bore with them; and in old age, they had an arm-chair in the chimney-corner, and a seat at the kitchen-table.

BROUGHT TO LIGHT.

CHAPTER V.—ESCAPED.

MR DUPLESSIS rode homeward through the warm May evening, slowly and musingly. He had done a good day's work, and was disposed to be satisfied with himself and all the world. It was a short three miles from Belair to Lilac Lodge, if you took the straight road through Normanford; but Mr Duplessis chose, this balmy evening, to take a longer route, that led him through unfrequented country ways, and quiet lanes, made shady by the rich foliage of overhanging trees. A genuine spick-and-span cavalier of the modern school, he would have looked far more at home in Pall Mall or the Park, than he did on those lonely Monksheire roads, where there were few signs of life, save here and there a cluster of lime-burners' hovels, or a batch of tired labourers returning from work.

Scarcely twenty months had elapsed since Mr Henri Duplessis was first seen at Normanford, but during that short space of time, he had contrived to put himself on the footing of a welcome guest at more than half the best houses in the county. The Spencelaughs had brought him with them on their return from a continental tour, and it was soon known throughout the neighbourhood that he had been instrumental in saving the baronet's life at the risk of his own. He had come to stay a month at Belair; but before the term of his visit was at an end, he had decided on taking up his residence in the neighbourhood for some time to come. The Monksheire streams were famous for

their trout; there was capital hunting in the next county, only a dozen miles away; there was no scarcity of people worth knowing, at whose tables, thanks to the baronet's introductions, he was a coveted guest; and last, though not least, perhaps, in the estimation of the Canadian, within the circle of his Monksborough acquaintance there revolved some half-dozen young ladies, all rich, and all charming—combined attractions, which act as the lamp does to the moth on the susceptible hearts of gay young bachelors (gay and young still at eight-and-thirty) of limited income and expensive tastes. But did the income of Mr Duplessis come within the meaning of such a term? Nobody about Normanford could exactly tell. All that was known respecting him was, that he was of good family—on that point we may presume that Sir Philip Spencelaugh had satisfied himself; that he had taken, furnished, for a term of three years, that elegant cottage or \acute{e} nee commonly known as Lilac Lodge; that his establishment comprised a couple of women-servants, a groom, and a valet; that he kept two horses, a hunter and a cob; that he was eminently good-looking; that his clothes were of the newest fashion; that he attended church regularly, and was liberal with his money for charitable purposes; and that, finally, he was declared by young and old to be the most delightful company in all Monksborough.

Mr Duplessis, in his moth-like eagerness to incinerate himself at the shrine of beauty (with riches) combined, had selected for that purpose the brightest lamp of all those which lighted up the Monksborough firmament. What his fortune had been, so far we have already seen; and so long as there remained the slightest prospect that he might ultimately succeed in his purpose, the fervency of his devotion would doubtless remain unimpaired. And in this he was not, perhaps, altogether selfish; for putting aside the fact that Miss Spencelaugh was the greatest heiress in the county, Mr Duplessis was quite capable of appreciating her goodness and beauty, and of estimating them at their full value; and, for my own part, I believe that his affection for Frederica was as deep and sincere as it was in his nature to feel for any one, or anything, except himself and his own interests. Should circumstances, however, go utterly against him at Belair, I think he was quite capable, without too much of a heartache, of turning his attentions to some other quarter, where they might, perhaps, be looked upon with more kindly eyes—say, in the direction of Miss Cumworth of Cumworth Manor; or towards the sole daughter and heiress of old Antony Tipplady, the great manufacturer of East-ingham.

Mr Duplessis coming after a time within sight of Lilac Lodge, while yet some distance away could see Antoine standing, napkin in hand, gazing earnestly up the road. It was a sign that dinner was waiting; so Mr Duplessis shook his horse's rein, and cantered up to the gate. Jock, the groom, was in attendance, and Antoine proceeded at once to serve up dinner.

Lilac Lodge was a small, low, white, two-storied building, with a broad verandah running round three sides of it, and with a stable, paddock, and servants' entrance at the back. From the verandah, a lawn of smoothest turf swept gently down, interspersed with flower-beds of various shapes and sizes, to where a sheltering hedge of laurel and holly

shut in the little precinct from the vulgar gaze. The main entrance was through an iron gate, from which a sinuous gravel-path ran up to the front of the cottage; but there was a side-wicket which was more commonly used.

Mr Duplessis ate his dinner in solitary state in his pleasant little dining-room, waited upon by the assiduous Antoine, who rarely allowed any other servant to approach his master. But then Antoine was more than a servant—he was M. Henri's foster-brother and humble friend; and another friend equally staunch, true, and devoted to his interests, the Canadian would not have found, had he sought the round world over. He was the faithful depositary of all his master's secrets; he rejoiced in his successes, and sorrowed over his misfortunes, with a sincerity that had no tinge of selfishness in it. Though of the same age as his master, he looked half-a-dozen years older. He had a round, good-humoured, but somewhat sardonic visage, crowned with a mop of short, black, stubbly hair, which stuck out in every direction, and which had further burst out on his upper lip in the shape of a stiff moustache. His cheeks and chin were blue-black, from the frequent use of the razor; and his large flabby ears were ornamented with small circlets of gold. He was very supple and active, and moved about the little house with a stealthy, cat-like pit-pat which was particularly distasteful to the two English women-servants, and added not a little to the dread with which they habitually regarded him; but advancing years were bringing corpulence with them, and Antoine's mind was troubled thereby. Round his neck he wore a black ribbon over a broad turn-down collar, and always carried a large, old-fashioned silver watch, worn in an old-fashioned fob, with an old-fashioned ribbon and seals. This watch, with its appendages, was Antoine's fetish of Respectability—a word which he held in great veneration. He talked both English and French indifferently well, but the latter better than the former; and it was in the French language that he and his master generally conversed when alone. Finally, the leisure hours of M. Antoine were devoted to the manufacture and consumption of innumerable cigarettes of a mild nature, and to the perusal of French newspapers of ancient date.

As soon as Mr Duplessis had finished his dinner, he lounged out into the verandah, where the attentive Antoine had already placed an easy-chair, and a small table with wine and cigars. It was a clear starlit evening, cool and refreshing after the hot day.

'Sit!' said Mr Duplessis with a wave of his hand, as he proceeded to light a cheroot; and Antoine, in obedience to his master's wish, seated himself some distance away on the edge of the verandah, which went down by two steps into the garden.

'Smoke!' said Mr Duplessis; and Antoine manufactured and lit a cigarette. The two smoked in silence for a few minutes, and then Mr Duplessis spoke.

'Thou must write to Clotilde to-night, my child,' he said; 'I promised her that thou shouldst do so. The girl is breaking her heart at thy neglect.'

'Yes, Monsieur Henri, I will write, if you wish me to do so,' replied Antoine with a grimace. 'Ah, bah! what a fool the girl is! She knows I care

nothing for her: why, then, cannot she let me alone, and try to forget me?"

'But, Antoine, thou must try to love her.'

'Love her, my faith! She has the temper of a tiger-cat. She would put a knife into me before we had been six months married.'

'I tell thee, pig that thou art, that thou must make love to her. She is useful to me, and I cannot afford to spare her just yet. As to marrying her, or not, afterwards, that is thy business.'

'It shall be as you wish, Monsieur Henri. I will write to her to-night, and tell her that I adore her, that I am her slave for evermore. But there is a little English *mees*, a miller's daughter, whom——'

'Silence, babbler!' said Mr Duplessis. 'What are thy miserable love-affairs to me. Listen, while I speak to thee of something far more important.'

'Yes, Monsieur Henri; I attend.'

'Before six months are over, I shall be married to the richest and most beautiful young lady in all Monkshire.'

'Ah, Monsieur Henri, but that is indeed good news!' exclaimed the emotional Antoine, as he flung away the end of his cigarette, and rushing up to his master, seized him by the hand, and kissed it several times with fervour. 'It is news that makes glad the heart of foolish Antoine. When Monsieur began to grow melancholy, and to lose faith in his planet, did I not cry: "Courage! The day of good-fortune will come at last." And now it has come; but Monsieur, when he becomes a great rich milord, will not forget his poor, faithful Antoine!'

'Never, Antoine Gaudin, while I live, shall thy fortunes be disavowed from mine. Whether rich or poor, we will sink or swim together. But I am no rich milord yet, nor ever may be one, perhaps; for, as the English have it: "There's many a slip 'twixt the cup and the lip."'

'Ah, no, Monsieur Henri; I will not believe that. You will marry the rich and beautiful Mademoiselle, and live happily ever afterwards.'

'I hope thy prophecy may come true, Antoine,' answered the Canadian with a laugh.—'If I could but forget the past,' he resumed more seriously; 'if I could but think of it as an ugly dream, instead of the wretched reality it is, how happy I could be!'

'It is only a dream, Monsieur Henri,' replied Antoine. 'It never can be anything more than a dream now. But when Monsieur is married, he will be rich; and money is the seal of silence, and Van Gooet is as secret as the grave.'

'Yes, Antoine, if this marriage ever does take place, there is much in my past life that I might well strive to forget. I shall reform, my child; I shall become a model country gentleman; I shall preserve my game, and convict poachers; I shall subscribe to the Monkshire hounds, and study agriculture scientifically; I shall give largely to the different charities, and never spend above one month out of the twelve away from my estate.'

'Oh, Monsieur Henri, but consider how *triste* it will be to live ever among these damp fields! One can enjoy life in Paris; one can even contrive to exist in London; but in the country here, one might as well be a cabbage, for anything there is to see or do.'

'Stupid! dost thou think that when I am married I will lead this miserable sort of life? Thou shalt see, my friend, what thou shalt see; but

should thy days be wanting in excitement and variety, why, marry Clotilde, and, by the garters of Nebuchadnezzar, thou wilt never complain of being dull again!'

Antoine shook his head solemnly, and lit a fresh cigarette.

'Thou hast seen the world of men and women, Antoine,' said his master after a pause; 'thou art somewhat of a judge of beauty. What is thy opinion of Miss Spencelaugh?'

'Oh, the beautiful Mademoiselle!' exclaimed Antoine with animation, as he drew his shoulders up to his ears, and placed the tips of his fingers over the region of his heart. 'How truly charming she is! What eyes! fire stolen from Olympus. What lips! sweeter than Hebe's own. What swimming grace and majesty of movement! Juno's self come down among mortals. What hair!——'

'Cease thy heathenish catalogue!' exclaimed Mr Duplessis impatiently. 'She is beautiful—that is enough. And she is as good as she is beautiful. When in her presence, I can't help feeling what a pitiful vagabond—what a mean, sorry rascal, I am. Can it be possible that she will ever stretch forth a lily hand to lift such a one as me from the nether pit of his own black nature? Ah, no, no; it is not possible!'

Antoine was alarmed; he began to fear for his master's sanity, for the Canadian spoke with an intensity of feeling quite uncommon with him; and then, was it not monstrous for any reasonable being to depreciate himself in that ridiculous way! Antoine crossed over to where his master was sitting, and stooping over him, stroked him gently on the back, as he might have done a sick child. 'Ah, Monsieur Henri,' he said, 'such words frighten me. Do not say them again, I pray of you. Your stomach is out of order; to-night you must take two pills before you go to bed. Mademoiselle is very beautiful, without doubt, but neither too beautiful nor too good to become the wife of my dear master!'

'Thou art an excellent fellow, Antoine,' said Mr Duplessis sadly, as he rose and began to pace the verandah—'but these things are beyond thy comprehension. I love this girl,' he went on—'yes, love her for herself alone, as I never thought this selfish heart could love any one; and, by Heavens, when she is all my own, I will do my best to make her happy! I will teach her to love me as I love her; I will forget the past; and walking through life with her pure presence by my side, I will strive to——'

Mr Duplessis ceased abruptly. There was the sound of a footstep on the gravel outside the garden gate. The nimble Antoine disappeared silently among the evergreens; but before he could reach the gate, Mr Duplessis heard the well-known hail of the country postman, and presently Antoine reappeared with a letter in his hand.

'A pretty time of the night to be receiving letters!' exclaimed the Canadian.

'A break-down on the railway, Monsieur Henri; hence the delay,' explained Antoine.—'From Montreal,' he added in a whisper, as he handed the epistle to his master.

Mr Duplessis muttered a malediction below his breath; all his finer feelings had been put to flight by the inopportune arrival of the postman; he was his cynical calculating self again, such as Antoine always remembered him to have been. He waited with what patience he could command till

Antoine had lighted the lamp and closed the shutters; and even then he dallied awhile with the letter before opening it, examining the seal and the postmark, and the curious crabbed writing of the direction. When he did open it, it did not take him long to read; but when he had spelt it through to the last syllable, he seemed for a moment or two as though he could not take in the full import of its contents: so he read it over a second time; and when he had made sure that his eyes had not deceived him, he flung the letter across the table, and turning on Antoine with a face from which all colour had fled, he said in a hoarse whisper: 'Read!' and then passed quickly out into the solitude of the garden.

Antoine picked up the letter, and read as follows:

MONTREAL, May 2.

Marie has escaped. I am on her track, and hope to find her either to-day or to-morrow. No time to say more. Will write you full particulars by the next mail.

Antoine having mastered the contents, spread the letter out on the table, and stood with his hands in his pockets, staring at it in blank dismay.

'Poor Monsieur Henri! what a terrible blow for him!' he muttered to himself. 'But, bah! why do I frighten myself? She is no match for Van Goost, and without doubt he has coaxed her back again long before this.'

Mr Duplessis coming in next moment from the garden, Antoine repeated to his master the assurance he had found so comforting to himself.

'It must be so, Monsieur Henri,' he volubly added, as Mr Duplessis shook his head in dissent. 'You know well how crafty and fearless is that Herr Van Goost. Yes, my faith! as bold as a thousand lions, and as crafty as the good Gentleman in Black. He is not a man whom Antoine Gaudin would like to have in pursuit of him; and *La Chatte Rouge* herself will find that it would have been better to stop quietly where she was, rather than exasperate him by a vain attempt to get out of his clutches.'

'It's like my cursed luck,' said Mr Duplessis bitterly, reverting to idiomatic English, 'to be bowled out in this style, just at the moment that fortune seemed to be shining her brightest on me!'

'Ah, Monsieur Henri, do not lose courage, I pray you!' exclaimed Antoine pathetically. 'You have no occasion to fear anything. Grant that *La Chatte Rouge* has escaped—grant even that Van Goost fails to find her. What then? She does not even know whether you are living in Europe or America; much less, that you are snugly hidden away, like a dormouse, in this quiet English retreat, as utterly inaccessible to any search of hers as if you were locked up with the man in the moon. As far as she is concerned, you are dead and buried.'

'Thou dost not know her as well as I do, Antoine, else thou wouldst not speak so confidently. In craftiness and duplicity, Van Goost himself is as a child compared with her. The news that cursed letter has brought me hangs like a millstone round my neck, and will do so till the next mail shall bring me further tidings—either good or bad; for to know the worst would be less intolerable than this suspense.'

'But look you, Monsieur Henri, even supposing *La Chatte* were to discover that we reside in this damp paradise—and by a miracle only could she become possessed of such information—why, even in that case, I do not think she would come near us, or let us know where she herself might be. Would she not rather say to herself: "Let him go his way, and I will go mine; and let us meet no more on earth!" Say, Monsieur, would it not be so?'

'Do not delude thyself with such an idea, my poor Antoine. She would beg her way barefoot for a thousand miles to wherever I might be, rather than miss the opportunity of blighting me with her hateful presence. But if she does come, let her beware. Let her not try to step between me and the golden apple that is ready to drop into my hand; for I tell thee, Antoine, that I will sweep her from my path at every risk, even if she or I should perish in the attempt!'

'Those are bright brave words,' said Antoine with a meaning smile; and as he spoke, he drew a long ugly-looking knife from its sheath, hidden away below his vest, and plucking a hair out of his moustache, he held it up to the light for a moment, and then deftly severed it with the blade.

'Put that villainous-looking thing out of sight,' said Mr Duplessis with a shudder. 'I feel a devil tugging at my heart when I look at it.'

'Tis but a pretty plaything, Monsieur Henri, which I always keep by me,' said Antoine with an evil smile; 'a toy, a trifle; but such as it is, it is always at my master's service—always.'

CHAPTER VI.—TACTICS AT BELAIR.

When Frederica Spencelaugh promised her uncle that she would give Mr Duplessis an opportunity of pleading his suit in person, she did not see the full danger of the concession she was making; nor was she, indeed, just then in a mood to care for anything beyond the one bitter fact, that she was deserted by the man she loved. As days and weeks passed on, the first sharp agony of her wound began to wear itself away, leaving in its stead a dull aching pain; and, whether sleeping or waking, the constant sense of some great and irreparable loss. Then, too, for the first time, she learned the meaning of the word 'nerves.' She grew morbid and melancholy, and would sit alone for hours, brooding, ever brooding; and when the ghostly solitude of her own thoughts became utterly unbearable, she would order *Zuleika* to be saddled, and would gallop far away over the breezy downs, or by the lonely shore, in a vain search for her old joyous self, only to return home weary and dispirited, sick of the glaring sunshine, and the rude ocean breezes, in which there was no sympathy with the dark misery gnawing at her heart. But to the world, Frederica was the same fearless proud-spirited creature she had ever been—clear-eyed and heart-whole; and except that her head drooped a little wearily now and then, and that her colourless cheek had a slightly worn look, such as had never been there before, there was nothing to tell of the struggle within.

Not many days were suffered to elapse before the rash promise she had made was recalled to Frederica's mind; and although she would have given much to revoke it, yet seeing how impossible it was for her to do so, she was far too straight-

forward and fearless to shrink from the consequences of what she had done ; but she soon gave Mr Duplessis to understand, and that without saying a word on the subject, that the advantages which he would gain from her promise would be trifling indeed ; and had not the Canadian been a man of exemplary patience, he would probably have been disgusted by the coolness of his reception, and have ' cried off ' before many weeks were over. But Henri Duplessis was not easily balked when he had set his heart on anything.

His object after Sir Philip had told him, with garrulous eagerness, that Miss Spencelaugh had promised ' to try to like him a little,' had been to seek an interview with Frederica, and with all the warmth and passion, real and simulated, which he could summon for the occasion, to lay himself, metaphorically, at her feet, and, if possible, to wring from her a further promise of one day becoming his wife. But when he saw, one time after another, how persistently Frederica refused to give him the desired opportunity ; how, by no scheming, would she allow herself to be left alone with him for a minute ; and when at last it dawned on his mind that the promise she had given had been given entirely out of deference to her uncle's wishes, and not in the least degree through any regard for himself ; and that if he persisted in these violent attempts at commonplace love-making, he should frighten his bird beyond recall ; he wisely determined to change his tactics, and to win his way to her regard through her intellect, before laying siege to the fortress of her heart.

Mr Duplessis, while admitting the full difficulties of the task before him, never allowed himself to despair. His experience of the sex had unconsciously led him to form such a good opinion of his own qualifications, that he was not troubled with any doubts as to his ultimate success in the present instance. He was acute enough to perceive, what no one else suspected, that the shadow of some old love still lingered in the heart of Frederica ; but he wisely kept his knowledge to himself, trusting to time and his own efforts to pull down the image of his unknown rival, and set up that of Henri Duplessis in its place. From the day on which he decided to change his mode of action, he no longer sought for opportunities of finding Frederica alone ; and when Lady Spencelaugh once or twice attempted, good-naturedly, to make such occasions for him, he shrank from accepting them, and seemed unaccountably to have become as shy and retiring as his lady-love herself.

When, on the other hand, Miss Spencelaugh and he met in the presence of others, and better still, if there were only a third person present, and especially if that third person were Miss Craxton—ex-governess at Belair ; middle-aged, snuffy, but still delightfully sentimental, and at present on a visit to her old pupil—then would Mr Duplessis exert himself to the utmost to dazzle and fascinate Frederica.

Although the richest young lady in all Monks-shire, Miss Spencelaugh had seen but little of London society, for the baronet and his wife had lost, years ago, all relish for town-life ; and what little company visited at Belair was not of a kind to possess much interest for Frederica, chiefly consisting, as it did, of middle-aged country squires and their wives, with perhaps an insipid daughter or two, just emancipated from the boarding-school. Young

gentlemen, wanting neither in manners nor education, were not more scarce in Monks-shire than anywhere else ; but after one or two of them had tried their fortune with the heiress of Belair, and had been repulsed ; and when a rumour ran through the bachelor ranks that Miss Spencelaugh had bound herself by an oath never to marry, they fought rather shy of the solemn dinner-parties at the Hall, and carried themselves and their attractions to quarters where they were more likely to be appreciated. But, indeed, had any of the robust young squires of Monks-shire—university-men many of them, with their honest homely country training overlaid with a thin lacker of London fast life—been foolish enough to enter into the lists with Mr Duplessis, they would soon have had cause to regret their temerity in so doing ; for Mr Duplessis had a hundred advantages on his side, such as no young man of twenty, however accomplished he might be, could hope to rival. In the first place, there was his age ; and a man's age, up to a certain point, if properly managed, is an advantage rather than the contrary in a love-chase, especially if the Diana of whom he is in pursuit has to be won through the intellect as much as through the heart. Then, again, Mr Duplessis had the advantage of a wide experience of the world. He had travelled much, and had seen life in various forms ; he was an excellent linguist, and had supplemented an originally good education by sundry accomplishments picked up in different countries ; and he knew how to present his knowledge in its most attractive guise before others. To all this, add the fact, that he was eminently handsome, and that his style was pronounced to be irreproachable, and it will at once be seen that Mr Duplessis was not without reason on his side when he expressed his firm belief in the ultimate success of his suit.

That the Canadian was possessed of many attractive qualities, Frederica had been made aware from the day on which the Belair party had made his acquaintance so opportunely among the Pyrenees ; and as time wore on, the friendly bond between the two assumed that easy, bantering, thrust-and-parry character which seems to be educed so naturally from the collision of two bright and well-polished intellects ; which is essentially of the world, worldly ; which rarely or never touches any of the deeper chords of feeling, nor desires, indeed, to do so ; which is very ephemeral, and easily broken, but very pleasant while it lasts ; and is, in fact, such a gay and sparkling apology for genuine friendship that many easy-hearted individuals prefer it to the real article, as less troublesome, and by no means so exacting. So long, then, as the friendship between them—if friendship it could be called—moved pleasantly along to light music, so long did Miss Spencelaugh take pleasure in the company of the accomplished Canadian ; but at the first whisper of love, the sunlight of laughter died out of her eyes ; she turned on him in all her dark and haughty beauty, and shuddered as though a serpent had stung her.

It was not merely that Frederica's heart was already given to another ; there was something beyond that—one of those nameless unaccountable antipathies, which caused her whole nature to rise in revolt against the idea of ever becoming the wife of Henri Duplessis. And yet, in the face of this antagonistic feeling, she had given that rash promise to her uncle ! She had given it during

the first sharp pain of her bereavement, while utterly indifferent as to whatever might happen to herself: how bitterly she regretted it afterwards, no one but herself ever knew. But when Frederica perceived that all lover-like advances on the Canadian's part had entirely ceased; that he no longer sought for an opportunity of finding her alone; and that his demeanour in no wise differed from that of any other gentleman who visited at Belair, she concluded, not unnaturally, that seeing how distasteful his suit was to her, he had silently abandoned it; and grateful to him for his forbearance, she began slowly, and almost unconsciously, to unbend towards him; and by degrees the intimacy between them came to assume its old easy laughing character, which was precisely the point to which Mr Duplessis was desirous of bringing it, and from which he began to work afresh.

It was the old easy intimacy with a difference, as Frederica was not long in discovering; less bantering and satirical than of yore, but with more of the earnest feeling of real friendship, at least on the part of Mr Duplessis; and based on a pleasant communion of intellectual tastes hitherto unsuspected by Frederica. It was strange to discover that Mr Duplessis's favourite authors were hers also. His acquaintance with Dante, and Goethe, and Schiller, exceeded her own; and in English literature, he was certainly much better read than she was. Then there were other happy points of contact between them. Mr Duplessis, like Frederica, was passionately fond of sketching from nature, and wielded a free bold pencil, which seemed to rub in, with a few easy rapid touches, effects which only by much slow, painstaking study could she adequately shadow forth. What more natural, under these circumstances, than that they should occasionally find themselves among the beautiful Belair woods, sketching some picturesque nook together, with obliging little Miss Craxton to play propriety between them. Then, again, Mr Duplessis was an admirable amateur-musician, and had a clear ringing tenor voice, which he knew how to use with excellent effect; and music, in such a case, is full of dangerous fascinations, and has tones of hidden tenderness all its own, which can reach the heart that no other language avails to touch.

The health of Sir Philip Spencelaugh waned slowly as the summer advanced, but he still clung as tenaciously as ever to his pet scheme of a union between the man for whom he had contracted so singular a liking, and Frederica. He saw, with a sort of querulous satisfaction, that Frederica no longer displayed any signs of distaste for the company of Mr Duplessis; and he was only dissuaded from urging his niece to name an early day for the marriage by the Canadian himself, who knew well that the baronet's persuasions would have an effect precisely the opposite of that which it was intended they should have, and would utterly freeze those pretty tender buds of liking which he saw creeping forth from day to day, and which he hoped, by patient and judicious cultivation, would one day culminate in the perfect flower of love. So the baronet, with some difficulty, was induced to keep his own counsel, and that of Mr Duplessis, as far as it was known to him. He would sit for an hour at a time with Frederica's hand in his, patting it softly, and murmuring below his breath: 'Good girl, good girl,' and gazing with anxious eyes into that bright proud young face, which,

when in his presence, always softened into a tenderness such as was rarely seen upon it at any other time.

Beyond the precincts of Belair, the news, unfounded as we know, spread quickly, emanating from what source no one could tell, that Miss Spencelaugh was positively engaged to Mr Henri Duplessis, and that the marriage was to take place before Christmas—spread to Normanford and Eastingham; and thence, in an ever-widening circle, from one country-house to another, till it was known throughout the length and breadth of Monkshire; and so, after a time, it travelled up to town, and came to be discussed in west-end drawing-rooms, and to be a topic for brief comment at chance meetings in the crush on aristocratic staircases.

Such was the position of affairs at Belair, at the time when one of the most important characters in our history makes his first appearance on the scene.

BEEHIVES.

If we investigate the laws that govern the power which we term instinct, we shall cease to wonder at any amount of apparent wisdom displayed by the inferior and smaller animals. To attribute, as some do, geometrical ideas to spiders and bees, is to mistake altogether the nature of instinct, in developing which the animal is as little conscious of the beauty and regularity of the effects he is producing as the rose-tree is of the form, structure, and fragrance of the flowers with which it annually adorns the summer. Nothing in the labours of the bee is more indicative of the sense of harmony, proportion, exquisite mixture of colours, and delicacy of scent, than the work of the palm-tree, the banana, or the apple-tree. In both, it is nature that energises through the animal or vegetable structure; and while we gaze at the creations of the Great Soul, we amuse ourselves by attributing the wonders we behold to the instruments made use of in their fabrication. No doubt, were we to push this doctrine to its utmost limits, other creatures besides the bee and the spider might lose much of the credit they now enjoy. Looking at the bee in his popular character, we may inquire when he first began to enter and occupy the prisons fabricated for him by the master of the animal world, whose language in nearly all countries has been enriched and made mellifluous by references to this active insect and his dwelling. With advances in this branch of natural history, men have been generally careful to unite advances in error; for example, we are told that the bee is a delicate little creature, intolerant of malaria, and everything approximating to it; yet who has forgotten a striking fact in proof of the contrary, which we find in one of the oldest records in the world? A man of great muscular strength, with no mean pretensions to wit, goes down into the country of his enemies, where he marries a wife, and makes merry with his treacherous relatives. In accordance with the taste of the day, they challenge each other to a trial of mental resources. The giant propounds a riddle, which, with the backing of a wager, he defies his new acquaintances to solve: 'Out of the eater came forth meat, and out of the strong came forth sweetness.' The event took place before the master of the world had thought proper to accommodate the bee with comfortable

quarters, in palaces of straw, or willow-twig, or the bark of trees, or *lapis specularis*, or glass. Having none of these lordly retreats in which to store up his provisions for the winter, Master Bee, to prove the bluntness of his sense of smelling, took up his residence in the unsavoury carcass of a lion, which the colossal riddle-pounder had slain on his way to his foreign courtship. Other circumstances of more modern date may be adduced to prove that the bee has no superstitious terrors, or aversion for bad smells. A baby died, was put into its coffin, and deposited in a vault. The words, 'Ashes to ashes, dust to dust,' had been incorrectly pronounced over its little body, which was not committed to the dust, or sprinkled with earth or ashes. On the contrary, it was placed on a shelf, like a little Egyptian mummy, and there left to all those thousand accidents which human flesh, whether before or after death, is heir to. Through some unexplained agency, a hole was drilled in the little coffin, and some of those mortuary wretches who haunt the precincts of grave or tomb, being somewhat addicted to observation, noticed that whole regiments of bees entered one after another into the last resting-place of the baby. At length, stimulated by curiosity, these philosophers raised the coffin lid, and discovered in the breast of the diminutive skeleton a complete hive of sweets, with the queen and her subjects humming and singing as cheerily as in some ancestral oak, dripping with honey dew, and fanned by the freshest breezes of the morning. Another swarm located itself in a horse's head, another in the belly of a dead ass, and another—oh, tell it not in Gath!—in the vault of a common sewer! Let us hear no more, therefore, of the taste and delicacy of Master Bee, who obviously, when pressed for lodgings, will pitch his tabernacle anywhere.

In spite of the facts alluded to above, the bee delights in all kinds of perfumes; and one of the means of coaxing a stray swarm into a hive is to rub the inside of it with balm, and suspend it within range of their olfactory nerves. The tabernacle thus scented may be of various shapes, according to the taste and science of the country in which it is fabricated. Looking at the general history of the world, we may safely affirm, that all great improvements in hive-making are of very recent date. Bacon observes that the science of architecture preceded that of gardening, which he therefore regards as the concomitant of a considerable advance in civilisation. The remark is as just as the practice which gave rise to it is rational, since it obviously behoves men to provide for themselves a shelter from the weather, before they think of adorning and beautifying it; and a garden is in many respects merely the ornament of a dwelling, though it may be, and is often, converted into a useful appendage. Homer, who had seen many palaces and handsome houses during his travels about the basin of the Mediterranean, found the bee to be still a houseless wanderer, depositing his sweets in the cavity of a rock, or in the hollow of some ancient and aristocratic tree. In Scio, Tenedos, or among the beautiful hills about Smyrna, clothed with wild-thyme, arbutus, and oleander, he often, while inventing his *Iliad*, observed the bees pouring forth from their secluded habitations, and settling in myriads on the flower-sprinkled meadows in

poem is that in which he compares the warriors before Troy, and the sound of their tramp and voices, to the diminutive honey-makers of Asia Minor, whose multitudinous hum may be often heard along the windings of the Meander or Cayster. Had hives existed in his day, this most observant of poets would, without doubt, have mentioned the fact. In the course of less than a hundred years from his time, the ingenious country gentlemen of Hellas had formed alliances with the bee, domesticated him, and persuaded or compelled his residence in the vicinity of their own dwellings.

Here, in the north, we have scarcely made the most of the advantages to be derived from cultivating the friendship of the bee, partly, perhaps, through defects incident to our climate, but partly also through lack of enterprise. We boast of our flowers, and with reason, if appearance only be considered; but in the matter of fragrance, no one who has stood at daybreak in a rose-garden in Egypt or Syria, will for a moment think of comparing the produce of our most highly cultivated grounds with the intoxicating flowers that drink the sun's rays near the tropics. There, accordingly, beehives may be multiplied with much greater chances of success than in our colder latitudes. The calculation, I believe, has never been made of how many bees can be sustained on a square acre of flowers; but I fancy that in the Fayoum, or in the neighbourhood of Damascus, or about Antioch or Aleppo, twenty hives might find sustenance where one could scarcely live in England. A gentleman who possessed an apiary at Hampstead, and was a curious observer of his subjects, frequently noticed large detachments of them working in the fields far away in Kent or Surrey. But bees, like men, take time to travel, and have no trains by which to shorten distances. It is accordingly obvious that their hives must have been filled more slowly than if they had found an adequate supply of flowers nearer home. But how did the owner, it may be asked, know his flock? He used to amuse himself by standing near the hive early in the morning; and as the squadrons mustered on the esplanade extending along their barracks, before dividing and marshalling themselves into columns, he dropped a little flour, moistened with some glutinous substance, upon their backs, which enabled him to distinguish his friends wherever he saw them. The same thing was done in Attica, only that there the bee-keepers used powdered vermilion instead of flour.

Among the rustics of France and England, bees are accommodated with very poor habitations, which are generally made with rushes or straw, and furnished with only one entrance. It is no doubt true that, bad as they are, they are generally much drier, warmer, and more comfortable than the cottages of their owners. Still, owing to the defective nature of their structure, the air at certain seasons of the year becomes humid, or too much heated or impregnated with miasmata, which generate a pestilence among the inhabitants, and carry them off by thousands. Then you may behold a melancholy spectacle in the territory of the Hivites. Day and night, laying aside all thoughts of ordinary labour, they are absorbed by the duty of bearing out their dead companions, though, like the wild elephants commemorated in the *Arabian Nights*, they provide no place of sepulture for the departed, but only tilt the bodies over the precipice in front

rats, or the hedgehogs, to clear the ground of their remains. In old Greece, bee-fanciers invented a beautiful hive, framed with thin panes of the *lapis specularis*, nearly as transparent as glass. Through this they studied the habits and economy of the bee, and were thus in a position to write its natural history with more or less accuracy. What are called glass hives among us consist, in truth, of the most part of wood, with glass windows here and there, placed so as to command the grand entrance through which the columns retire when leaving their cells, or march in on returning from their expeditions. I have often sat up all night to watch their manœuvres by the light of a lamp suspended over a glass opening in the top. On very fine nights in June, the industrious insects seemed never to lose a moment in sleep, but were constantly in double columns marching out or in, and it is a fact that they always kept their neighbours on the sword-hand, reversing the fashion which prevailed in London when men wore weapons. Nothing can be imagined more delicate than the fragrance wafted along in the night by the returning bees, which probably suggested to the Greek poets the idea that you could always know when a goddess was approaching by the odoriferous air that preceded her.

In the eighteenth century, hives of very ingenious construction were invented by Wildman, but they proved of no advantage to the ordinary cultivator, on account of their costliness. It is much the same with nearly all the inventions of our own day, which practically are little better than toys for the amusement of the wealthy, for their expensiveness places them beyond the reach of the poor. If cheap hives could be made with two stories, divided by a sliding roof, the bees might be admitted into the upper story by removing the slide as soon as they had filled the lower. This, I am aware, is done in costly new inventions; but what is wanted is such a hive obtainable at a low price, which may place it within reach of the humbler classes. In the Grecian islands, they make use of a habitation for the bees which has been pronounced by many the worst in the world, since it is made of earthenware, which in summer becomes so extremely heated that it almost roasts the insects in their cells. If, however, by any contrivance it could be kept cool, it would be found at once cheap and convenient, since no substance would lend itself more readily to the extension of accommodation for the labourers, who, by simple luting, could be provided with a second and a third story at very little expense. In the forests of Asia, bees erect their own dwellings, or rather find them ready erected by nature, in every hollow cane or tree; and as these are numerous, the quantity of honey and wax there found in the woods is prodigious. In proportion, however, to the extension of culture, the provender of the bee becomes diminished, and unless care be taken to plant flowers expressly for its use, in winter, it will be found needful to supply him with food in considerable quantities. In England and in France, when honey runs short in the hive, moist sugar is introduced in a split cane. In Italy, it has been recently found that oil-cake, made with rape-seed, suits the bee quite as well. Signor Masso discovered this fact by accident. Having a quantity of this material in sacks near his hives, he found that the bees pierced holes through the canvas, and bit by bit carried away nearly all his cakes. He then took a quantity of

the substance, and placed it near the hives on plates, which were very soon cleared of their contents, and in this way he fed his dependents till the flowers appeared in spring. As this contingency may always be foreseen, it should be kept in view in the construction of hives, which ought to have a portion of their interior set apart for the reception of food.

In some islands of the West Indies, flowers are so abundant, and so prolific of mellifluous material, that the natives gather four honey-harvests in the year. There, however, as in many other parts of the world, they have recourse to the barbarous practice of destroying the insects in order to obtain the produce of their industry. It would be easy to invent a method which would enable bee-keepers to dislodge the bees from their habitations without sacrificing the lives of any of the inmates; this might be done by placing new hives at a short distance from the old ones, and then introducing a pipe into the latter, by means of which they might easily be smoked out. This, in a rude way, is done in many countries; but the fumes of the brimstone generally employed on such occasions, deteriorate both wax and honey. The Abbé della Rocca, a great authority on these matters, objects strongly to straw hives, and seems likewise to disapprove of the circular form, terminating in a dome. But square edifices, though more easily constructed, are less convenient—at least the bees appear to adapt themselves better to the dome or cupola. A Swiss gentleman has devised a curious method of aiding the bees in their labours: narrow sheets of wax are imprinted by machinery so as exactly to represent the dividing-wall of crust between the cells. These strips are attached to the top of the empty hive before the new swarm is put in, thus enabling the bees to go immediately to work, and also guiding them in making the sheets of comb in the proper direction.

Returning to the form of hives: people are beginning, through attention to analogy, to prefer the hexagonal shape, which is that of the cells in the comb. But the price of such hives must always be an objection on the part of the poor, especially if it be needed to use the wood of the soft American pine, an inch thick. To enable cottagers to have an apiary, the plan proposed by Della Rocca is preferable to any other that I have seen; he advises that the walls of cottages, in the face next the fields, should be built with niches, to hold twelve, twenty-four, or thirty-six hives, arranged in one, two, or three stages of twelve in each. To protect the earthenware hive from cold in winter, and heat in summer, he recommends that a thick layer of hay should be placed above and below the hive, while a stone coping projecting in front would throw off the rain. In the island of Syra, where the management of bees is much attended to, almost every house—at least in the country—has an apiary. It is constructed in a peculiar manner, consisting of a thick wall, with a double row of niches, over which a third and a fourth row might be made, but for the fact that the island is exposed to strong winds, which might blow the labourers out of their dwelling, if located on a too great elevation. In ancient Greece, the practice was not to exceed three rows; but where reference was not made to the winds, the plan must have originated in superstition. Such an apiary as is found in Syra, where it is built with common stones entirely without mortar, except in the niches, any ingenious

rustic might construct in his garden without expense, and the produce of his honey-harvest would not only pay his rent, but in many cases support both him and his family. The Bee-master, whose letters appeared some time ago in the *Times*, says he could easily realise fifty pounds a year from his hives; and it is a fact that many persons have realised a great deal more. Two soldiers in Greece having been left by their father a piece of ground so small that nothing could be made of it by any ordinary processes of culture, converted it into a home for bees, planted the whole with flowers, surrounded it with a wall, which they built with their own hands, and then purchasing a few hives, began a course of industry by which they afterwards made handsome fortunes.

It appears to be commonly thought that it is immaterial what sorts of flowers are provided for the use of the bee; but this is certainly an error: the potato-flower, the gooseberry blossom, the common poppy, which have been enumerated, yield an insipid honey worth comparatively little. Again, in the island of Corsica and in the countries north-east of Trebizonde, honey is produced which is so bitter and unwholesome as in many cases to cause temporary madness. Some have thought that in Corsica the bitter savour is derived from the box-tree; while in the region of the Kurds, it is the flower of the rhododendron that imparts the nauseous and noxious qualities to the honey. If in these cases the chemistry of the bee fails to assimilate the juices in question to the proper purpose of honey-making, it may be inferred that it would equally fail to impart a rich scent and flavour to the juices derived from the coarse blossoms of the kitchen-garden. The Sicilian honey, so famous in old times, derived its exquisite flavour, scent, and colour from those large tracts of wild-thyme which perfumed the whole atmosphere in many parts of the island. But even the manufacture of the Hyblaean bee yielded in fragrance, colour, and sweetness to the honey of Attica, which was admitted to be the most delicate and delicious in the world. The reason is not difficult to be discovered: the whole territories of the republic from Sunium to Cithæron consisted of a soft succession of hill and dale, covered with a light sweet earth, which infused, and still infuses, extraordinary fragrance and delicacy to all the flowers there growing, especially to the blossoms of the wild-thyme, which send up a cloud of sweetness as you tread upon them. In the hills above Lausanne, you find considerable patches of the same description, sometimes completely netting small mounds, at other times extending from eminence to eminence, where you may amuse yourself for hours by watching the manœuvres of the Attic insect as it toils beneath your feet, singing all the while to lighten its labours. I have already observed that the bee sometimes works all night, but as it would be impossible for it to persevere in such a course, it occasionally takes a nap in the bells of flowers, where, if particularly weary, it nestles all night; and one of its favourite resting-places is the hollow of the scented geranium, or the spotted cranesbill. Among the fifty-five species of bees enumerated by Linnæus, some kinds display a preference for one sort of dwelling, others for one totally different: the moss-building bee constructs its dwelling, as its name imports, of delicate mosses found on the tops

of rocks: the violet bee bores a hole in hollow trees, and deposits its sweets at the bottom of the cavity; while there is one species which suspends its pensive habitation to the boughs of the cotton-tree. The peasants in Russia, taking a hint perhaps from this insect, make small wooden hives, which they set up in the lofty branches of the pine-tree, as the traveller may observe in nearly all the extensive woods between St Petersburg and Moscow.

If the management of bees were made to enter into the education of the humbler classes in all parts of the world, there would be much less poverty and much less crime for the laws to deal with. At present, not a thousandth part of the benefit which might be derived from this diminutive coadjutor of man is taken advantage of. In this country, and perhaps throughout Europe, the adulteration of honey forms a separate branch of industry, so that it is scarcely possible to obtain it pure except when bought fresh in the country. It is then almost as clear as dew, transparent, fragrant, glistening, and nutritive beyond most other substances. When allowed to settle and harden without adulteration, it granulates into a sort of beautiful paste, of a light golden colour, which is exchanged for a whitish disagreeable hue, by the admixture of flour and other substances. The wax, also, when pure, is of a golden colour, yet considerably darker than the honey, and when old and mixed with extraneous matters, it often looks nearly black. It is easy to understand what increase of employment would be afforded by carefully attending to these insects, making hives, building apiaries, planting flowers, attending to the wants of the insects, collecting and storing the honey, melting the wax, conveying it to seaports, shipping it from one country to another, and numerous other processes very easy to conceive. Some of these forms of industry would not be unsuitable to women, who might thus find occupation far from towns, where they might cultivate healthy tastes and provide with facility for their own subsistence.

AS GOOD AS A WHITE MAN—AND BETTER TOO.

ABOUT the end of last century, I was called out of Inverness-shire to attend a meeting of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland in Edinburgh; and having been but newly placed over my charge, my circumstances were but as yet so limited that, upon making the necessary preparations for the journey to Edinburgh, I could muster no more than one poor solitary half-crown in cash to meet my travelling-expenses—a sum totally inadequate to pay any, or but a small part of any means of conveyance. The call being hurried, I had no time to write any of my brethren for the needful funds, and not caring to ask this from any of my parishioners, but expecting that, when come to Edinburgh, I would get such assistance as I required from some of my brethren, or some friend whom I knew, I resolved to set out on foot, husbanding my precious half-crown in such a way as would afford me the necessary victuals, without having recourse to begging during the journey. Having received the letter of con-

morning, there being only five days before the meeting of the Assembly. In the dim dawn, accordingly, I was on my way; and after pushing on for an hour or two, and entering the high-road from Inverness to the south, I descried, some distance ahead of me, a man on horseback leading in his hand another horse. Having come up with the rider, who was going forward at an easy pace, I began to be afraid, and trembled when I saw that the man was quite black. You must remember I was a young man and a Highlander; and though I had heard of the black men of the Indies, yet, considering the unseasonable hour, and, as I had never heard of any black man having been ever seen in that neighbourhood before except the devil, who was believed to assume that appearance, I was not without some doubts of this strange apparition, and for some time I narrowly watched the man and his movements. Having ventured to accost him, I perceived he was eager for conversation, which was carried on while I kept cautiously towards the other side of the road. At length, having told him I was going to Edinburgh, the black man replied that he was bound thitherward also, and offered me the horse which he led. This, as my misgivings regarding the personality of the black horseman had begun to give way, I was glad to accept, inwardly thanking Providence for having thus favoured me with such good-fortune.

It turned out that the Black was the servant or slave of a rich Jamaica planter, who was at that time home on a visit to his Highland friends, and that the spare horse was for the master, who had gone forward a day in advance of the horseman, to enjoy a walk through the Highlands. My good-fortune was not then quite so great as I had at first calculated, but yet I was very glad. The day was spent very pleasantly, the black man raising my astonishment by conversing freely in Gaelic, which, it appeared, was well known in the West Indies; while I myself, taking advantage of the occasion, and finding the man was as willing to learn as he was also ignorant of religion, spent the most of the day's journey in unfolding to him the truths of the divine record, until I came to regard my new friend, whom, from his wild and swarthy looks, I at first looked upon with dread and abhorrence, with a brotherly affection, founded not only on our common relationship to the first, but also to the second Adam.

When the night was coming down, and we had entered the bleak hill-country, we left the main road, and struck up through the hills, expecting to find some human habitation, where, for the sake of the horses, we might spend the night; but after pursuing our errand for some time without anything appearing to meet our desire, and our route having become very fatiguing and dangerous, the ground being everywhere broken and puddled, and often covered by the thick and intergrowing heather, we came to a halt, and having no other resort, set about making preparations for spending the night in the open air. Willing to make one more effort for the sake of the beasts, I proposed

ascending to the top of a high hill that appeared to the southward, and leaving the black with the horses, I reached the summit of the hill in about half an hour, and was delighted to catch in my eye the distant glimmering of the light of a habitation; and after having marked the position of the light, I at once retraced my steps down the hill. We now remounted; and after a little more fatigue, and a few escapades, arising as much from our ignorance of the ground as from its real difficulty, we arrived at the place to which the light directed us. This turned out to be a *bohanári*, or shepherd's shieling, rather larger than the ordinary dimensions, and looking by no means uncomfortable; and having secured and provided for the horses for the night in an enclosure at the back of the shieling, we entered the *bohanári*, where we found a blazing fire, but no human being. However, as we were now in need thereof, we set about preparing our evening meal, trusting to the well-known hospitality of the shepherds, that the liberty we were taking would not be taken amiss. After our repast, being greatly fatigued, we grew heavy, and inclined to go to sleep, and observing a bed obscured by some drapery in the further corner of the hut, we set about examining it; and finding it quite comfortable, we both stripped us of our clothes, drew everything inside the curtains, and lay down to sleep.

We had fallen asleep but shortly, when we were awakened by a loud and confused noise outside the hut, which we soon recognised to be the voices of a number of men. Stamping and swearing, they rushed in, seized hold of a small table at the foot of the bed, and placing it in the middle of the floor, they began emptying out great sums of money upon it, which, or the parting thereof, appeared to form the matter of their dispute. As it now sufficiently appeared to me and my friend that these ruffians were no other than highway robbers, and that it was in their or their chief's bed we were now lying, we were driven to the extremity of despair, not knowing what to do. As soon as discovered, we could expect nothing at the hands of these bloody and lawless men but certain death, in one form or another; if we dared move, we were discovered; and if we remained as we were, there was hardly a chance that we should eventually escape observation. Being almost afraid to breathe, and nearly stupefied with the squabbling and swearing of the ruffians, I at length, in the courage of despair, whispered in the ear of the black man these words: 'My dear friend, God is always good, and helps us in our time of need; have faith, and do this: Seeing that God has given you a skin differing so much from the people of this country, you will seize my stick, and rise up naked in your black skin the first time they mention the name of the devil, and rushing up to them, cry out: What, in my name, is that you do?'—Then, waiting his opportunity, which was not long in coming, the black man, springing from the folds of the curtain, and rolling up his eyes, and shewing his great jaws, roared out in Gaelic the words I gave him. This lucky idea brought the desired result. The black no sooner appeared in his Satanic character, than the villains scamped away like so many scared sheep.

After a fervent 'Praise be to God!' we began dressing as quickly as possible for our departure; 'for,' said I, 'though we are perhaps safer here now than we can be anywhere else, the villains being

so superstitious that they will not venture within some miles of the place before daylight, yet, with the first break of day, they will be sure to return to see after their money; and if then found in the neighbourhood, we shall fare ill indeed.' We next gathered up and secured the money, for the purpose of having it restored to those who might claim it. Much of it was paper, and it amounted to a great sum; and I wondered how such an amount of money could have come within reach of robbers in that part of the country. We equipped ourselves, moreover, with two of the lanterns which the robbers had left behind in their fright, and having got out the horses, we were ready to start. The black then proposed to burn the hut, and, suiting the action to the word, he thrust a burning peat into the wall, and flared a wisp of burning straw over the roof; and we soon had a blaze which, the black said, would let us see how to set out on our way, as it had guided us off it. The night was very dark, there being no moon, and the sky overcast with clouds, and we had no sign to guide us but the wind on our cheek. We were not, indeed, without apprehensions that we might fall in with some one of the scared bandits, but the black said he was prepared to meet them all again. We continued our nocturnal march for many hours, without sight or sound of anything to realise our apprehensions, and held, as well as we could reckon, due south, until we got into a more open part of the country. We then expected that we should soon either reach the high-road or some human habitation, and were beginning to assure ourselves that we had now got clear of the enemy, when both our horses gave a loud snort, pulled back, and snuffing the air, were eager to plunge away in a new direction.

We stopped, and called for any one to answer us. Then receiving no reply, we dismounted, resolved to know what was before us; and the black saying he was the fittest man to meet anybody, took his lantern, and went to search. He had not far to go when he stumbled on a white figure lying on the ground, and bringing his lantern over it, he saw it was a man stripped of everything but his underclothing; and laying his hand upon the body, he found the man was dead, and looking at his face, he saw it was his master. The black then raised a howl of anguish, and threw himself on his knees, and began beating his breast and crying and sobbing as if his heart was struggling to burst; and it was long before I could draw his attention to hear that I was speaking, and to answer my questions, put for the hundredth time. At last the matter was explained; and the black coming to guard the frightened horses, I went to look at the body, and making a minute examination, stupified the poor black by crying out that I believed his master was not dead. The poor slave so far forgot himself that he let the horses go, and ran up to his master to be assured that he was not really dead. 'If we only had brandy or whisky,' said I, 'I think he would revive.' Then the black, saying he had brandy at his saddles, ran away again in pursuit of the horses, calling himself by no flattering names for his stupidity in letting the horses go, and almost immediately came upon the high-road, from which it appeared we had been but a little way off when we stopped. He then listened, and catching a

direction indicated, and soon found the poor animals, which were too fatigued to run far, lazily moving along and biting the grass at the roadside. He was soon back again to my assistance; and leaving the horses on the road, with their bridles tied together, he came with a flask of brandy. I had by this time ascertained, by the aid of my lantern, that the black's master had received a severe blow on the head, and a knife-wound in the neck, which appeared to have bled profusely, but that he was still alive, though unconscious. We lost no time in administering the brandy; and before half an hour, we had the satisfaction of seeing the wounded man so far recovered as to be able to speak. We then dressed and bound his wounds, and divesting ourselves of part of our own garments, clothed him, and laid him upon the heather. Here we remained until day began to dawn, when the wounded man appearing so far restored as to be able to bear lifting, we placed him on one of the horses; and the black man walking by his side supporting him, we journeyed slowly onward until near the middle of the day, when we came in sight of a farmhouse, towards which we at once made, and were most hospitably received. Our sad plight was sorely bemoaned; the wounded man was put in a comfortable bed, and had all the care and kindness shewn him that could be given in the circumstances, while I was myself also induced to rest where I was for the day.

The poor gentleman told his story as follows: 'He had loitered longer on the way than he had at first intended, and having arrived about midnight, the first night, at a public-house some twenty miles north of the place where we then were, he spent the night there, and also part of the next day, amusing himself by getting the stories and information of the place. He loitered on the road the second day as he did on the first, so that he did not reach the place where he was found till some hours after dark, though he calculated to have reached that distance by sunset, and the next public-house two or three hours after. On reaching the place alluded to, he was surprised by a number of men springing upon him from the roadside, and demanding his purse or his life. He happened, and, as it turned out, very foolishly, to have a large quantity of money upon him; and not wishing to risk the loss of such a sum in this way, he first remonstrated with the men on the wickedness of their designs, and then offered them five pounds apiece. This appeared to satisfy them, and he was then allowed to pass on. He had not gone very far, however, when apparently, after a second consultation, the men were after him again, and coming up to him, they said they wished to know his name, and immediately he felt a blow on his head, and he remembered no more.' After thus hearing the wounded man's narration, I produced the money found in the bohanári, and rehearsed our own story, and was delighted in thus being guided by Providence to restore the lost property to its rightful owner.

Next morning, I started for the south upon the planter's steed, and attended by one of the farm-servants, to bring the horses back. The black remained to attend to his master, who, having some knowledge of surgery, was able to prescribe for himself until his further recovery should enable him to proceed on his journey. On my way back from Edinburgh, after the meeting of the Assembly,

but found they had gone a few days before. There was, however, a letter left for me, and a packet, which, on being opened, was found to contain all the money that the black and I had recovered from the robbers.

FIELD-MARSHAL VISCOUNT COMBERMERE.

WHEN a very long life closes—a life which has been successful, honoured, and renowned—it is natural that the imagination should please itself in sketching its probable experience, in tracing its vicissitudes, as the biographer records them, and especially in surveying the historical field through which the journey, which has come to an end, has lain. A human life which endured for ninety-two years—nearly a century in the most wonderful period of the history of mankind—a life which had its duties in high command, in war and in council, its place, elevated in the eyes of men—a representative life, with vast opportunities of action and knowledge—is a subject for thought, speculation, and association, from which only the shallow and careless can turn away uninterested and unimpressed. Such length of days is in itself alone wonderful to contemplate. To the very old man, who, like Lord Combermere,* retains his faculties in extreme age, history and politics, the cognate studies which have the most lasting and satisfying charm for the intellect, acquire vast additional interest and actuality. What other men read of, and imagine vaguely, he has seen; the things which have faded, in the rapid rush of events, systems, and discoveries, into the vagueness of tradition, are present and real to him. A retrospective gaze into his own life is as wonderful as to the young student is the sudden realising glimpse attained by intense thought, by long concentrated attention on an era, or an event of the past; but to him sight has been given; to the student, faith alone.

Only a year ago, a fine old soldier, a brave, dutiful Englishman, died at Clifton, in the full possession of his faculties; who, albeit but little given to talking of himself, a reserved man, and one from whom information had to be dexterously extracted, had seen wonderful events, and shared their danger, their glory, and their reward; who had helped to make history, and had seen, in his ninety-two years of existence, more than a couple of centuries in any preceding ages had to show of the real vitality of human affairs, and the true progress of liberty and enlightenment. If Lord Combermere had been, individually, a less remarkable man than he was—had the actual incidents of his career been less striking and interesting than they were, it would still have claimed our interest: the story of the years which had passed over the slight, upright form, only a little while ago familiar to us all—the panorama on the banks between which that stream of life flowed on to the ocean of infinitude. The old man who died last year, full of honours, had seen Dr Johnson, and had had his growth and comeliness commented on by Mrs Thrale, a relative of the Cottons, who 'cut' her when she consulted (and secured) her own happiness by marrying Signor Piozzi. He was

at school at Westminster under Dr Dodd; Southey, Sir Robert Wilson, and Lord Henry Petty, known to our time as the Marquis of Lansdowne, were his contemporaries; Charles Bunbury, and Charles Wynn, afterwards Speaker of the House of Commons, were his chosen friends. Nothing makes us better realise the distance from the present of Stapleton Cotton's boyhood than the account of his father and family removing from their house in Berkeley Square to Combermere Abbey, in Cheshire, when the ladies travelled in a huge coach, drawn by four grays, which Sir Robert drove, the sons followed on horseback, and the cavalcade was three days on the road.

In 1790, Stapleton Cotton got his commission, and proceeded to Ireland, to join the 23d Regiment, or Welsh Fusiliers. His relatives were terribly frightened when they learned his destination. English people in those days had notions of Ireland and Irish society about as correct as those now entertained by ordinary French people, who have heard of an island of that name, are not certain whereabouts it is, but believe the inhabitants to be almost savage; and the reputation of the regiment was as bad as that of the locality. Everybody drank hard in those days, and the army drank harder, especially in Ireland and Flanders. 'Little Cotton,' as Colonel Ormsby (an individual whom the taste of the age called joyous and jovial, but whom we should simply designate as a drunken, ignorant brute) called him, possessed moral courage, and a fine constitution; the one enabled him to resist the contagion of the brutishness then prevalent and fashionable, the other to support the measure of excess to which he did yield, without evil results. He was frank, cordial, possessed of great animal spirits, and he had a success in Irish society. After three years, when it is to be presumed he was seasoned to soldiering, claret, whisky, and flirtation, Stapleton Cotton exchanged into the 6th Carabiniers, and was sent to Bruges. In 1794, he went into action, in 'the affair of Premont,' a forgotten incident of war, his own account of which will be read with interest. On the eve of another war in Europe, it is strange and melancholy to turn to the records of the past, to see how blood and treasure were wasted, and human misery ignored, a thing of no account, and how utterly it all failed to avail—how the old struggle is, beginning over again, to reach again a semblance of cessation, and remembrance age after age. The old man who shall die ninety-two years hence, having been born to-day, what story will his life have to tell, when the sum of it is made up? What sort of thing will the map of Europe be, when his biography shall be written; and what will be the cut-and-dry lessons respecting countries, their rulers, and their governments, set for the children of that generation? His family interest soon procured Stapleton Cotton's promotion, and we find him at Weymouth, a captain in 'Gwynn's Hussars,' as the 25th Light Dragoons were called, attending on George III., and dancing with the Princess Mary, before she became Duchess of Gloucester. The life of the soldier, which began with garrison in Dublin in 1790, and lasted until ten years after the Crimean war, offers a long vista; that of the courtier, which commenced with the days of the Princess Mary's girlhood, and finished with the marriage of the Princess Mary's grand-nephew, long after the worthy old duchess was dead, is not less suggestive.

* *Memoirs and Correspondence of Field-marshal Viscount Combermere, G.C.B., &c. From his Family Papers.* By the Right Hon. Mary Viscountess Combermere, and Captain Knollys. London: Hurst and Blackett.

Forty years of soldiering and governor-general business, and thirty years of gold-stick—what a quantity of trumpery and tinsel, of real power and mock dignity—what intrigues, what miseries, how much grandeur and reality, how much wearisome form and heartless pretence, how much vanity and vexation of spirit, are implied in the mere statement! This was a life passed both on the stage, in the boxes, and behind the scenes—a prosperous, successful, eventful life—not illumined by genius, remarkable because circumstances made it so; with a share of trial and affliction, but only a small share, considering the space it was spread over. One wonders whether it became very fatiguing, whether gold-stick, trembling and shivering in St George's Hall, at ninety years old, but bravely bearing the brunt of court ceremonial, as of battle in days of yore—the yore of half a century—did not consider it dreary work, and long for the endless holiday. The exceptionally great age of the field-marshal and gold-stick is always present to the mind in reading these Memoirs—present, when the 'dandy hussar' (the 'English Murat,' as he has been called, though, if his portrait be a true resemblance, he can never have been comparable in personal appearance to the plebeian royal Adonis, and famous *sabreur*) writes boyish letters, in 1797, to his mother and his aunt, from Madras, in the wonderful, then little-known empire of the East—letters the author of which was to be Commander-in-chief there thirty years later, and to live to hear the great Indian mutiny of 1857 spoken of as a thing of the past, out of eight, in fact, like the siege of Seringapatam or the taking of Bhurtpore.

At Trichinopoly, Colonel Cotton saw much of Colonel Wellesley, his senior by seven years, his unsuccessful rival in the art of dress, wherein, indeed, Colonel Cotton was supreme, being as fond of fine clothes as any woman or negro, and deriving satisfaction from his uniform and decorations to the end of his life. That the Duke of Wellington disliked Lord Combermere when they were both old men, is notorious; that he prevented his being given an earldom, and tried to prevent his being made a privy-councillor, these Memoirs tell us. The probability is that he did not much like the young colonel, so much handsomer, and more elegant, so much more popular, and so incomparably inferior himself. The story of great men's lives affords us curious glimpses of the infinitely little in feeling and principle—the present instance is no exception. The two were breakfasting together, when, after the British victory at Seringapatam, Tipoo Sultan's children were brought in, and Colonel Cotton comforted the little five-year old Gholam Mahomed with sugar. Sixty years afterwards, Gholam Mahomed dined with Lord Combermere, and reminded him of the incident. India was very far off when Tipoo's son was only five years old; but the madness of the French revolutionary spirit had wonderful expansion, and it reached the distant East. When the future hero of Waterloo was inaugurating his splendid career in India, the French officers in Tipoo's army were declaiming at a republican club built in front of the Sahib's palace, surmounted by the cap of Liberty, and where they swore eternal hatred to all sovereigns, 'the citizen Tipoo alone excepted.' Perhaps the Duke remembered this grimly when he had brought back to Paris that 'well-beloved' sovereign, who

shewed such remarkable ineptitude for anything but running away, when he had been made a king, though Monsieur had been a cunning and mischievous schemer enough as Count de Provence. When Colonel Cotton was leaving India in 1799, he bade a friend adieu with the remark that they should never meet again. 'Not until you are Commander-in-chief,' was the reply; and thirty years later, Lord Combermere shook hands with the gentleman in question in Madras, having just arrived in that identical capacity. The recurrence of such coincidences keep the old man ever in our minds; the young man eludes realisation.

In 1802, Colonel Cotton went to Ireland, accompanied by his wife, Lady Anna Maria Clinton, sister to the then Duke of Newcastle, the present duke's grandfather. He had seen the fall of Tipoo Sultan, and had been distinguished first by the familiar regard, and then by the virulent and spiteful enmity of the Prince Regent. Now he saw misery, destitution, class-hatred, vain rebellion, heroic, but wasted enthusiasm and patriotism. Emmett's rebellion was the chief event of his sojourn in Ireland. Then, in 1807, came his young wife's death, and the outbreak of the Peninsular War. He was still a young man when he commanded the Light Division at Talavera, and was made lieutenant-general when he succeeded to his father's baronetcy, when the Duke of Wellington bore public, though probably reluctant, testimony to his judgment and ability; when he returned to England, received the thanks of the House of Commons, and was sent out again to the Peninsula in command of the cavalry. The history of the war until 1810 is his history—grand, terrible, and eventful. The lustre of the Duke's great name throws all others, perhaps unduly, into the shade, and the great achievements of the war were those of the infantry; but throughout it all, Sir Stapleton Cotton's gallantry, and admirable soldierly qualities, were conspicuous.

He was not a man of genius, but he was a man of action, splendidly brave, with a high and inexorable sense of duty, a quick temper, popular manners, a handsome person, dashing bearing, and a kind heart. These are generalities, after all; but he was, if not a great, at least a 'considerable' man. There is no doubt that he sustained a bitter and embittering disappointment by the appointment of Lord Uxbridge to the command of the cavalry, when Napoleon's return from Elba once more plunged England into war. He had been raised to the peerage, and invested with the decorations he prized so highly, before that time; he had married a second time, and had been *fêted*, and presented with public addresses; had had processions got up in his honour, and undergone a variety of things of the kind, which, strange to say, he liked, and continued to like till the end of his life. A simple sort of vanity and love of representation is remarkable in him always. He sat for an equestrian statue, in field-marshal's uniform, when he was ninety, hour after hour, day after day, with patient pleasure; and very likely he regarded the custom which enjoins the interment of military dignitaries of his rank in that uncompromising uniform, with satisfaction. He had rank, wealth, applause, and 'ovations' enough to satisfy a Yankee orator, or a New York mob; but he never got over his mortification at being absent from Waterloo. He could not bear the subject mentioned, so his friends avoided it, and no doubt duly criticised

the weakness which rendered such reticence necessary. He got the command when Lord Uxbridge was incapacitated by his wound, but the game was played out then, the eagle's talons were drawn, and his wings clipped, and the lonely eyrie awaited him. The army came home; the Great Captain began his career as a statesman, and Lord Combermere went out as governor to Barbadoes.

He reached the island in 1817, and left it in 1820. His governorship was not remarkable; he had quarrels with the council, and a good deal of difficulty; but, on the whole, he did well, always doing his duty, according to his lights, which, if not brilliant, were always steady. He was far removed from the gold-stick period, even then, and yet he had seen wonderful scenes and events, and turned a great page in the world's history. In 1822, he was sent to Ireland, as Commander of the Forces, and found society there in a queer condition, but on the whole very amusing, with its pervading flavour of Lord Norbury's brutal wit, and Lady Rossmore's eccentricity. In 1825, he was selected by the East India Company for the command-in-chief in India. 'Send out Lord Combermere; he's the man to take Bhurt-pore,' said the Duke of Wellington, whose confidence was perhaps strengthened by an inclination to get rid of his old companion-in-arms. 'He's not a man of genius,' objected the deputation sent to request the Duke's advice. 'I don't care a d—n about his genius,' replied his plain-speaking Grace; 'he's the man to take Bhurt-pore.' So Lord Combermere went to India once more, and he did take Bhurt-pore, and so turned another, and most important, page in the history of the British empire; and then he enjoyed processions, grand hunting-parties, and so forth, to his heart's content; and kept rather an interesting journal. He was popular in India, and led a delightful life there, until the last year of his stay, when the 'half-batta question' led to quarrels, which have lost all their point long ago, and never had much general interest. He returned to England in 1830; and having been appointed colonel of the First Life Guards in 1829, was made gold-stick on his arrival, by William IV. His active military career closed with his second campaign in India, the second epoch in his life; and still a long term of years lay before him, a term checkered by some domestic misfortunes, but on the whole singularly fortunate.

Lord Combermere did not possess a particle of political ability, but then he did not require to use any. He was a vote, and no more—a traditional, obstinate, bigoted Tory, a most respectable peer, and a valuable and dignified personage at prorogations by commission, openings of parliament, and all kinds of 'spectacles.' He was a devoted adherent of Sir Robert Peel until the 'shocking affair' of the corn laws, and then he was utterly horrified at the great statesman's baseness. The man and the measures contrived to survive the worthy veteran's displeasure and opposition, probably much to his surprise, for, never having been clever, Lord Combermere began, in the third era of his existence, to be stupid. In 1837, Lady Combermere, from whom he had long been separated, died; and in 1838 he married, for the third time, the lady who is his admiring biographer. A foreign tour, with plenty of *fêtes*, and much royal hospitality, belongs to the gold-stick period; and at home, peace, honour, increase of dignity, the office

of Constable of the Tower, and the rank of field-marshal. With all the political events, and all the history of royalty during the present reign, Lord Combermere was intimately associated. The French revolutions of 1830 and 1848, the Crimean War, and the events which have changed the fate of Italy, and led to the new war just beginning, developed themselves under the eyes of the man who had past his first youth before the treaties of Paris and Vienna were made. He was a living link between the past and the present in the history of England—a gallant soldier and a true gentleman. None who read these volumes will deny the meed of respect to the memory of Lord Combermere.

THE RUINED CHAPEL.

No abbots now in ghostly white nor sable,
No choir to rival the angelic songs,
No whispering thunder in low organ-notes,
To thrill with heavenly answers kneeling throngs.

The monks have long departed! shadows now
Fall thick upon the roofless porch and chancel;
Long since the raging king drew angry sword,
The charter of this fallen house to cancel.

No priests nor worshippers are left—ah! vainly
Faith, praying, consecrates her special places;
Time is a cruel heathen, and delights
To leave on sacred things its mouldy traces.

But 'No,' Hope says, for where of old there stood
The altar and God's shrine so loved and treasured,
Comes now the black-bird's ceaseless gladsome hymn,
Poured forth with joy and gratitude unmeasured.

And see, the Elder brings its pure white flowers,
So broad and level, lavish, and so fair,
As offerings to the shattered altar-stone,
That still, though rent and mossy, moulders there.

And still the suppliant wind, its frightened dirge
Moans ceaseless o'er the silent sheeted dead,
Or waits its lingering hymns when winter moons
Are shining cold and brightly overhead.

These little worshippers, the wild-flowers, too,
Sown by the pitying angels, rise and bloom
(Speedwell and primrose) in among the stones,
Nod from the arch, or sway above the tomb.

Nature has pity on man's frailty,
And loves such ruins for their builder's sake,
For the old piety that's gone to dust,
And lies so calmly now beneath the brake.

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THE ULTRA-MARINE.

I KNOW something about hotels in England, both big and little. I have 'put up,' more than once—in the sense of 'to bear, to suffer'—with the accommodation at the *Universal Unlimited*, where you rise in a patent lift, through floor after floor, like a stage-ghost, until you arrive at the seventh—but if they call it a seventh heaven, that's a Story. Who are the people that go about praising such caravansarais? Are they lunatics or paid agents? Or is it for the very love of Lying that folks are to be found to echo that advertisement about 'the conveniences of a hotel combined with the comforts of a home?' Convenience! Comfort! It is said there are two hundred waiters, but 'what care I (as Sir John Suckling sings) how many there be, if there be not one for me?' I have rung and rung up in that attic with the latest improvements, until I have thought nobody could have heard anything but my bell, and yet not one of that 'efficient staff of servants, kept upon every floor,' has deigned to pay the least attention. It is a great satisfaction, doubtless, to some minds to know that there is a Great Chamberlain, with a private sitting-room of his own down-stairs, to superintend such matters; but for my part, I would exchange him gladly for a page-boy out of livery, a maid-of-all-work, nay, a Black, in my more immediate neighbourhood, who would procure me what I want at the first summons.

Similarly, to know that the cook is called a *chef*, and that he has five-and-twenty myrmidons in white caps and white aprons, is not only enough (as it ought to be), but as good as the feast itself which it is their duty to prepare. I, on the other hand, want my meals; and provided that they are good of their kind, and punctually served, I do not care three farthings for the machinery which has produced them. At the *Universal Unlimited*, it invariably happens that 'we are so exceedingly busy just now' that the dinner is considerably behind hand, and the intervals between the courses prodigious; the waiters run on with the dishes as in a pantomime, then hasten away to execute their daily

feat of serving five hundred tables in an hour and a half. Like Falstaff (almost), they are not only waiters themselves, but the cause of waiting in other people. Moreover, if the hall-porter, instead of having a gold band round his cap, and a chair of state with a canopy whereon to sit, could manage to place my letters in my own sitting-room, instead of other people's, and *vice versa*, I should prefer that alternative, even though he performed his duty in his shirt-sleeves. Also, when I want a piece of sealing-wax, or the loan of a pair of slippers, as the case may be, I don't wish to be referred to a Department, as though I were the country at large, and the *U. U.* were the government, because, as we are all aware, that is only a synonym for infinite delay.

I am pretty well acquainted, too, with another sort of Inn called the *Fine Old Crusted, a Family Hotel* which lives upon its Reputation; and I am happy to say has, in consequence, nearly got to the end of it. The principal feature of these establishments is dulness: the flavour that pervades them is dusty, rusty, musty, and fusty. They are most admirably adapted for the convenience of persons belonging to 'much-respected' firms or banking-houses on the verge of insolvency, to end their days by violence. Not only is there nothing to seduce the mind that is bent on self-destruction to cheerfulness, but the furniture and fittings, the demeanour of the attendants, and the hush and gloom of the atmosphere, are most conducive to this fell purpose. Nay, if a person of a lively fancy enter the portals of such an establishment, he very soon gets toned down to the appropriate pitch of genteel melancholy. If the landlady (a widow with a smile that reminds one of the silent tomb) doesn't do it, the head-waiter (formerly an undertaker's man) will do it; and if not they, the amount of the bill will most certainly do it; and you will leave that house sadder and a poorer man. I was at such a family hotel lately, where they charged fourpence for an hour's loan of the *Times* newspaper. I ventured to suggest that the cost-price was but threepence. The widow replied that, in her dear husband's

lifetime, the parlours always paid their fourpence an hour; and, with Heaven's blessing, she would respect his memory, by keeping matters as they were. It was at this place, I think, that they charged the gentleman for the use of plate and glass, who had a tumbler of hot gin and water, and a spoon to stir it with, as he sat upon the coach-box outside the door.

I had had considerable experience of both these classes of hotels, as well as of others of a less ambitious sort; and not without reason, I flattered myself, like Mr Dickens's Dollmaker, that I knew their tricks and their manners. When, therefore, I was told that the *Ultra-marine* at Shingleton was an exception to all British caravansarais in the perfection of its arrangements and accommodation, I smiled good-naturedly upon my enthusiastic informant, and replied: 'Ah!' with significance. I concluded it would only turn out an exception in the sense of proving the rule. But as three of my friends and myself were about to leave London, as was our custom in the early summer, for a week's holiday, with all the world before us where to choose, it was determined, upon the great national principle of holding a man innocent until his guilt is proved, to give the *Ultra-marine* a fair trial: we had also about as much faith in its innocence as the public has in that of any criminal accused of a capital crime—and no more; for we four had tried so many inns in these periodical expeditions of ours—by the seaside and on land, in town and country; and we had no illusions to be disenchanted of with respect to such places.

And yet, so long as we could do as we liked—which proviso was indispensable—and were well housed and fed, we were not difficult to please. Of exalted social position at home, we sank our respective dignities when on these excursions of pleasure; and although the superscriptions upon the letters sent to us through the post remained as usual (and very useful they were in extorting respect, I do assure you), we ourselves were accustomed to address one another in a style somewhat more than familiar. It was our humour to counterfeited a small travelling menagerie, of which the Artemus Ward, or showman, was myself; the rare and valuable animals being, first, a distinguished member of the Alpine Club, playfully designated as the Rum-tum-foozle-um, or Climbing Ape—described (though falsely) by some natural historians as poising himself upon the tip of his tail while wondering at the works of nature; secondly, a prompt and wily individual, with a dangerous glitter in his eye at whist, which betrayed his possession of four by honours (he always held them), and who was termed the Serpent; thirdly, a gentleman of august proportions and constitutional opinions, known in political circles as the Great Conservative Body, but with us affectionately designated as the Performing Elephant, the best tempered and most sagacious creature that it is possible to imagine.

These names came to our lips, of course, as naturally as Jones and Brown to those of vulgar persons; but the listening to them was always a trial to the gravity of the waiters who attended upon us. We were sometimes left wholly without attendance, while they rushed out of the room, and exploded with laughter immediately on the other side of the door; nor could they be induced to return for several minutes, notwithstanding that the Rum-tum-foozle-um would fly to

the bell with characteristic agility, the Serpent flicker (audibly) with his double tongue, and the Elephant trumpet so vigorously as to attract astonished crowds to our open window. These were the only occasions upon which I lost my control over this otherwise truly 'happy family': they would not listen to the voice of their Artemus while kept waiting for their food.

When we read in the train, on our way down to Shingleton, that there was an Archbishop staying at the *Ultra-marine*, we looked at one another uneasily; not that we were not attached to the ecclesiastical Establishment of our native land, or would not have died (so far, at least, as the Elephant was concerned) to have preserved its dignitaries; but should we be able to do as we liked in a house where there was an Archbishop? I saw the Serpent wriggle, and the Rum-tum clutch at the carriage-cradle above his head, as though it would have relieved his mind to climb. But we had engaged our apartments, and it was too late. The *Ultra-marine* is a magnificent house, abutting, nay, overhanging (as its name implies) the deep blue sea. But for it, Shingleton would be nothing; while from its presence it derives Fashion, Fame, Prosperity. Nobody knows how the colossal hotel arose; like most remarkable inventions, its originators are not to be discovered. It is darkly rumoured that they perished beneath the weight of their enterprise, and were mentioned (but not favourably) in the *Gazette*. Then another Company took the matter up, and brought the building to completion: of course, they had no money left wherewith to furnish it, so a third set of speculators took their places at the pumps (for the difficulty in keeping such a Monster afloat was prodigious), and stocked the *Ultra-marine* from garret to basement. But, instead of having done this in the ordinary hotel manner, there is not a single horsehair sofa, nor a convex mirror with an eagle on it, in any of the parlours, nor a wool-mattress on one of the beds. The living-apartments are not mere dining-rooms with a rickety chiffonier added, but are as home-like as it is possible for apartments to be which are not one's own; the sleeping-rooms are provided with all one (or two) can wish, with the exception of rough towels—an omission, doubtless, owing to extreme delicacy of feeling on the part of the Management. The comforts of the Body are of course provided for. There are cold-baths, in whose marble depths you may procure the privacy which is denied you when using the machines upon the beach, and almost the coolness of the spectators; there are warm ones so seductive that they well-nigh persuade one to 'breathe a vein' in them (not, of course, in the marble, but in one's self), and leave the world like a philosopher. There are billiard-rooms, but cut off from the house by double-doors, so that the clergy staying in the hotel should not be scandalised. The best Emotions of the Human Heart are fostered and encouraged. There is a Ladies' Coffee-room, into whose sacred portals it is quite a treat for a bachelor to peep, upon his way to or from his lonely chamber. Finally, the Intellect is not neglected. There is a reading-room, open to every visitor at the *Ultra-marine*, amply supplied with copies of *Chambers's Journal*.

It will easily be imagined that I could not have introduced my Menagerie into the coffee-room, even if they had been willing to enliven its spacious solemnity with their presence; but our

private sitting-room was everything that could be desired.

'Ha, ha! a clock!' ejaculated the Elephant; 'there will, therefore, be no excuse for our meals being unpunctual.'

'A nice table for whist,' murmured the Serpent, 'supposing we were so unfortunate as to have bad weather.' [There was nothing this abominable reptile liked better than rain.]

But the Rum-tum-foozle-um uttered not a word. I attributed this to the flatness of the scenery through which we had lately travelled, for unless this animal perceives hills, he becomes dispirited.

'Come,' said I reassuringly, 'we passed a ruined castle, perched upon quite a precipice, a few miles from this: you shall climb up that to-morrow.'

But the Rum-tum-foozle-um shook his head. 'It is not *that*,' said he. 'But I don't like the gorgeous splendour of this apartment; those fine cut ornaments upon the mantel-piece, and that elaborate sofa: and I tell you what I don't like, my Artemus, I don't like those MAGNIFICENT CURTAINS. Mark my words: *We shall not be allowed to smoke.*'

At this terrible prognostication, the other two members of the menagerie turned as pale as though they had just been smoking for the first time, and the proprietor sank into a spring arm-chair, which, almost under any other circumstances than the present, would doubtless have afforded him comfort.

'Let us know the worst,' remarked I with calmness. 'Ring the bell.'

'I can't,' replied the Rum-tum-foozle-um with a mocking laugh. 'Oh, dear me, but this is a great deal too fine for us.'

He pointed to a placard above the bell-handle, upon which was printed: *This bell being constructed upon the Atmospheric Principle, visitors are requested to pull out the handle as far as it will come, and then press it back sharply.* The faces of the menagerie, including that of its proprietor, upon the receipt of this intelligence, afforded a study for any delineator of the Sublimar Emotions.

'Try it,' cried I, the first to recover myself from the natural stupor induced by scientific information.

'It may be dangerous: try it yourself,' murmured the Serpent doubtfully, and according to my request with the utmost caution. A dull thud, evidently confined to our own apartment, was all that came of it. Irritated by this failure, I seized the recalcitrant knob, pulled it out to its full limit, and let it go. The same dull thud was the reply. Except for the monotony of the sound produced, the whole scene reminded me of Collins's *Passions* in their attempt to play the guitar.

First Fear, his hand, its skill to try,

Amid the chords bewildered laid,

And back recoiled, he knew not why,

Even at the sound himself had made.

Next Anger rushed, his eyes on fire,

In lightnings owned his secret stings,

In one rude clash he struck the lyre,

Which rings not, though it says it rings.

With eyes upraised, as one inspired,

The Rum-tum-foozle-um sat retired,

like Melancholy herself, and could hardly be induced to try his hand at all at what his mind with reason misgave him would turn out to be a most miserable failure.

'Last came Joy's ecstatic trial,' and to the un-lively pipe his trunk addressed. A clear and decisive 'ping' in some region without was the immediate result. Our Elephant had rung the bell! and from that moment (as in most other menageries) this sagacious animal was solely intrusted with that office.

When the waiter appeared, his reply to the great Smoke question was, that there was a Room of splendid proportions fitted up expressly for smoking.

'That means "No,"' murmured the Rum-tum dolefully, as the attendant withdrew. 'I knew how it would be. I must have my pipe in peace in my own arm-chair. I cannot ascend three stories after dinner.'

'Nor I,' said the Serpent viciously. 'I should like to see myself at it.'

'Nor I,' ejaculated the Elephant with a confident melancholy; 'it would be impossible, unless there is a lift.'

'My good creatures,' observed I, rising with the occasion, 'do not be despondent. After food, you will be brave and defiant. We will have our smoke to-night, even if we leave the *Ultra-marine* to-morrow.'

So, after a really excellent dinner, the *entrées* whereof had not previously (as is usual) been handed round at other tables, we ordered coffee; and when the waiter arrived with it, he found us each smoking a pipe, as Mother Hubbard found her dog Tray, and I think he was scarcely less astonished. Nevertheless, our silence and profound puffs, so like the Great War Council of the Qjibbeways, awed him to that degree that he made no verbal remonstrance. Thus our indepenence was proclaimed. Otherwise, had he 'gone to the Manager'—a threat at the *Ultra-marine* for which there is no equivalent in the language of menace—there is no knowing what would have happened. That tremendous personage never presented himself to vision during our stay; but it was understood that, in his private suite of apartments upon the ground-floor, he maintained an almost regal state and splendour. His wife, who was visible in the *Ultra-marine* firmament at certain fixed epochs, was a magnificent person, of affable though stately manners, from whom each visitor received a bow at his arrival, and another (if his conduct merited it) at his departure. And there were two charming young ladies in what the Vulgar would call 'the Bar'—a sort of Crystal Palace in miniature—who smiled and courted to each of us as we came down to breakfast every morning, and made me tremble for my too susceptible charges.

At 11 P.M., the waiter came to ask if we wanted anything more, as the establishment was about to close. The Archbishop had already retired (archbishops' candlesticks, it was whispered, were supplied by the management with a small silver mitre, instead of the ordinary extinguisher); the nobility in the first floor had sought their coroneted couches (an ample supply of coronets being kept in stock); it was therefore fitting, he hinted, that the untitled gentry (for, no letters having yet arrived for us, our rank remained unknown) should retire likewise, and without making the least disturbance.

'I never go to bed till one,' observed the Rum-tum-foozle-um with decision; 'but as I always swarm up the banisters, nobody will hear a foot-fall.'

'As for me,' said the Serpent, 'I crawl upon my stomach, and make no noise.'

The waiter looked at the Elephant. That conscientious animal, well aware that the poet has truly described him as 'the huge earth-shaking beast,' took up his candle, and trotted off up-stairs; while visitors paused at their toilets, and imagined that the night-express was panting in.

'As for me, I must sit up with my two animals,' said I, 'for they are not to be trusted; but I will retire to rest upon all-fours, and with my boots in my mouth.'

By 11.30, the whole establishment was bathed in slumber: the illimitable sea was imitating the *Ultra-marine*; all Shingleton was abed and asleep. In hushed voices, we whispered to one another of our experiences of other inns, and agreed we had never been in such a place before—never. We listened, in the solemn silence of the night, and fancied we detected at intervals the archiepiscopal snore. The situation would have been sublime, but for the cachinnation of the Serpent, who always finds something ludicrous in the arrangements of Good Society. At one, we softly opened the door, and sought the candles that we had seen upon the table outside. There were now no candles. All was space and gloom. What were we to do? We could not carry away our chamberlied with us. We could never find our way to our own apartments in the dark. What if we should wander into the archiepiscopal chamber, and be Excommunicated before we could explain the circumstances! The ticking of the Louis Quatorze clock in the great hall was the only sound to be heard. I touched the Serpent, and felt him wriggle and shake with suppressed malice. 'If you want to laugh, sir,' observed I severely, 'go back to the sitting-room; the Rum-tum-foozle-um and myself will explore the establishment.' We did so. A light glimmered down upon us from the topmost story, and we made for it with caution and without our shoes. I counted thirteen corridors and eleven flights of stairs. It was like Piranesi's dream, as described by De Quincey. At last we perceived that what we sought was only a star shining through the skylight. By 2 A.M. we had got down again. There was a hissing noise in the hall, concerning the nature of which it was impossible I should be deceived. The Serpent was there, and in trouble. Contrary to my express commandment, he had gone gliding about the house in the grateful darkness, when a light was suddenly flashed upon him, and he found himself in the custody of the Night Chamberlain. Our travel-worn appearance, and the boots which we carried in our hands, corroborated our story, and we obtained his release and our bed-candles.

This was the sole misunderstanding that took place between any one of us and the authorities of the *Ultra-marine*: our relations with them grew friendlier and friendlier the longer we stayed. The cooks, both French and English, vied with one another to produce repasts that should receive our approbation, and their efforts were most successful. When they sometimes outdid themselves by the production of some gorgeous sweetmeat that looked more like a Twelfth-cake ornament, or a firework, than something to eat, we never hurt their feelings by leaving it untouched. A large piece was always given to the Elephant, who, if he didn't like it, bolted it whole, and then trumpeted triumphantly. After the third exhibition of this

performance, our waiter was able to remain in the room, pretending to busy himself at the sideboard, with his back towards us, and his shoulders shaking, while the majestic animal bid him inform the cook that the article in question was very good. I think I never laughed so much during the whole course of my life as I did during that week at Shingleton. The proceedings of my animals (which nevertheless, be it observed, are at all times polite and decorous) were so altogether different from those of the *habitués* of the *Ultra-marine*, that they often affected me to tears. When we tore ourselves away at the week's end, and the manageress gave me her plump white hand, like the Queen at a drawing-room, I thought I ought to apologise for their apparent eccentricities. 'The Elephant is young and frolicsome,' said I—that's all. The Serpent is not quite so wicked as he looks. The Rum-tum-foozle-um is a good creature, although so restless.'

'My dear sir,' returned she with a gracious smile, 'we are charmed with all of you. We are a little dull here at times. Your presence has been a great relief to the Archiepiscopal element. We hope to see you again.'

'Madam,' said I, with profound respect, and raising a finger-tip to my lips, 'we shall never go anywhere else.'

And we never shall.

LOSSES AT SEA.

It is still to be proved whether iron or oak is the most buoyant and suitable material for ships, and whether the vessel of Benbow's time, or the mass of metal that now bears our English thunders over the waves, is to be the sea-conqueror of the future. The recent deplorable fate of the *London* has led to many such inquiries, and the thoughts to which it has given rise will long continue to ferment in the minds of our ship-builders and ship-buyers. In seeking greater speed and increased steam-power, we may perhaps have rather lost sight of other qualities equally valuable, and equally needful for the safety and comfort of our sailors. Following out a train of thought into which the late calamity has led so many Englishmen, let us briefly recapitulate a few of the chief shipwrecks and other losses at sea during the last century.

The loss of the *Royal George*, a fine 110-gun ship, in 1782, not in a storm, not by fire, or in the shock of battle, but in a sea calm and without a ripple, excited a great interest in England, and roused Cowper the poet to the production of a ballad that is still read. In her last cruise, the *Royal George* having sprung a leak, was ordered into dock to be examined, and to have some of her copper sheathing removed. She was to be 'careened' at Spithead—that is, to have her guns removed to one side till the damaged part rose above the water. At 6 A.M. on an August morning, the work was begun; and at ten, to remove some more copper, she was lowered another streak. A great part of the crew (nine hundred men) had just sat down to dinner, when a sudden gust of wind coming, forced the vessel lower on her side; the sea poured in at the open ports, and she sunk

in eight minutes. Admiral Kempenfeldt, who was at the time in his cabin, perished, and so also did two hundred and sixteen bumboat women and children who were on board. Of twelve hundred persons in the vessel at the time, about two hundred and ninety were saved by boats, which were kept off for a few moments by the whirlpool round the sinking ship. The *Lark*, a victualling sloop alongside the *Royal George* at the time, also sunk in the eddy, and several of her men were lost. Soon after the catastrophe, numbers of dead bodies appeared floating round the ships at Spithead. The *Royal George* had been condemned, and had only a few months more to float.

Another calamitous and historical wreck was that of the *St George*, ninety-eight guns, one of the fleet sent into the Baltic, in 1811, to convoy merchantmen, Admiral Reynolds commander. The *St George* had been injured by a collision, and was being brought home by two men-of-war, when she went ashore near Cape Ryssestein, on the coast of Jutland. Her guardian-vessel, the *Defence* (seventy-four), first grounded, and went to pieces in half an hour, all her crew perishing but five seamen and one marine, who were saved on spars. The *St George* took ground upwards of eight hundred fathoms from land, as she was trying to anchor. No boats could reach her from the shore, and those lowered from the ship were instantly lost. Only twelve men were saved, and these escaped on planks. When they left, Admiral Reynolds and Captain Guyon, who had refused to leave the vessel, were lying dead on the quarter-deck, surrounded by some five hundred of the crew. Fatigue and cold had struck them one by one. About fifty men were still alive, and their cries could be heard till dark. A part of the mast was cut away, and a raft was also formed, but in vain. Two days afterwards, the gale abating, boats were put off to bring ashore the bodies of the admiral and officers, but the deck had been washed away. Between thirteen hundred and fourteen hundred lives were lost with these two vessels.

The *Earl of Abergavenny*, a noble first-class East Indiaman, of twelve hundred tons, sailed from Portsmouth on February 1, 1805, with other outward-bound vessels, under convoy of the *Weymouth* frigate. The weather was unfavourable, and the wind strong against them. The very first night, the sheep-dog and the flock—the frigate and the convoy—lost sight of each other, and till day broke were out of each other's reach. This was an ominous beginning, but the sailors no doubt attributed it all to sailing on a Friday, and turning the ship's head, ran for Portland Roads. There was less hurry in those days, and no steam to force a vessel through opposing sea and wind. It was a comfortable, easy-going age; and the captain of an Indiaman, laden with precious goods, and bound for a long journey, thought nothing of a few days' delay. On Tuesday (there must have been rough work between the Friday and Tuesday), the Indiaman having a pilot on board, a calm, grave man, who knew every rock, bight, and headland, beat along the Dorsetshire coast, and bore up for Portland Roads; but ebb-tide setting in fast, and the wind being slack (misfortune on misfortune), she suddenly drove on the Shaubles, a rock off the Bill of Portland. There was no alarm at first—no thought of not getting off at the turn-tide—no fear of ever having to take to the boats; so for an hour and a half no guns

made much water, which gained terribly fast upon the pumps. The crew worked hard, endeavouring to bail her at the fore-hatchway, but with little success. In the midst of all this anxiety and excitement, at five, the carpenter went below, and searching about and sounding, returned with a pale, scared face, and reported a great leak, that no pledgets or art of his could stop. Then, and not till then, the huge wounded ship spoke, groaned forth her alarm and distress, with discharge of twenty cannon. Ceaselessly, too, the pumps went; but at six o'clock the loss seemed certain; more leaks were discovered; and to crown the horror and misery, the wind, as if exulting at the mischief, rose to a furious gale. Night, too, had come, and hidden shore and sea. The vessel was settling down fast. At seven, more guns were fired, to call for boats to take off crew and passengers, and king's and Company's troops, who were on board. The *Earl of Abergavenny* was laden with gold. She had seventy thousand pounds in specie, and a cargo of porcelain and other rarities, valued at two hundred thousand pounds. All that must go now, if the one hundred and sixty sailors, fifty passengers, thirty Chinamen, and two hundred recruits, could only be saved. Wordsworth, the captain, was a mild, thoughtful man—called 'the Philosopher' by his friends; and he keeps his head during all this growing danger, in the hopeless, baffling darkness. At eight, the captain sends the purser, the third-mate, and six seamen ashore, to save the valuable papers and despatches. Now, this fortunate third-mate had been loitering on shore with the first-mate when the vessel left Portsmouth, and had been forced by the greedy boatmen to pay forty guineas for a boat to join their ill-starred ship; now they would give one hundred and forty guineas to get clear and safe out of it. One boat of brave Dorsetshire fishermen beat out to them, and clinging for a moment by rope and boat-hook, took off five passengers, and swept off with them securely.

About nine, the water had risen above the orlop deck. The crisis approached, and Captain Wordsworth, in his calm and collected way, had to fulfil a painful duty, and inform the passengers that they must soon perish. The crew, hitherto calm and orderly, broke through all discipline in the despair of that moment, demanded drink; they would die delirious and happy; but the officers withstood the brutal and unworthy craving, and stood armed, with their backs to the door of the spirit-room. Just before the ship staggered in its death-throes, and began to sink, Mr Baggett, the chief-mate, said to Captain Wordsworth: 'We have done all we can, sir—she will sink in a moment;' to which the captain calmly replied: 'It cannot be helped—God's will be done.' He refused all entreaties to save himself, and when last seen, the brave man was clinging quietly and imperturbably to a rope. About eleven, the ship gave a sudden shock and sank backwards, falling first on her beam-ends, in twelve fathom water. Between eighty and ninety persons were at the time clinging to the tops of the masts, and were afterwards taken off. In the agony of the last hour, the sailors had forgotten to get the boats out. At half-past eleven, the shore-boats were hailed by the men still in the shrouds, whom, however, they did not, for some reason or other, try to save. About twelve, a sloop anchored close to the wreck, and saved the wretched men who still remained. The number lost in this terrific

and porcelain was estimated at two hundred thousand pounds. Nothing was saved but some despatches for India, and some valuable prints consigned to General Lake. Captain Forbes and three privates, taken from the wreck, died in the boat that rescued them before they could reach Weymouth, although that place was only two miles distant. Some time after, the spar-deck of the unhappy vessel floated up, with many trunks and light goods.

The *Kent* East Indiaman was destroyed by fire in the Bay of Biscay on the 1st of March 1825. This fine ship, of 1350 tons, had on board a crew of 158 men, 364 soldiers, 20 private passengers, 43 women, and 66 children. The vessel was set on fire by the light from the lamp of an inspecting-officer, which caught some spirit from a stoved-in casket in the hold. Three out of the six boats belonging to the *Kent* were soon swamped, but the most perfect discipline was maintained throughout the whole time of danger; the officers, with swords drawn, superintending the departure of first the women and children, and then of the soldiers and crew. The captain of the *Kent* was almost the last man to drop from the spanker-boom into the boat—nor would he leave his ship till he heard the guns, whose tackle had burst in the advancing flames, explode in the hold, into which they had one by one fallen. Fourteen men who clung to the chains till the masts fell overboard were saved by a Liverpool vessel. The flags of distress were seen waving amid the flames till the masts fell like stately steeples, and the fire reaching the magazine, the charred timbers were blown into the air by a tremendous explosion. Eyewitnesses describe the half-burnt vessel as resembling an immense caldron or basket-work of fire, the blackened planks dark against the flame. Fire was springing from the hatchway, and storms of sparks were scattering to the wind. One man was seen by the sailors of the rescuing boats bound to some spars that were under the ship's counter. He was so close, that as the stern-frame rose with every swell, he was jerked upwards and suspended above the water, only to be scorched by streams of pure flame that shot forth momentarily from the casings of the gun-room ports. On these occasions, the man screamed with agony, till the surge came and buried the stern-frame in the waves. Just as the boat reached the sufferer, the fire snapped the rope that bound him to the spar, and he sunk and was seen no more. It was supposed that the spar had caught by some rope to the keel or rudder-irons, while the other spars had drifted away. It is supposed that above eighty-one individuals perished in the luckless *Kent*.

The *Ocean Monarch*, one of the Boston and Liverpool packets, left the Mersey at daybreak on August 24, 1848, with a crew of 30 men and 366 emigrants and passengers. About 12 o'clock, a yacht from Beaumaris saw the vessel between Orme's-head and Abergyle. Mr Little-dale, the owner of the yacht, was standing with his friends admiring the splendour of the ship, when, to their horror, she suddenly put up her helm, as if she was about to return to Liverpool. Then up went a flag of distress, and a moment after, furious flames broke out from her stern and centre. The yacht could not run alongside the burning vessel because of the sea that was running, but she lowered a boat, and saved thirty-two persons. The Brazilian steam-frigate *Afonso*

also came to the help of the *Ocean Monarch*, as well as several other steamers. The flames were now so threatening that the crew all rushed to the forepart of the vessel. Women with children in their arms jumped into the sea, and men followed. As the fire advanced, driving all before it, the passengers and crew collected on the jib-boom, clinging in clusters as thick as they could pack, and even huddling one upon another in their paroxysm of despair. There was no discipline possible, and the passengers ran distractedly about quite uncontrolled, and hurrying to the most dangerous places. To add to the horror, and just when rescue was near, the foremast fell with a fearful crash, and with its burning spars on the shrieking masses crowded on the jib-boom, which it struck into the water with all those that had taken refuge on it. The captain threw spars to float those overboard, and then, being pressed by the flames, leaped after them, and seized hold of some floating wood. Several men struggling for the same hold, he swam off to another plank, and there remained till the yacht picked him up. The Brazilian frigate, out on a pleasure excursion with the Prince de Joinville and the Duke and Duchess of Aumale on board, came up an hour and a half after the yacht, and anchored to windward of the burning vessel. Her sailors making fast a rope to the *Ocean Monarch*, sent her boats backwards and forwards to save the endangered wretches who lay between the pursuing fire and the expectant sea. A Bangor and a New York steamer also arrived to help in the same good work. The yacht remained till the unhappy bark was burned nearly to the water's edge. The men and women were so close together in the water that the boats could not approach the ship so near as was necessary. Many lives were lost from this singular cause. The brave stewardess perished in attempting to save the powder, which, after all, exploded. The fire left the figure-head and solid timbers of the stem untouched; but the upper works were cleared to the water's edge as clean as if a carpenter's saw had levelled them. As the water stole in, and the burning ship settled down, large volumes of flame rushed forward hissing and crackling. Of the 396 passengers and sailors, 218 were saved, and 178 lost—the majority killed by falling masts. This fire was supposed by the steward to have originated in a careless passenger having made a fire in a wooden ventilator which ran from the third deck to the captain's cabin, mistaking it for a chimney. The captain, however, attributed it to the passengers smoking near crates of earthenware, which was packed in exposed straw. Water was instantly thrown upon the fire, but almost immediately the after-part of the vessel burst into flames. The anchors were instantly let go, to keep the ship to the wind and the fire to the stern. Two boats were also got out, but the cruel fire came on the rest before the lashings could be either loosened or cut.

Losses at sea have been and will continue to be, but their number may be reduced by forethought, care, and increased study of meteorology. Passenger-vessels must not be overloaded; fire-annihilators must be always carried; too great speed must not be sought, to overtax the engines; dead-weight must be prudently distributed. No reckless selfish greed of base men hasting to be rich must be allowed to render our merchant and emigrant vessels less fit than they used to be to

safely brave the dangers of the treacherous element in which our brave sailors get their living, and too often meet their death.

BROUGHT TO LIGHT.

CHAPTER VII.—JOHN ENGLISH'S LETTER.

LATE one August evening, a tall stranger stalked into the bar of the *Hand and Dagger*, and inquired whether he could be accommodated with supper and a bed. Mrs Winch having answered him in the affirmative, he went back to superintend the unloading of his luggage from the fly which had conveyed him from the nearest railway station; and when that operation was concluded, and a short five minutes had been given to his toilet, he re-appeared in the bar, and, at the landlady's invitation, seated himself in the arm-chair by the chimney-corner, pending the preparation of his supper. Would he not like to have a private room? asked the landlady. No, he should prefer taking his meal where he was, provided Mrs Winch had no objection to his company. Mrs Winch had no objection whatever, and would do her best to make him comfortable.

Supper was quickly served, and while the stranger was discussing it, Mrs Winch was enabled to take a mental inventory of his appearance. He was apparently about six-and-twenty years old; very tall—six feet two at least—and strongly built; without an ounce of superfluous flesh, but with plenty of muscle. His skin was very dark, either naturally so, or from long exposure to a hotter sun than ours; his hair was black and crisp, and evidently inclined to curl, but cut too close to allow of its doing so; he had a thick black mustache, and a beard that fell in great rippling waves low down on his chest. His eyes were the same colour as his hair, and extremely bright and piercing; so much so, indeed, that, as the landlady afterwards observed, they seemed to look clean through any one on whom they were steadily fixed. His features were sufficiently regular and well-cut to be considered handsome by most people; but it was the general expression of the man that struck you, rather than any one point of detail; there was something noble and lionlike about him; he looked so strong, and yet withal so gentle, that a child would as instinctively have asked him to mend its broken toy, as a bully would have shrunk from the lightning of those terrible eyes, or the silent menace of that iron arm. When he walked, it was with a free swinging gait peculiar to himself; and in all his movements there was a certain careless dignity which might have graced a Red Indian chief or a sheik of the Desert; and as a true sailor always smacks of the sea, so did he seem to carry with him, wherever he went, a fresh, open-air, breezy flavour that was infinitely refreshing. Although he wore no gloves, and was shod in strong boots, he was unmistakably a gentleman; and that close though unconscious observer of character, the great Jeames himself, never ventured to treat John English with anything but the most profound respect.

Yes, that was his name, John English; and a good name too, he added, as he volunteered the information over supper to Mrs Winch. He was not at all indisposed to talk about himself, as the landlady was gratified to find; for one's curiosity respecting strangers, especially in a little country

place like Normanford, ought never to go unsatisfied; only some people are so stupidly reserved that they never can be induced to talk about themselves or their business. He was a photographer by profession, he went on to say, and was at present engaged by an eminent London firm to go from county to county and photograph the most picturesque and noteworthy architectural features of each shire, especially the houses of the landed gentry, as the basis of a certain great illustrated work which was shortly to appear. He intended to take up his residence at Normanford for a few weeks, as a convenient central spot from which to make excursions to different parts of Monksborough; and if Mrs Winch knew of any clean and respectable lodgings in the little town, he should be glad to receive her recommendation. To-morrow, or next day, he was going up to Belair, to request permission of Sir Philip Spencelaugh to photograph the east wing of the Hall, which—so he had been given to understand—was very old and picturesque, while yet in an excellent state of preservation. And then he got out his portfolio, and proceeded to shew the landlady some specimens of what he had already done in other counties. Mrs Winch was loud in her praises, her knowledge of the photographic art having hitherto been limited to cheap portraits of herself and acquaintances.

By and by, Mr Brackenridge came in, and was duly introduced to Mr John English; and the latter seeing before long how affairs stood between the chemist and the widow, discreetly withdrew; and having lighted his well-worn meerschaum, proceeded to take a quiet ramble through the town, in which, early as was the hour, nearly everybody seemed to have gone to bed. He lingered on the bridge for half an hour, smoking, and listening to the melancholy murmur of the dark stream that ran below, and trying to make out through the starlight the outlines of the different hills by which the little town was shut in from the world; and then back to the *Hand and Dagger*, and so to bed.

The following letters, written a few weeks after John English's arrival at Normanford, and addressed to his friend Frank Mashiter, at that time staying at Nice for the benefit of his health, are here inserted as containing his own impressions of certain people with whom the reader has already some acquaintance, and with whose fortunes those of the young photographer himself were afterwards so strangely interwoven.

MY DEAR FRANK—How long is it since I wrote to you last? Somewhere about a month, I believe; at all events, I know that there is a long letter due to you, and I sit down this wet Sunday evening to conscientiously work off my arrears. Yes, a wet Sunday evening in a little country place where I am almost an entire stranger—such is my predicament at present.

I rejoice heartily, my dear Frank, to find that you are so much stronger than when you left England, and hope, now that the year is so far advanced, that you will stay where you are through the winter, and come back to us, thoroughly rejuvenated, with the swallows in spring. Your account of the old Italian *maestro* and his little household was excellent, and might, I think, be elaborated without much trouble into a tolerable paper for the *Metropolitan*. Send me a full account of what you are engaged on, next time

you write. I am afraid, from the tone of your letter, that you are growing too dreamy and transcendental—that you read too much poetry and see too many dark eyes for your peace of mind. The society of a hard-headed practical fellow like me for a week or two would do you a world of good.

I wish, *cher ami*, that I possessed your ready pen, your easy flowing style, your happy knack of putting down whatever you wish to say without any apparent effort. To me, writing is hard work; my thoughts move crabbedly; my style is no style at all, but a series of angular jerks without grace or unity of design; my fingers feel far more at home with a rifle between them than they do when handling a pen. I trust, therefore, sir, that you will value my lucubrations all the more when you consider under what difficulties they are written.

Why I wish for your pen at this time more than another is, that it might assist me to state clearly certain particulars which I wish to lay before you, without exactly knowing how best to set about doing so.

I came to Normanford three weeks ago, an utter stranger to the place. I was captivated with it at the first view, and determined to make it my headquarters for some time to come, especially as I knew there was some good fishing to be had in the neighbourhood, and my work was so far ahead that I could spare a few half-days without detriment to the interests of anybody. After passing a couple of nights at the only tolerable hotel in the place, I engaged my present lodgings—two rooms *en suite* in the house of a decent widow body, who does her best to make me comfortable. Normanford does not, I imagine, contain over a thousand or twelve hundred inhabitants, but its situation is more picturesque and romantic than that of any other English town with which I am acquainted. It lies in the hollow of a most lovely valley, three or four miles in length, but nowhere very wide, shut in on both sides by hills wooded to their very summits, which here and there are split as by some great movement of nature countless ages ago; road and river in many places wind in and out between huge precipices of rock that impend grimly on either hand.

Every little country town in England has its great man, to whom it looks up with reverence, on whom it is more or less dependent, and who sways its destinies in a greater or lesser degree; and Normanford is no exception to the rule. The great man to whom it touches its cap respectfully, not to say obsequiously, is Sir Philip Spencelaugh of Belair—a personage of great wealth and blameless life, who can trace back his pedigree almost to the Flood. Although only a baronet, he is quite as important a personage in Monksshire as my Lord Clopford himself, whose title only dates back to the reign of the Second Charles, and whose castle, some dozen miles from here, is the great show-place of the county. The greater portion of the property in the neighbourhood of the town belongs either to the owner of Belair, or to his niece, who is said to be even richer than he is, and who is young, charming, and unwedded; but of her more hereafter.

Before proceeding to give you an account of my reception at Belair, and the events which followed it, I must go back to the date of my arrival at Normanford, and deal first with certain occurrences,

trifling in themselves, perhaps, but possessed of a singular interest for me, as throwing an unexpected ray of light on the great mystery of my life.

I have already stated that my first two nights in Normanford were spent at its principal hotel, a great rambling place, a relic, I suppose, of the old coaching-days, many of its rooms being now denuded of furniture, and entirely unused. It is widely known under the sign of the *Hand and Dagger* (part of the armorial cognizance of the family at Belair), and is kept by a widow of the name of Winch, a tall, angular, hard-featured woman, with slaty eyes, and a most determined-looking mouth. She is not, however, too far advanced in life to have lost all hopes of matrimony, her 'intended,' who came in, and to whom I was introduced, in the course of my first evening, being a chemist of the name of Brackenridge, who keeps a shop in the town. He is much younger than the widow—not over thirty, I imagine—and is a stoutly-built man, with huge sandy whiskers, and a face that would be handsome if it bore fewer traces of premature dissipation, and were less cynically defiant in expression. What his object is in seeking the hand of the landlady of the *Hand and Dagger*, it is not, I think, difficult to opine; but the widow's eyes are evidently blind to all his imperfections. He seemed disposed to fraternise with me, but beyond the barest civilities, I would have nothing to do with the fellow; he is one of those people to whom I take an antipathy at first sight—it may be prejudice on my part, but I can't help it—and I soon wandered out to smoke a solitary pipe.

I was just finishing breakfast next morning, which had been laid for me in the landlady's own little snugery, when I heard a voice call loudly outside: 'Jerry! Jerry!' Merely those two words: ridiculous words you will probably call them, but I cannot tell you how strangely I was moved at hearing them. Yes, they thrilled me through and through, and my memory seemed to go back to some far-distant time when I had heard those very words repeated, and that by a woman's voice. I sat for a moment or two like one petrified. Happily, I was alone; there was no one to observe how strangely I was affected. Where and when had I heard those words before? I asked myself the question again and again, but without being able to arrive at any satisfactory conclusion. You know something of the mystery that surrounds the history of my early years, and how anything that seems to touch, however remotely, upon that time has for me an indescribable fascination; and I could only conclude, that to some vague recollection of that period which still lingered faintly in my memory, was due the sense of unfamiliar familiarity, if I may use such a term, with which the repetition of those two words affected me.

But who was 'Jerry?' I got up from the table, and lighted my pipe, and wandered out towards the back premises of the house on a voyage of discovery. How I progressed, I will tell you to-morrow; for the present I am tired—so, good-night, and pleasant dreams.

CHAPTER VIII.—THE LETTER CONTINUED.

I walked through the long flagged passage leading to the back of the house without encountering any one, and was just about to enter the yard, when

glancing through one of the side-windows, I saw a sight which brought me to a stand. Sitting astride a wooden bench, placed full in the warmth of the morning sun, was one of the strangest figures I have seen for a long time—a youth of eighteen or twenty, with features that were almost feminine in the delicacy of their outline, but freckled and burnt by the heats of summer; and with long tangled elf-locks, in colour a pale yellow, falling low over his shoulders. On the ground near him was an old felt hat, gray and napless, in shape like a sugar-loaf; and on the other side of him, a steaming bowl of oatmeal porridge, waiting till it should be cool enough to be eaten. But what took my attention most was the singular way in which he was occupied. He was playing one of those long tin whistles, the like of which may not unfrequently be seen among the *gamins* of London, and the music he elicited from it was such as I could not have believed so rude an instrument capable of producing. What the air was, I know not. It was one that I had never heard before—weird and melancholy, and for anything I know to the contrary, may have been improvised by himself. Over the bench in front of him was spread a piece of green baize, on which two large vipers were now placed, which swayed their heads slowly to and fro as he played, darting their long tongues here and there with every movement, and seeming mightily pleased with their master's shrill music. I stood for three or four minutes a silent spectator of this singular scene. At length, the youth ceased playing, and turned his head to look after his porridge, and as he did so, I saw, with a thrill of sorrowful surprise, that he was an idiot. No—that is too strong a word; he was what the Scotch call 'daft,' and Yorkshire folk 'soft'—in fact, a harmless simpleton, with three grains of sense in his head to one of foolishness. His eyes told the story of his misfortune at once; and yet they were beautiful eyes, large and bright, but with an expression in them beyond my skill to analyse.

'Jerry will catch thee a nice fat mouse to-night, my beautiful Mogaddo,' he said, apparently addressing one of the reptiles. 'But as for thee, my little Pipanta, thou shalt go supperless to bed; thou art getting too lazy to dance to thy lord's music, and thou must be punished. Jerry dreamt last night that he was king of the monkeys, and lived in a grand palace; and the monkeys were masters of everything; and all the men and women that were left in the world ran wild in the woods. And King Jerry, and his lords and ladies, went out hunting them; and it was rare sport to see how the men ran and hid themselves among the bushes, and to hear them roar with pain when our arrows took them in a tender part. And why shouldn't the monkeys be masters for the next thousand years, I should like to know? They would be a far jollier lot of fellows to live among than these miserable two-legged creatures that have it all their own way now. Beautiful Venus and red Mars would shiue just as brightly if all this was to happen to-morrow. What would it matter to them? But Jerry wants his breakfast. When he is sultan of the apes, thou, Mogaddo, shalt be his grand vizier. Hoo-hoo-hoo!' and he ended his speech with a wild crackling laugh, such as no sane being could have given utterance to, and then fell to work ravenously on his porridge; while his two pets coiled themselves up on the green baize, and basked lazily in the grateful warmth of the sun.

This, then, was the Jerry whose name, when called aloud, had startled me so strangely. 'Good-morning, Master Jerry,' I said as I advanced; 'you seem to be enjoying your breakfast.' The poor lad started at my sudden appearance, and stared up in my face with a touching, wistful look, as though deprecating any possible anger on my part. 'Sahib Mogaddo, too,' I said, turning to the larger of the two vipers, 'seems to relish the bright sunshine;' and as I spoke, I seized the reptile with my left hand by the tip of its tail, and running my right hand quickly up its back, grasped it tightly with my thumb and finger, just behind the head, and so held it, powerless for injury, while its body twisted and untwisted itself rapidly round my arm. 'I met thy uncle one day on the banks of the Ganges, and thy grandfather among the Mountains of the Moon, and each of them sent thee a message,' I continued, addressing myself to the viper; and with that I mumbled over a few sentences of Arabic which I had picked up during my travels; while Jerry looked on with a silent awe, his nether lip trembling with nervous agitation. Afraid, apparently, lest I might treat Pipanta in the same unceremonious way, he hastened to seize the smaller viper, and put it away in a box which he drew from under the bench; and I was by no means sorry to deposit Mogaddo in the same place of security. Jerry was evidently disposed to regard me with reverence, if not with absolute fear: that any one should be on speaking-terms with his favourites, and introduce himself to them as a family friend, was something altogether beyond the narrow range of his experience. Where might the knowledge of this mysterious stranger be expected to stop? So, to shew the depth of respect in which he held me, he proceeded to favour me with a series of old-fashioned rustic bows, running the open palm of his hand close up by his face, and then bringing it down through the air in a sweeping curve almost to his feet. 'Jerry hopes that your Lordship has salubrity of health, this saffron-tinted morn,' said the poor lad. 'He is your Highness's most complaisant and obedient slave. My lord Mogaddo and his bride, the beautiful Pipanta, are your slaves. We know nothing, and the master, to whom everything is known, holds the key of our destiny.'

What answer I should have made to this high-flown tirade, I cannot say, but at this moment Mrs Winch entered the yard. 'Good-morning, sir,' she said. 'I perceive that you are making the acquaintance of my poor boy. Heaven, for some wise purpose, has seen fit to afflict him, but he is none the less dear to a mother's heart: it may be, indeed, that I love him more than I should do were he the same as others;' and the widow bent and kissed her son's forehead fondly. But Jerry was again ravenously intent on finishing his breakfast, and seemed to have no attention to spare for either his mother or myself. The widow signed to me to follow her. As soon as we reached her little parlour, she turned to me and said: 'Last night, sir, in the course of conversation, you mentioned that you were a photographer by profession. Would it be too great a favour to ask you to take the portrait of my poor boy some day when you may have a little spare time? It is what I have desired to have—a good one I mean—for a long time. I will pay you whatever you may choose to ask.'—'I will take your son's portrait with pleasure,' I replied (and so I would have

done, for it isn't every day that one has an opportunity of adding such an original to one's gallery); 'although portraiture is out of my usual line of business, and I only dabble a little in it occasionally, and that merely for my own amusement; still, in the present case, I will gladly do my best to give you satisfaction; and as for the expense, we will talk about that some other time.'

I was away at Eastingham all that day on matters of business, and did not get back to the *Hand and Dagger* till close upon eleven o'clock. 'Mr Brackenridge and I have been talking about photography this evening,' said the widow to me as I lingered over my last pipe. 'He tells me that by its means copies of fading portraits may be taken, and that thus the features of those who, when living, were dear to us may be perpetuated for years after the original likeness has become blurred and unrecognisable with age. Will you, sir, kindly tell me whether this is so or not?'—'What Mr Brackenridge told you is to some extent true,' I replied. 'Pictures can, of course, be photographed just as any other object can; but the brighter the picture is, the clearer will the photograph of it be: a dim picture will yield but a dim copy through the camera. But you had better let me see any portrait that you may wish to have photographed, and I can then judge better as to its capabilities for coming out well under the process.'

—'I am really ashamed, Mr English, to trouble you about such a trifle,' said the landlady, 'but I have, up-stairs, a portrait of my brother, which has, unfortunately, been hung for some time in a damp room, and I now find that the colours are fading rapidly, and that in another year or two it will look nothing more than an unmeaning daub.'—'Let me see the portrait,' I said; 'something can be made of it, I have no doubt.' The interest I shewed in the matter evidently pleased her; she rose with a gratified air, and went at once to fetch the picture. She came back with it almost immediately, and laid it on the table before me. It was a poor thing enough—a Kit-cat, done in water-colours, in that florid style of art so popular among a certain class about the time that you and I were born. But scarcely had I set eyes on it before I recognised it as the portrait of a man whom I knew when I was a child—of a man whose rugged and strongly-marked face I have but too much reason to remember; and the same instant there flashed across my mind the very time, place, and circumstances under which I had heard those two words: 'Jerry, Jerry,' called aloud many years ago, the sudden repetition of which had so startled me that very morning. Yes, that man on whose portrait I was now gazing was the very man to whom those words were addressed. The whole scene rose before me in a moment, as clear and vivid as one of my own photographs. Here it is. Daybreak on a bitterly cold morning. A man is riding away from the door of a little house in a little, shabby country town—not an English town—and mounted behind him, with his arms round the man's waist, is a lad of nine—your friend John English, to wit, only his name wasn't John English then. They are riding slowly down the silent street, when a shrill voice behind them calls 'Jerry, Jerry.' They both look back, and see a white-faced woman standing in the doorway of the house they have just left, earnestly motioning to them to return. But the man only mutters a curse, and digs the spurs into his horse, and the sparks fly out of the flinty road-

way as the animal springs suddenly forward; and as they turn the corner of the street, the boy, still looking back, sees the woman's clasped hands flung up suddenly above her head, as though in prayer or invocation; and then she passes from his sight for ever; and the man and he ride wildly on for what seems to the lad a terribly long time, till at length the latter drops asleep from very weariness, and is only kept from falling by the belt which fastens him to his companion; and when he awakes, it is to find himself in a strange place, and among strange faces, and to be told that he will never see the man who brought him again, whereat he is not sorry.

Such was the picture, my dear Frank, which the sight of that faded old portrait brought back so vividly from the dim recesses of my memory. It was all that I could do to retain my self-possession under the keen eyes of the widow, while pretending to be making a close examination of the painting. The beating of my heart, for a minute or two, seemed to deafen me; strange lights danced before my eyes; the room, and everything in it, except that stern-faced woman before me, seemed to fade into unreality; and it was as though I, John English, were looking down upon some other man, who sat there in sad perplexity, not knowing what to do next. But a question from the widow soon recalled my scattered wits. 'Well, sir, what is your opinion?' she said. 'Do you think that anything like a tolerable photograph can be taken of it?'—'Undoubtedly,' I said. 'A person who understands his business well might, with care, obtain a very fair reproduction.' I said this more to gain time than for any other reason; and my next remark had the same end in view. 'If I remember rightly, Mrs Winch, you stated that it was the portrait of your brother?'—'Yes,' she said rather plaintively, 'the portrait of a very dear brother, who died many years ago. My poor boy is named after him.'

Her boy named after him! If any doubt had previously existed in my mind as to whether my memory were playing me false, these words would have been sufficient to remove it; but even so, I determined to extort further testimony from her, if it were possible to do so. 'Yes, Mrs Winch,' I said, 'if you will intrust this portrait into my keeping, I will engage to make you a very excellent photographic copy of it. But do you know, the more I look at it, the more it gives me the impression that it is the portrait of a man who walked with a limp—of a man one of whose legs was shorter than the other. Ridiculous, of course, but that is the idea it gives me.' As I said these words, I looked full and unflinchingly into the widow's eyes. Her face blanched to a dull deathly gray before I had done speaking, while the firm fire of her eyes quailed and flickered, and then fell utterly before my gaze. Her thin lips tightened over her large white teeth; her breath came and went rapidly; and her long thin fingers closed unconsciously over the wine-glass which she happened to be holding at the time, and crushed it to fragments in their convulsive gripe. She got up without a word, and stretched out her arms, and drew the picture to her, like a woman in a state of somnambulism, and then turned and walked slowly from the room. But when she reached the doorway, she stopped; and her head came slowly round, as though it were worked by mechanism, till her eyes met mine with one brief fiendish look of mingled hate and fear,

which, if looks possessed the power of annihilation, would have withered up your poor friend on the spot. I saw the widow no more that night.

I was too much excited to sleep, and sat by the open window of my bedroom, smoking and thinking till daybreak. How can I set down, how make you comprehend, even a tithe of what I thought as I sat there? Some vague outline of my history is already known to you, and one of these days I will fill in the details, and colour the picture for you; but even then, you will but faintly realise my state of mind on that night, when I deemed I had found the key that would unlock the dark mystery in which, as in an iron chest, hitherto to me impenetrable, lay hidden the secret of my early life.

I encountered Mrs Winch at the foot of the stairs, as I was coming down to breakfast next morning. I thought she looked paler than usual, but her demeanour was as quiet and impassive as it always was. 'You must have thought me very rude last night, Mr English,' she said with a smile. 'I believe I actually snatched my brother's portrait out of your hands, and left the room without a word. Pray, accept my apology for such ill manners; to explain which, I must tell you what is well known to my intimate friends, that I am subject to sudden attacks of vertigo, combined with sickness. Feeling the premonitory symptoms of an attack last night, I hastened to leave the room while I had still some control over my actions. The act of seizing the picture was merely an instinctive impulse to reclaim what I value so highly, and at the moment I was only half conscious of what I was doing. You will pardon me, will you not?'

What could I do but utter some commonplace phrases of civility that meant nothing? In my secret heart, I believed that the woman was lying to me; her tone carried no conviction with it: and again, how could I believe her in face of the fact that I had certainly recognised the portrait of the man she called her brother, and that her sudden illness declared itself exactly at the moment when she became aware of such recognition on my part? No—there was certainly something more in the case than was just then visible on the surface; and it was equally as certain that I had made this woman my enemy; in those cold gray eyes, and that set, colourless face, I read a strength of implacability that might well have made a nervous man tremble in his shoes. Happily, I am not nervous, and rather enjoy the fact of having an enemy than otherwise; it is like caviare, and gives a zest to an otherwise insipid *plat*; for, after all, life is insipid in this dull conventional England. Still, I think a man had better have six enemies of his own sex, than have one woman against him who has the power and the will to work him harm. (N.B.—Do not suppose from this that I am afraid of the widow.)

'I think, Mr English, I heard you mention yesterday that you intended going up to Belair this morning?' said Mrs Winch interrogatively, as she brought in my coffee herself.—'Such is certainly my intention,' I replied. 'If you will permit me, sir, to give you a word of advice,' continued the landlady, 'I would recommend you to go, in the first instance, to Lady Spencelaugh rather than to Sir Philip. The baronet is in very delicate health at present, and all power is vested in the hands of her Ladyship, a word from whom to Sir Philip would at once insure the success of your mission.

By the by, while I am here, I may as well tell you that Mrs Jakeway, of Cliff Cottage, has got two very nice rooms to let, which I think would suit you exactly. I intend writing her a note presently, which I will send down by Jerry; and you, sir, will perhaps be good enough to step in as you go through the town on your way to Belair, and see whether the apartments are to your liking.'

All this certainly seemed very kind and plausible on the part of the widow, but I am afraid I scarcely felt sufficiently grateful for her good offices; in her demeanour towards me there was a sort of insincerity impossible to analyse, but none the less certainly there.

When the girl who ordinarily waited upon me came in to remove the breakfast things, she told me that her mistress had just received a telegram, which had been brought express from the nearest railway station, about six miles away, informing Mrs Winch that her mother was dying, and that if she wished to see her alive she must start by the first train without fail. The girl added, that the news had affected her mistress a good deal, but that the first thing Mrs Winch did after hearing it was to write and send off two notes, one addressed to Lady Spencelaugh of Belair, and the other to Mrs Jakeway of Cliff Cottage; and that everything was now hurry and bustle in the house, to enable her to get off in time to catch the train.

'I have sent a note down to Cliff Cottage,' said Mrs Winch when she came in, a few minutes later, to bid me good-bye. 'I think you will find the rooms to your liking;' and with that she went, and I saw her no more for nearly a fortnight.

A note for Lady Spencelaugh of Belair! Was Mrs Winch, then, on such familiar terms with her Ladyship that she could presume to write to her? But what business was it of mine if she chose to write fifty notes? Probably it was nothing more than a bill for ale or wine supplied to the Hall. And yet, do what I would, I could not get the idea out of my head that the Landlady's note had reference in some way to my approaching visit to Belair.

I found Cliff Cottage without difficulty. It was pleasantly situated on the outskirts of the town, and formed one of two small semi-detached houses standing quite alone in gardens of their own. The other house, as I was not long in learning, was tenanted by Brackenridge the chemist, whose shop was half a mile away in the town. Mrs Jakeway was a clean, apple-faced, motherly little woman, brisk and busy from morning till night, with an intense pride in her neat little house, and a pardonable weakness on the subject of chimney-ornaments and anti-macassars, of which articles she possessed sufficient to stock a house six times as large as her own. 'Law bless you, sir!' she said, when I had introduced myself and made known my business, 'why, I had a note from Mrs Winch only half an hour ago, telling me, I suppose, that you were about to call, and that you were a respectable gentleman; but I can see that well enough by your looks: I've not lived in the world all this time without having my eyes about me; and if the rooms suit you, I shall be very glad, and will do my best to make you comfortable.'

'But if you have received Mrs Winch's note, you of course know what she says,' I replied.

'No, that I don't,' answered the little woman, as sharp as a needle; 'for, as it happens, I mislaid

my spectacles this morning, and I might just as well try to fly as to read that scrawly spider sort of writing without 'em. I know the note was from Mrs Winch, because Jerry brought it. Here it is, sir, and I shall take it as a favour if you will just read it out aloud, and let us hear what the widow has to say. A very decent respectable woman is Mrs Winch, and everybody in Normanford will tell you the same thing.'

She held out the note as she spoke. 'But there may be something in it,' I remonstrated, 'intended for your eye alone.'

'Don't you think anything of the kind, sir,' said the little woman emphatically. 'There's no secrets between Mrs Winch and me; and I shall just take it as a favour if you will read it out aloud.'

She was so urgent on the point that I could not well refuse to comply with her request; so I took the note, carelessly enough, and opened it, never dreaming for a moment that it was anything other than what Mrs Jakeway imagined it to be—a simple recommendation of myself as a tenant for the vacant rooms at Cliff Cottage. But it was something very different indeed, as I saw at once when I had made myself master of the spiky irregular hand in which it was written.

It was the note intended for Lady Spencelaugh, which had been enclosed by Mrs Winch in the wrong envelope!

It ran as follows: 'DEAR LADY SPENCELAUGH—Be on your guard against the stranger who will come up to Belair to-day to ask permission to take some photographs of the Hall. Refuse his request, and do not allow him to see Sir Philip. *He is dangerous.* He knows something, but how much or how little I cannot at present tell. I am unable to see you, having just been summoned to the bedside of my mother, who is dying.—Your Ladyship's devoted M. W. Burn this when read.'

I sat staring at the letter like a man in a dream, till Mrs Jakeway's shrill voice recalled me to the necessity of explaining my silence. 'A nasty awkward hand to read, ain't it, sir?' said the old lady. 'Folk now-a-days seem to try how badly they can write.'

'Pardon me, Mrs Jakeway,' I replied very gravely, 'but Mrs Winch has evidently made a mistake in sending this note here. It is intended for Lady Spencelaugh, to whom the note for you has probably been sent. If you will oblige me with a light, some sealing-wax, and an envelope, I will at once enclose it to the writer, and your maid can take it down to the *Hand and Dagger* some time in the course of the day.'

I think it probable that the old lady would have demurred to my summary disposition of her note, but I spoke so authoritatively, and looked so grim and determined, that she was frightened into submission, and got me the articles I wanted without a word. I addressed the envelope to Mrs Winch, and marked it with the word *Private*, and wrote inside, 'With Mr John English's compliments: sent in mistake to Cliff Cottage'; and then enclosed the note, and sealed it up in the presence of Mrs Jakeway, who looked on in wondering silence, and promised faithfully that it should be delivered at the hotel in the course of the day. 'If the mistress of the *Hand and Dagger* and I are to be enemies,' I said to myself, 'the warfare on my side at least shall be fair and above board.'

Having completed all needful arrangements

with regard to my apartments, I set out for Belair with a heart that beat more high and anxiously than usual. What did that woman mean by saying that I was dangerous? I, at least, was ignorant of my own power for harm. And why should I be dangerous to Lady Spencelaugh, of all persons in the world, of whose very existence I was utterly ignorant three days before? Into the heart of what strange mystery was I about to plunge? Vain questions, but pondered so deeply as I walked up to Belair, that I had no eyes for the beautiful scenery through the midst of which I was passing.

How I sped at Belair, I must leave for another epistle. This one is so unconscionably long, that I am afraid you will never wade to the end of it. Write soon, old boy, and let me have a good account of your health. *Vale.* Ever thine,

JOHN ENGLISH.

CRITICAL BLUNDERS.

AN action for libel of a somewhat unusual nature was lately tried in London. An evening paper, in recording the first night's performance of a certain drama, stated that the part of one of the principal actors 'was most efficiently spoken by the prompter.' The actor whose memory was thus called into question naturally considered his professional character must suffer if the statement was allowed to pass uncontradicted; and, failing in obtaining a retraction from the offending journal, sought his remedy in a court of law. The writer of the critique repeated the obnoxious statement in the witness-box, and was supported by the author of the piece; on the other side, the prompter himself and the actors engaged in the performance declared that the plaintiff was letter-perfect, and the jury awarded him five guineas as a salve for his wounded feelings.

Player and critic seldom appear thus as plaintiff and defendant; a circumstance not to be wondered at, since modern theatrical critics, it must be owned, are very chary of fault-finding, as a rule preferring to deal out praise with more liberality than discretion—the ink they use has but an infinitesimal modicum of gall in it, if that ingredient has not been omitted altogether. Once upon a time, it was very different, the dramatic writers for the press handling their pens after a less gingerly fashion than is common now-a-days. Fancy the commotion there would be in a modern green-room if the *Times* took to sunning up theatrical performances in this style: 'Last night, Farquhar's sprightly comedy, the *Constant Couple*, was most barbarously murdered at Drury Lane. The lively knight was reduced by Elliston to a dull piece of affectation. Clincher was altogether lost in the hands of Bannister; it approached Farquhar as nearly as the frog in the fable resembled the ox. Miss Mellon was not thoroughly unpleasant in her representation of Angelica; but criticism has not language severe enough to deprecate the impertinence of Barrymore presuming to put himself forward in the part of Colonel Standard. We were scarcely less offended with Dowton's attempt at Alderman Sniggles; it was only not absolutely the worst thing we ever saw.' This pretty specimen of the gentle art of criticism appeared in a paper called the *British Neptune*, and great was the wrath of the actors so mercilessly castigated; their anger not being the less furious because the performance so bitterly assailed had never taken place, the sudden illness of Elliston

having necessitated the substitution of another comedy in place of the *Constant Couple*. Elliston was not a man to submit quietly to such an uncalled-for attack, and he had not much difficulty in persuading his fellow-sufferers to join him in taking legal proceedings against their libeller; but, knowing he had no case at all, the proprietor of the *British Neptune* wisely compromised matters by paying all expenses, and handing over fifty pounds to the Drury Lane Theatrical Fund.

The practice of writing critiques before instead of after the performance criticised (less uncommon, perhaps, than might be supposed), however convenient it may be, is undoubtedly a very risky practice, seeing that theatrical and musical programmes are especially liable to sudden and unannounced changes, calculated to bring the too imaginative critic to grief when he least expects it. Such was the fate of the gentleman who, years ago, wrote in the *Morning Herald*: 'We were extremely gratified on Tuesday evening at Covent Garden Theatre to hear that Mr Sinclair had attended to our advice, and that his adoption of it was eminently serviceable to his professional character. In executing the polacca, he very prudently abstained from any wild flourishes, but kept strictly to the laws of melody, by which he was encored three times by the universal desire of the whole audience.' It is possible that the popular vocalist may have taken his critic's advice to heart, and resolved to forego indulging himself in wild flourishes; and if the opportunity had been afforded him, he might possibly have earned the extraordinary compliment of a triple encore. Unfortunately, neither singer nor song was heard at all that night on the boards of Covent Garden; and the critic had small reason to congratulate himself upon adopting the rule of Captain Absolute's too ready-witted man, who, whenever he drew upon his invention for a good current lie, always forged endorsements as well as the bill, in order to give the thing an air of truth.

The *Herald* seems to have had an unhappy knack of selecting gentlemen of this adventurous turn of mind. When the Piccolomini was attracting musical London to the old Opera-house by her winning portrayal of the heroine of *La Traviata*, the curiosity of opera-goers was piqued by the announcement of a rival Violetta at Covent Garden, in the person of Madame Bosio; but when the night came which was to bring the respective merits of the two great prima donnas to the test of comparison, circumstances compelled the postponement of the trial. The disappointed audience must have been more astonished than edified at the appearance next morning in the above-named newspaper of a highly panegyric criticism of Bosio's Violetta. The conscientious writer, after describing the deep pensiveness pervading the performance, declared it was not surprising that the first representation of *La Traviata* at Covent Garden should have achieved one of the most remarkable successes of the season, Madame Bosio having, by her admirable rendering of the heroine, taken a new lease of fame. Descending to details, the critic says: 'Perhaps Madame Bosio never sung so admirably as she did last night. Her first aria was sung to perfection. . . . In the duet with Germon, and the finale to the second act, she created a profound impression by her energy and feeling. Mario surpassed himself. . . . The recalls of

Madame Bosio and Mario were numerous during the performance, and at the conclusion the usual ovation was paid to the lady and gentleman. Doubtless the critic was satisfied with his production, and considered, as an exercise of the imaginative faculties, it was not bad; his editor, however, took a very commonplace view of the matter, and the following paragraph appeared in a prominent place in the next issue of the paper: 'The report of the performances of *La Traviata* which appeared in a portion of our impression of yesterday, was altogether incorrect, the *Traviata* having been postponed in consequence of the illness of Signor Graziani. We are compelled to confide in the honour of our reporter in all such matters, and therefore we have felt it our duty to at once dispense with the further services of the writer of the pretended critique.'

A now defunct literary periodical was guilty of a comical blunder. Just a couple of days before a *Tale of Two Cities* was brought out at the Lyceum Theatre, the *Critic* informed its playgoing readers that 'the sole event of any moment which has taken place in the metropolitan theatres during the past week, is the production of Mr Tom Taylor's dramatised version of Mr Dickens's *Tale of Two Cities*, but as it has been even more unsuccessful than similar attempts to convert a novel into a piece usually are, we shall refrain from any detailed criticisms;' which was wise under the circumstances. The manageress of the Lyceum thought this prophetic condemnation a little too bad, and gave the public a bit of her mind on the subject through the medium of the daily press; and being a popular actress, her complaints were endorsed by the newspapers, and some rather hard words flung at the offending weekly. The editor of the *Critic*, however, was quite equal to the occasion. In his next number, he explained that his theatrical reporter had left a note at the office running thus: 'As the *Tale of Two Cities* has failed me, I have nothing for this week without going far afield; pray say a few words about it.' In reading this, the recipient managed to ignore the little word 'me,' and therefore supposed that the piece had been played without success; the result of this error being the concoction of the aforesaid notice. The explanation was all very well as far as it went, but it certainly scarcely justified the announcement of the supposed failure being made in such very emphatic terms. The editor thought otherwise, or pretended to do so, and actually assumed the tone of a highly injured individual, complaining that so much should have been made of what he delicately described as a 'single deviation from accuracy;' while the reporter, whose bad writing was apparently the cause of the original mistake, taking his cue from his superior officer, coolly declared he had only told the truth, 'as many wise men have done, a day too soon;' and then hastened to console his maligned editor with the assurance that if he were to devote his space to correcting the errors of fact, logic, and language daily committed by his assailants, all the space and time at his command would be occupied with the ungrateful function.

Such critical blunders as these tell their own story, but it is hard to account for the mistakes regarding personal identity into which newspaper critics have now and then fallen. T. P. Cooke must have been inexpressibly delighted to see himself praised for his performance of a part

played by another actor; and Miss Faucit must have blushed with pleasure at the unintended compliment when, after playing Volumnia, she saw Miss O'Neill reproached with making the character too youthful in appearance. The playbills in these cases may have misled the critics, and the theatrical 'make-up' of the actors have prevented them discovering the truth; but no such excuse is available for the musical critic who abused our great tenor, asserting that he had deteriorated in style, voice, and execution, as the said critic had prophesied he would do, if he persisted in travelling about the country singing commonplace ballads. The proof of the singer's deterioration was the manner in which he sang at a certain performance of the *Messiah*, when it happened—as it too often happens—that the popular tenor's place was occupied by a substitute; and the critic proved that he was short-sighted in more senses than one.

THE MONTH:

SCIENCE AND ARTS.

EXTRAORDINARY storms of hail and thunder—strange meteors—improved dwellings for working-people—the American iron-clad *Miantonomoh*—the departure of the *Great Eastern* for another attempt to lay an Atlantic telegraph cable—to say nothing of home politics and foreign war, combine to make a stirring time for the close of the sessions of our scientific and learned societies, and to disturb their holiday plans. All the savans who intended to pass their vacation in the mountains of Austria, or to attend the meetings of German naturalists, will now have to betake themselves elsewhere.

As regards the American iron-clad, many a query has been asked as to the meaning of her name; but readers of Cooper's novels will remember that in *The Wept of Wish-ton-Wish*, the name of a famous Indian chief is mentioned, there spelt Miantonomoh.

Two professors of Zürich have been making experiments on the *Origin of Muscular Power*, one part of their operations being the ascent of the Faulhorn. They took careful note of the food they had eaten, and tested at intervals their liquid excretion, with a view to ascertain what were the substances oxidised, or converted into mechanical work: a question much debated among physiologists and chemists; some contending for albuminoid, others for non-nitrogenous substances. The professors above referred to—Fick and Wislicenus—now assert as the result of the experiments and observations, that the oxidation of albuminous substances contributes at the utmost a very small quota to the muscular force; and that the substances which by burning generate force in the muscles, are non-nitrogenous, either fats or hydrates of carbon. This doctrine may be made clearer by explanation. A bundle of muscle-fibres is a kind of machine consisting of albuminous material, just as a steam-engine is made of steel, iron, and brass; and as coal is burned in the steam-engine to produce force, so in the muscular machine, fats or hydrates of carbon are burned for the same purpose; and, to pursue the simile further, as the material of the steam-engine oxidises and wears away, so is the material of muscle worn away, and must be replenished by proper food. Attention to this latter particular is essential by

holiday tourists, who, when among the mountains, are very apt to damage their muscular health by overexertion on insufficient diet.

To the numerous contrivances for consumption of smoke, there has now been added another, which, after trial at certain works in Sheffield, is considered successful. Of all the smoke-infested towns in the kingdom, Sheffield is perhaps the worst; a popular author pronounces it 'detestable,' hence it is the very place in which endeavours towards abatement of the nuisance should be encouraged. In this new process, the furnace is fed with hot air, the boiler with hot water; and it is essential that the door fit closely, and be opened only for firing. The air is heated in flues placed on each side of the boiler, passes into the furnace, through small perforations in the side brickwork, and being thus distributed evenly over the surface of the fire, the consumption of smoke is complete. For heating the water, the waste steam is made to circulate through pipes in a large cistern, from which it (the water) flows to the boiler at the boiling temperature; consequently, full steam-power can be kept up with half the usual quantity of fuel, and of labour on the part of the fireman. All this seems very simple; and that it can be accomplished with economy of coal, is an important element in its favour. We hope to hear that the process will be applied in Sheffield until its atmosphere shall be perfectly free from smoke.

In a lecture on the *Combustion of Gas for Economic Purposes*, Dr Lethbey states that the bat's-wing and fishtail burners, not being subject to such great variations in power as other forms, are best suited for common use, yet require certain precautions to render them fully effective. The best burners, he explains, are those which consume from 3 to 5 cubic feet of gas per hour, and the slits and holes should be so graduated that the gas issues at a pressure of from 0.08 to 0.12 of an inch for very poor gas (12-candle), and from 0.20 to 0.40 for 14-candle gas, and from 0.4 to 0.6 inch for canal-gas. He adds, that Argand burners are only fit for gas of less than 18 or 19 candle-power; and that the taps, instead of being fitted near the burners, as they now commonly are, should be placed at a distance of 18 inches from the burners, which would tend to brighten the flame.

Consumers of paraffin will hear with satisfaction that the shales dug near Glasgow, and in parts of Fifeshire, yield 30 gallons of crude oil to the ton, besides ammoniacal liquor. This, however, is far exceeded by a kind of coal found in New South Wales, which gives 147 gallons to the ton. From experiments made by Mr J. W. Adams of New York, it appears that petroleum and some other hydrocarbons can be very advantageously used as fuel when burned in combination with jets of steam. With proper apparatus, it is stated that nearly 30 lbs. of water, at a temperature of 60 degrees, can be converted into steam by the consumption of 1 lb. of petroleum, which is nearly four times as much as could be converted into steam by 1 lb. of anthracite coal. If these results can be substantiated, an important economy would be effected by burning petroleum in the furnaces of steam-engines.

The prizes offered by the Royal Institute of British Architects are: the silver medal for the best essay on the Influence of French, German, and Italian Art on English Architecture in the 12th,

13th, 14th, and 15th centuries—the influence of the several schools to be particularised: the Soane medallion for the best design, accompanied by a sufficient number of drawings, for a general market-house and exchange suitable for a provincial town. Concerning this latter, we are tempted to inquire, why the R. I. B. A. did not ask for a design suitable for London, for if any place in England is in want of a proper market-house, it is London? It would be easy to name a dozen provincial towns in which the market-house is as good as could be desired, and we may hope that some day London will choose one of them as a model, and provide itself with a really metropolitan market-house. We are promised that the 'dead-meat market,' about to be erected in Smithfield, shall be excellent in all respects; we accept the promise, and trust it will be kept. Hereupon we cannot help asking, why the objectionable term 'dead meat' is so persistently used? Is not the term *meat* a sufficient indication that the animal from which it was taken is no longer alive?

By recent news from Melbourne, we are put in possession of important particulars relating to the material progress of the colony of Victoria, which are well deserving of attention. The total produce of wheat for the year ending in March last, was 3,603,439 bushels—nearly double the quantity of the former year. In barley, beans, peas, millet, and sorghum, and green crops, there is also a marked increase. The number of vines under cultivation, 7,144,407, was not so great as in 1865, but the produce of grapes, 39,536 cwt., is nearly a fourth greater. From these grapes, or a portion of them, 127,400 gallons of wine were made, which is for the most part consumed in the colony. The quality is inferior; and if the Victorian wine-growers wish to find a foreign market, they must take more pains than hitherto with the manufacture.

Some remarkable results are shewn in a paper on *Deaths by Lightning*, presented to the Academy of Sciences at Paris by M. Boudin. In thirty years, ending 1864, there were killed by lightning in France 2431 persons; and the number struck, but not killed, was at least four times as many. This is a surprisingly large total, being at the rate of four hundred a year. M. Boudin shews further, that women are much less liable to be struck than men even when out of doors; and he mentions instances of groups composed of persons of both sexes being struck, the women remaining unharmed while the men were all killed.

Gun-cotton is being largely used at the metal-liferous mines of California and Nevada, and with advantage to all concerned, for its explosive force is greater than that of gunpowder; and as it makes no smoke, there is no loss of time in waiting for the smoke to clear away after firing the blasts. We may expect to hear that the cotton will be used for other than industrial purposes during the war now raging in Germany, for large orders have been sent to the gun-cotton factory at Stowmarket by at least one of the belligerents. For blowing up ships or forts, cotton is far preferable to powder.

The American Magnesium Company at Boston have brought out a new form of magnesium lamp, which is said to give a steadier light than any yet invented. The clock-work is made to deliver a double strip of magnesium ribbon, and to trim the ashes from the end; besides which, a contrivance is

introduced for 'fixing' some of the smoke. Operators who have experienced the inconvenience occasioned by the profuse smoke thrown off by the magnesium lamps as hitherto constructed, will appreciate a lamp in which that objection is diminished.

Artists and others accustomed to work at plastic models, will hear with satisfaction that a mixture of thoroughly dried clay with about half its weight of glycerine forms a good substitute for wax, which can be used with advantage for models of various kinds.

There grows in Australia, especially in the colony of Victoria, a tree known to colonists as the grass-tree, which, from its abundance, has been considered as an encumbrance. Some of the settlers knew that the natives extracted from the tree a tenacious kind of gum, which they used as glue in preparing their weapons and implements; but none seem to have been aware that the despised timber would one day prove to be highly valuable as a source of commercial products. This, however, has now been demonstrated by a colonist at St Ronan's, who, from the root of the grass-tree, extracts gum, shell-lac, sugar, alcohol, and gas with which he lights his works. These are all saleable products; and as we are informed that grass-trees are so abundant near St Ronan's that six hundred tons of root and wood can be had every week for the next ten years, they will probably be found ere long figuring in the list of colonial exports. In addition to the abundance of full-grown timber, we hear that large self-sown crops of young grass-trees are coming on.

At the anniversary meeting of the Geographical Society, one of their gold medals was awarded to Mr William Chandless, an Englishman, who, with no other help than a boat's crew of Indians, has explored and laid down on a map the course of the great river Purus, one of the affluents of the Amazons, into which it flows at a distance of eleven hundred miles from the sea. Some notion of Mr Chandless's enterprise and perseverance may be inferred from the fact, that he ascended the Purus to a distance of nineteen hundred miles from its confluence—till he was stopped by rocks and rapids in Peruvian territory, at the eastern foot of the Andes. Though very tortuous, the stream is navigable for large vessels through the greater part of its course, and will probably become an important channel of export from Peru and the adjacent states. The Brazilian government have established a line of five-hundred ton steamers on the Amazons, and the vessels ascend the river once a month to Yurimaguas, a distance of more than three thousand miles from the sea. What undeveloped resources for trade there must yet be in that vast territory!

A WORD FOR DOGS.

M. NICHOLAS FETU, of Dijon, has been pleased to issue a pamphlet recommending the "extinction of the canine race." A copy was sent to Marshal Vaillant, Minister of the French Imperial Household. The marshal acknowledged the attention, and, at the time when thousands of men were about to exterminate each other in Germany, pled feelingly in favour of the dogs in the following curious letter:

SIR—I am anxious to thank you for your pamphlet on the extinction of the canine race, but, in truth, I have not courage to do so. I have a horror of this

new "massacre of the innocents," the object of your indictment. I have a horror of this new St Bartholomew of dogs preached up by you. What! you would kill the dog of Ulysses—the old blind dog that knew his master after more than twenty years' absence, and who made a last effort to lick his hand! Mercy, sir, mercy for Argus; do not kill him. He is dying with excess of joy—let him die of happiness. You would kill the dog of young Tobias, that went so far to announce to the poor blind father the approach of his son and the end of his misfortunes! You would kill the dog whose then marvellous instinct discovered St Roch dying of the pestilence in the depth of a cavern in a frightful desert—the dog that restored to the world a man almost God by his charity, and whom so many acts of sublime devotedness was to conduct to heaven! You would kill the brave dog of Montargis, without allowing him time to denounce the assassin of Aubry de Montdidier, his master, and force Richard Macaire to avow his crime! You would kill the dog of the regiment—the dog of the poor man's funeral—the Newfoundland—the dog of the Hospice of St Bernard, after he had rescued your son from the precipice, or from the waves. You would kill all without exception, and without compassion. Your rage would be turned even against the dog that is now lying near the hand that writes these lines to you, his eyes fixed on mine, and reading in them the indignation which I feel against you. "Scold this person," he seems to say to me; "scold him well; tell him that I love you as we love each other. Tell him that I love your sister, your niece, and all who are dear to you. Tell him that I watch over you day and night. Tell him the names of all those I have bitten. Tell him of all the pantalons I have torn, of all the gowns I have made rags of, merely because those who wore them wanted to come too close to you. Repeat to him some of the verses which the Duke of Malakoff, your faithful friend, wrote upon me who am still more faithful. Shew this wicked fellow some of the epistles, French, Latin, German, and Italian, which I inspired to kind-hearted men who knew me. Tell this calumniator, who is doubtless incapable of comprehending a pure and absolutely disinterested attachment, that under the fine portrait which Jadin has made of your dog, a young girl of twelve, still handsome, but not gentler or more loving than I am, caused to be engraved, among other verses, all in my praise, and which I deserve, I dare say, these two lines, which touched me more than all the rest:

Du bien de mon bon maître en ami je profite;
J'aimerais son pain noir, s'il était malheureux!

Tell him, besides, that on a beautiful engraving of this same portrait, by the son of a celebrated general, may be seen the following verses:

Sulfureis captam depinxit doctus in arvis
Artificis calamus, quæ sedet, ecos canem;
Atque quære, precor, facies dote venustam,
Neo quæ Blanditias fundere dulcis eat:
Corpus enim pingens animi meliora reliquit
Munera, nec vidit pectoris ille sinum.
Victa equidem vici victorem, corde fideli,
Cura, grato animo, callidate, jocis.

Explain to him that *arvis sulfureis* means, the battlefield of Solferino; that *captam* means, it is you who took me; that *sedet* means, I am seated, and not standing; and tell him that the little antithesis (if it be so called), *vici vici victorem* is your own, and that I find it pretty enough. But no, my dear master, do better still—don't write to this hangman of dogs. Wait till we go together to preside at the Council-general of your dear department. You will then take off my muzzle only for a few instants, and you shall see if I do not pay out the unworthy creature who has so worried us both." Until such time as

Brusca executes his project, believe me, sir, to be your very humble servant,
MARSHAL VAILLANT.

A newspaper correspondent gave the following account of the dog above referred to by M. Vaillant: 'This remarkable animal, which is named Brusca, was found on the field of battle at Solferino. His master, an Austrian officer, had been killed that day, and the poor dog was found howling by the side of his dead body. Some French soldiers, touched by the sight of his evident grief, carried him away in their arms, and brought him to Marshal Vaillant. The Marshal accepted the gift, and brought him with him to Paris. At first Brusca, having been educated in Germany, had great difficulty in understanding French; indeed, unless he was spoken to in German, he walked off and turned his tail to the speaker with an air of utter disgust. However, he has now acquired the language, and were ten Austrian regiments between him and his present master, all their Teutonic sounds would not prevent his reaching the Marshal. Whenever he goes to court, Brusca goes likewise; whether the Emperor himself be in his way or not is nothing to him, Brusca would quietly walk over the imperial boots to secure a snug seat near the Marshal. He attends cabinet councils with the utmost regularity. This winter Brusca was immensely bored by the length of the discussions, and sneezed and coughed as usual when he considered that the council had sat long enough; but on this special occasion his impatience rose to a loud whine, which producing no effect on the Ministers, he walked straight up to the Emperor and scratched his trousers. His Majesty, annoyed at being interrupted, pushed the dog away, and said: "*Eat-il bête, ce chien?*" "*Bête!*" said the Marshal indignantly, "no sir, he is not stupid—you shall see." The Minister rose, took a newspaper off the table, and going to the far end of the council-chamber, said: "Brusca, take that to the Emperor." Each of the Ministers, as he passed them with the paper in his mouth, tried to get it from him. Brusca would not let it go, and carried it safely to His Majesty. From that day to this, Brusca has his *entrée* at all cabinet-councils. He keeps himself beautifully clean, and when his paws are muddy, he carries a brush, left for his special use in one spot, to one of the Marshal's servants, and barks at him till he brushes off every particle of dust.'

THE DIAL.

I HED not complications of late times—
The interwoven wheels and subtle springs.
Give me the Dial, with its simple stone,
To catch the shadow of Time's passing wings.

The honest wisdom of a happier age
Ruled out these slanting lines and figures quaint:
'Man's life is but a shadow—pray for us,'
So runs the scroll beneath the guardian saint.

The things surrounding are the fitting types:
The clouds above—so glory melts away;
The dew upon the vine-leaf and the rose—
So turns our beauty into churchyard clay.

To stay the sunbeam, for an hour enslaved
To measure out our life—large-hearted thought
Of wisdom grand in its simplicity!
Mighty are Time and Death, but man is nought.

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THE STORY OF A BURGLARY.

IN October last, I was invited by a friend of mine, whose daughter was about to be married, to go to London to attend the wedding. He had taken a large house in one of the streets leading out of Piccadilly (which I will call Folkestone Street), and was so good as to offer me a room for the marriage-week. Having been out of health for some time, and needing a change, I thankfully accepted his offer, and made my preparations for the journey at once.

I reached London about a week before the important day; and to those who know anything about weddings, and especially weddings 'in high-life' (so, I believe, the correct phrase runs), I need not say that this week was a busy one. The presents were numerous, and consisted chiefly of jewellery; the *trousseau*, I was informed, could not be surpassed; but of that I am not qualified, nor is it any part of my purpose, to speak. I am only concerned to state that the presents of jewellery were numerous and valuable. As they were brought in by messenger after messenger from the various jewellers' shops, they were placed for inspection by visitors, with other presents, in the front drawing-room, which, I may observe, had four large windows all looking into the main street.

The marriage was fixed for a Tuesday; and on the Saturday previous, my friend gave a dinner-party to relations on both sides, and a good many people were invited to come in the evening to inspect the presents and the *trousseau*. As it was Saturday night, everybody departed shortly after twelve o'clock; and by one o'clock, every light was extinguished. No suspicion of robbery seems to have entered into the head of any of us, and the jewellery and other valuable presents were left exposed in the front drawing-room all that night. But on the next night, the groom of the chambers did seem to have a little anxiety at having so much valuable property exposed in so open a manner, and he communicated his uneasiness to his mistress. The most costly of the jewels were, in accordance with his suggestion, placed in a large jewel-box,

and deposited at bedtime in his mistress's bedroom. So little real anxiety, however, was felt by any one, that a magnificent dressing-case and dressing-bag, both with gold fittings of very great value, were left, with numerous other articles, in one of the back drawing-rooms, without even the key of either being turned in the lock. On that Sunday night, or rather early on the Monday morning, the house was robbed.

It will be well, perhaps, before I proceed further in my narrative, that I should give a general idea of the number and position of the rooms on the three principal floors of the house. On the ground-floor there were dining-room, breakfast-room, and morning-room. On the first floor, there were three drawing-rooms; and besides these, there was, built out at the back, and lying beyond the servants' staircase, the bedroom and dressing-room inhabited by my friend and his wife, and in which the jewels had been deposited. On the second floor were four bedrooms and a dressing-room, occupied by different members of the family and myself.

I went to bed about eleven o'clock, and must have slept soundly for about four or five hours, when I was awakened by the violent barking of a little dog which I had in the room with me. I looked up, and saw the door of my bedroom open gradually, and a bright light shine through it. I called out at once in a loud voice: 'Who's there?' when the door was quickly and quietly shut, without an answer being returned. I never dreamed of thieves, for I had been similarly disturbed the night before: my impression was, that some servant had mistaken the room, the house being strange to all the inmates. I struck a light, and looking at my watch, found the time to be four o'clock. For a time, I listened intently, but soon, finding that all was quiet, I turned on my side, and tried to get to sleep again. This, however, proved to be impossible, and I got no more sleep that night. About five o'clock, I heard some noises in the next bedroom to my own, and concluded that my neighbour was stirring; and at half-past five, I heard somebody stumble over a box in the passage outside my door. But it still

never occurred to me to think of thieves. I imagined still, that in the hurry of preparation for the wedding, some servant had been compelled to rise earlier than usual, and had stumbled in going down stairs in the dark; but as I could not get to sleep, I determined to get up, and at ten minutes to six o'clock by my watch, I left my room to go to another at the end of the passage. The moment I left my door, I saw a man standing ten yards from me. The fellow, who was about six feet two inches in height, and most powerfully made, was listening at the door of a bedroom close to mine, and had his hand on the handle when I first saw him; but the moment he caught sight of me, he made a rush either to collar me or to get by me, I don't know which; and seeing this, I drew back, and allowed him to pass. The next moment, I gave the alarm, and the household was speedily aroused. An attempt at pursuit was made; but the minute or two which had elapsed, enabled the burglars to make good their retreat, and they got clear away without molestation.

The next thing to be done was to ascertain the extent of our losses; and a very casual inspection decided this. Everything of silver or gold in the house which they could lay their hands upon, they had carried off, but only such articles as were very portable: plate they never sought to touch, although some was lying about in the different rooms. They had made a clean sweep of the most valuable of the presents left in the drawing-rooms; they had wrenched off and carried away all the gold tops from the fittings of the dressing-case and dressing-bag; they had entered two bedrooms on the second floor, and taken valuable property from each, while the inmates were sleeping; but, most fortunately, they had missed the great prize, the jewels, to obtain which the burglary had, doubtless, been planned. They had never imagined that the head of the family would sleep in a bedroom beyond the servants' staircase, and so made no attempt to explore in that direction. They must have reasoned, that the best bedrooms, in which alone the jewels were likely to be, would be those to the front on the second floor, over the drawing-room; and about these they must have hung for hours, in the hope of getting their prize, listening at the doors to the breathing of the sleepers, entering and rifling the rooms of those who slept most heavily, and waiting for an opportunity of safely entering the others. My room, after the barking of my dog, they did not again attempt to approach. But although the jewels were safe, we found, upon inspection, that they had carried off property to a very considerable amount; indeed, the loss, we found, could not be estimated at less than seven hundred pounds.

Of course, the first thing to be done now was to send for the police. This was done at once; and as I was the only person who had actually seen anybody in the house, I received a visit, in an incredibly short space of time, from Inspector Fairfield—so I will call him—of the Q division. The inspector was a tall, fair-haired man, who looked a good deal younger than his real age, but who seemed a capital man of business, whatever his age might be. His first question was: 'What sort of man was it that you saw on the landing, sir?' I said at once that I had seen a tall, dark man, but that I had not seen him sufficiently well to be able to describe his features accurately. The inspector mused over my description for half a minute, and

then called upon me for a detailed description of every article of property which had been stolen, and its probable value. I had scarcely got half-way through the list, when a knock was heard at the door, and Sergeant Wood, as I will call him—also of the Q division—was announced. Had he not been styled a sergeant, I should never have guessed what he was. My idea of a policeman was, that he was tall and stout, and with whiskers that were the objects of the admiration of the servant-maids, and the satire of 'Mr Punch.' But here was a little man in plain clothes, very short, very dark in complexion, and with his hair and whiskers cut very close ('So that they may have nothing to hold on by,' he darkly whispered to me in a conversation we had some days after). But I suppressed my astonishment, and politely greeted my visitor. In return, Sergeant Wood expressed the usual civil regrets for the occurrence—which, somehow, one can't think quite sincere in a policeman—and then had a brief whispered consultation with Inspector Fairfield. What the inspector said seemed to decide him upon some course of action, for, after again asking me to describe the man I had seen, he hurriedly left the room. I then completed the list of the stolen property, and, after accompanying the inspector in a tour round and over the house, to see how the entry had been effected, and after being convinced that the thieves had entered from the back through the kitchen, I bade him good-morning, fully convinced that the best plan was to grin and bear our losses as best we might. It was the firm belief of every one of us, that every article of gold and silver was in the melting-pot within an hour after the thieves left the house, and that no portion of the stolen property would be recovered. Nor did we think in our hearts that there was any use in the police exerting themselves; we had not, I am ashamed to say, any belief in their powers of detection in a really difficult case, such as this seemed to promise to be.

Judge, then, of my surprise, when, barely an hour and a half afterwards, I was informed that the burglars had been captured, and every article of property recovered. The manner in which the capture was effected was so ingenious, and the whole affair was so creditable to the police force of the metropolis, that I shall make no apology for describing it at some length.

The burglary at my friend's house in Folkestone Street was not, I discovered, by any means the first of its kind which had lately occurred. A succession of robberies had taken place at the West End during the previous three months, all apparently the work of the same man (for the same features distinguished them all), and the police had been greatly nettled at their non-success in detecting the culprit.

As far back as the middle of the previous June, the house of a great minister of state had been broken into, and a quantity of jewellery stolen. In that case, the thief seemed to have clambered up a very high wall, and then to have 'dropped' a great distance on to some leads. This gave him access to a window, through which he entered the house. The jewellery was taken from a lady's dressing-room, and the robbery must have been effected within a very short time after she had left that room, for she did not retire to bed till three o'clock, and the thieves were out of the house by five. One remarkable feature in this case was, that one of the thieves had washed his

hands in the dressing-room before leaving it. The police used every exertion to trace the thieves, but were unsuccessful; and so mysterious did the affair seem, that they were driven to suspect that there had been some connivance on the part of the servants. For these suspicions, it is only fair to say, whatever events proved that there was no ground whatever.

A fortnight afterwards, another burglary took place; this time, at the residence of an ambassador. In this case also, the thief appeared to have 'dropped' a considerable height. And here, too, the police were at fault.

A few days after this, a burglary took place at a house looking into the Green Park. A lady was sitting, about seven o'clock in the evening, in her boudoir alone, when she heard somebody walking in the room overhead. She fancied it was her brother, and called out to him to come down to her. No answer being returned, she ran up-stairs, and was just in time to see a strange man going up the upper staircase. At sight of her, he quickened his footsteps, and rushing to the topmost story, shut himself up in one of the servant's bedrooms. By this time, an alarm had been given, and a policeman fetched from the street. He does not, however, seem to have been either a very intelligent or very courageous member of the force, for all he did was to summon the burglar inside to open the door and come out. This, however, he declined to do, whereupon this valiant defender of our homes declined to break open the door without further assistance, and went off to fetch another constable. Of course, directly his back was turned, the burglar resolved upon flight. To the surprise of every one, he was seen to get out of the window, and make a terrific 'drop-leap' on to some leads, whence he got into the Park, and was lost to view in the shades of evening. The Park was searched at once, but no trace of him could be discovered. The lady, upon being questioned, declared that the man she saw was tall and dark; and that was all the description she could give. The question then arose: Has any man been seen to loiter about the house lately? The immediate answer was in the affirmative. A tall, dark man had been seen by the postman loitering about the house, and the postman had communicated his suspicions that 'he was after no good,' to the sergeant of police, but had only been pooh-poohed for his pains. The sergeant was immediately questioned, and explained that he had fancied that the man was only courting one of the maids at the house in question. This explanation, however, was considered unsatisfactory by the Commissioners of Police, and the sergeant was suspended; and to this suspension may indirectly be attributed the ultimate detection of the burglar, for the sergeant felt his disgrace so deeply, that he determined to leave no stone unturned to bring to justice this tall dark man, who had such a marvellous power of making 'drop'-leaps.

Meanwhile, news came of another burglary at Kensington. In this case also, the thief seemed to have shewn great activity, and again to have washed his hands. Again, a few weeks later, a burglary was committed in Hamilton Place, Piccadilly, and here again the thief washed his hands, even bringing a lemon from the kitchen to aid him in his task.

It now became almost a certainty that all these robberies were the work of one man; and as there

was the remarkable fact of his washing his hands in almost every instance, it was probable that this man was of a better class, and of greater refinement than the ordinary run of London burglars. But an altogether new fact, which was likely to aid the police considerably in their efforts to trace him, was elicited during the inquiries which were made with respect to the Hamilton Place robbery. It transpired that two men had been seen for some days loitering about and examining the house, and that one of them was tall and dark, and the other short and fair. But not only had they been seen; the tall, dark man had actually spoken to a *commissionnaire* stationed in the district, and had been observed to have a foreign accent. It seemed most probable, therefore, that the man of whom they were in search was a foreigner, and the suspended sergeant determined at once to follow up this slight clue.

But there are a great many tall, dark foreigners in London, and the sergeant's task seemed one of no slight difficulty; however, he was a determined man, of iron nerves, and he determined to find the right man, if he searched through the whole of London; so he sat down and thought out the whole matter, and decided upon the course he would pursue. He could not help fancying from all he heard that it was probable the man in question was a discharged Swiss or Italian valet, or courier, or something of that kind; so, following up this idea, he went to call upon a friend of his who kept a very respectable public-house at the West End of the town. This man had been a courier himself in his earlier days, and was well acquainted with all the members of the confraternity, and, indeed, had a *table d'hôte* daily for them at his house, of which other foreigners occasionally availed themselves. After much consultation with the landlord, the sergeant determined to attend the *table d'hôte* that day, on the chance of seeing his man. At dinner-time, he accordingly made his appearance, of course in plain clothes, and took his seat with the ease of an *habitué*. None of the diners, however, answered in any way to the description of the burglar, and the sergeant began to think that he had been wasting his time. But scarcely had the cloth been removed, when a tall, dark man, of not unpleasing appearance, came in, and took his seat at one of the little round tables. Upon him the sergeant at once fixed his attention, and when he rose, after taking some slight refreshment, quietly followed him out of the house. For some time, he pursued him without being perceived, but at last the foreigner seemed to become aware that he was being tracked, for he looked round from time to time suspiciously. This, of course, did not look well, for a man who has nothing to fear does not do this, and our sergeant determined not to lose sight of him. However, clever as the sergeant was, the tall, dark man was cleverer still, and after a long chase, suddenly gave his pursuer the slip. The sergeant was in despair; just when he seemed to have got hold of a most promising clue, he had lost it, and it was more than probable that the foreigner would now take the alarm, and leave the country at once.

But, as good-luck would have it, as he was walking, somewhat disconsolately, in Oxford Street that same night, he saw his man again! Again he followed him, and again he lost him, but this time in such a position as to make it nearly certain that he lived in one of three well-known streets in Soho. These streets were accordingly watched

night and day, and the tall, dark foreigner was finally tracked down to No. 224 Canon Street, Soho.

But although they had been successful so far, what, it may be asked, had in effect been proved? What was the result of all these watchings and inquiries? Simply this: that a tall, dark foreigner, who evidently did not like followers, lived at 224 Canon Street, Soho. Slight, however, as the clue was, the police determined to follow it up. So much annoyance and excitement had been caused by the numerous burglaries at the houses of great people, and there had been so many comments upon the unskillfulness of the police, that the force made it almost a point of honour to discover the culprit. Directions were given to certain trusty men, the house was watched night and day; and this perseverance was at last rewarded by a certain amount of success, for, on the Friday preceding the burglary at my friend's house, the tall, dark foreigner was seen to come out, and, accompanied by a shorter man, to go to a marine-store dealer's shop, and purchase some skeleton-keys. On the following day (Saturday), he was seen to purchase some more keys, and with these he returned to his lodgings, and was not seen out again that day. These facts, of course, proved him to be a suspicious person, and justified the police in putting him under surveillance. On the next day (Sunday), he left his lodgings at half-past three o'clock in the afternoon, and was seen to return to them at half-past eleven o'clock at night; but after that hour, those who were appointed to watch him declared that he did not leave his house that night, and asserted that it was totally impossible for him to have done so without their seeing him.

Now, my friend's house in Folkestone Street must have been broken into about two o'clock on the Monday morning, and the man I saw on the landing certainly did not leave the house till ten minutes to six. It appeared, then, quite certain, that whatever he might have done on other occasions, the tall, dark foreigner of 224 Canon Street had nothing to do with this robbery. When I described my friend on the landing as being a 'tall, dark man,' the inspector, as I remembered well, had smiled grimly, but he was not then aware that it had been declared by those who had been watching him that the man in question had not left his house after half-past eleven o'clock on Sunday night. Of this fact, Sergeant Wood had given him the first intimation, when they had that brief consultation together in my bedroom to which I have alluded above, and for a moment they must have been dumbfounded—if, indeed, a policeman ever yields to so purely 'civilian' an emotion. Apparently, all their labour had been thrown away: the tall, dark foreigner, whom they had so successfully traced to his lair, could not, it seemed, be in any way connected with this last robbery, in spite of the strong presumption which my description of him excited.

Policemen are, however, proverbially slow to despair. One hope still remained, which slender as it then seemed to us, proved ultimately the right solution of the difficulty. The Sunday night in question had been wet and misty, and it was just possible that the vigilance of the watchers might have been eluded, though, from the skill and ability, and general high character of the men employed, this seemed hardly within the bounds

of probability. It was determined, therefore, that the house in Canon Street should be closely watched; and on leaving my room, Sergeant Wood himself repaired to the spot, and made the necessary arrangements.

The sergeant left me at half-past eight, and an hour and a half afterwards, the tall, dark foreigner was seen to come out of No. 224 Canon Street, and to walk down the street in the direction of Seven Dials. He was instantly followed, and in a short time was observed to meet, as if by appointment, the same short, fair man who had accompanied him when he had made the purchase of skeleton-keys. This latter man had a small and apparently empty blue serge-bag on his arm. The two men linked arms, and walked on together, having very much the appearance, my informant said, of two master-tradesmen. They were followed by three constables, of whom Sergeant Wood was one, and the question which occupied his whole thoughts was, should he, or should he not, take these men into custody? It must be remembered that he had no evidence against them—nay, he had evidence which directly exculpated the tall, dark man, and, if correct, made it impossible for him to have been present at the burglary: he had all the terrors of damages for false imprisonment, and serious rebukes from magistrates for exceeding his duty, floating before his eyes. But my friend Sergeant Wood is not a nervous man, and his hesitation was but momentary. In spite of the testimony of the watchers, he had always felt certain that the tall, dark man had planned and actually executed the burglary in Folkestone Street that morning; and he determined to risk everything that might ensue if he made a mistake. He accordingly arrested them; and after a considerable show of resistance on the part of the shorter man, and a great deal of virtuous indignation from the affronted foreigner, added to considerable opposition from a mob of the lowest characters in Seven Dials, the two were safely lodged in the station-house. Of course the blue bag was examined at once, and this apparently innocent receptacle was found to contain a large housebreaker's 'jemmy' or crowbar, a bottle of aqua-fortis for testing gold, and finally, a small gold toothpick, which had been taken from the fittings of the dressing-case in my friend's back drawing-room, and which had apparently been left in the bag by mistake, having got stuck in the lining. I should like to have seen the grim smile of my friend Sergeant Wood when the toothpick was produced from the blue bag. I think that at that moment he could almost have forgiven the watchers, whose negligence had so nearly led him astray.

The next thing to be done was to search the lodgings of the tall, dark man. This task Inspector Fairfield undertook, and he proceeded at once to Canon Street. After some opposition on the part of the landlady, who stoutly denied that any such person was lodging or ever had lodged in her house, the inspector at last got admittance, and proceeded to search the house (which was a very large one), commencing from the attics. On reaching the second story, on his way downwards, he inquired if any foreigner lived in any of the rooms upon it; and to this the landlady, whose memory seemed to have been much improved by intercourse with the inspector, replied, that a foreign gentleman, who was a highly-respectable wine-merchant, had a bedroom on this floor looking to the back.

She did not know much of him, she said, but he was very regular in his payments, and very quiet in his habits, and for her part she did not wish for anything more in a lodger. The courteous inspector requested permission to have one look, merely as a matter of form, at the distinguished foreigner's bedroom; and to this the landlady acceded. Unfortunately, however, the door was locked, and as the landlady had no other key than that which she had given to her lodger, and which he had doubtless in his pocket at that moment, the inspector was compelled to do violence to the feelings of a worthy woman, and break open the door. There was nothing remarkable in the bedroom in any way; it was a thought small and airless for a 'wine-merchant,' perhaps; but then he might be a trifle eccentric—many greater men have been guilty of more striking eccentricities, and yet not a word has been breathed against their respectability. But there was one thing which seemed to surprise the landlady, though not perhaps the inspector—her lodger seemed to be about to make a journey, and the room was disordered by preparations for departure. Above all, in the middle of the room stood a magnificent portmanteau, brand new, and of the best workmanship. The inspector lifted it, and found it heavy; he tried the lid, and found it locked. Fortunately, he had upon his bunch a key that fitted the lock; and with many apologies, he proceeded to open the portmanteau. Within it he found every article of the property stolen from Folkestone Street, with the single exception of the gold toothpick found in the blue bag; but besides this, the inspector found in the portmanteau some of the property which had been taken from the houses in Hamilton Place and Kensington. It was clear, therefore, that they had been right in their conclusions, and that the tall, dark foreigner was the planner and perpetrator of all these robberies.

Little more remains to be said. The first examination of the prisoners was taken that afternoon before the magistrate, and the landlady identified the tall, dark foreigner as her lodger, and the owner of the portmanteau. A policeman swore to having seen both prisoners loitering near the mews at the back of Folkestone Street on the Sunday evening between eight and nine o'clock; and so the chain of evidence was complete. Evidence was also given that both prisoners had been previously convicted, and then they were remanded, in order to complete the depositions before committal. But before the day of final examination, the tall, dark man, in utter despair as to the result of the trial, and dreading a sentence which, at his age (he was fifty-five), would probably be tantamount to penal servitude for life, committed suicide by hanging himself in his cell at the House of Detention. The younger man was sentenced to fifteen years' penal servitude, and is now working out his time.

At the inquest which was held upon the foreigner, some curious particulars relating to his life were disclosed. He was a Frenchman, and of very respectable family, his father having been agent to a French nobleman. He seemed to have had respectable friends in London, who had no idea whatever that he was a burglar. He was thought by them to have an independent income, and to travel about for his pleasure. At what time of his life he took to burglary, seemed to be quite unknown, but there was no question as to his

talent for that profession. The police considered him a most skilful and dangerous thief, and regarded his capture as an important event. His manners and language were remarkably good, and his appearance was such, that if he had been met in a house, he would have been supposed to be some gentleman's foreign servant. There is little doubt that the burglary at my friend's house was only one of a series; indeed, among his papers, a list of houses of the nobility was found, with full particulars of access to each; and these, there was every reason to believe, would have been plundered in succession, had not his career been stopped by the police.

THE LAW BETWEEN 'MISSIS' AND SERVANT.

WE are not going, under this head, to discourse on the evil effects of servantalism, or expatiate on the merits and demerits of the 'greatest plagues of one's life,' or even touch upon the social condition of our domestic helps. Nor do we intend to solve the riddle, why Mrs Brown should always be suited with servants while her next-door neighbour should have a dozen housemaids in as many months? These topics we leave to the discussion of the ladies in their after-dinner conversation in the drawing-room. Our purpose is simply to give a general idea of the law of the land in relation to masters and the servants employed in their household; and it is principally to you, my dear Mrs General Reader, that I intend to address my observations, inasmuch as you are the person who engages the domestic servants. But you must bear in mind that you do not do this of your own inherent right, but merely as the agent for your good lord and master, and by his authority. It is true that Mary Ann calls you Mistress, or, what is more likely, Missis, but that is only your title by courtesy, for her only real hirer or master is your husband, who has to pay the wages.

Now, this hiring may be made in various ways: it may be by word of mouth, or by writing, or even by a deed solemnly signed, sealed, and delivered; but in all probability, if the last-mentioned formalities were required, Mary Ann or John Thomas would look upon the document in the light of a death-warrant, and would at once say the place would not suit. Nor is it usual to employ writing at all in engaging your domestic servants, in nearly every case the hiring is by word of mouth only, and that is amply sufficient for all practical purposes. There are, however, cases where the hiring must be in writing, for where no limited term is mentioned, the hiring is understood to be for a year, determinable on either side by a month's notice or 'warning,' as it is usually called; and a certain statute has enacted that where an agreement is not to be carried into effect within a year from its making, it must be in writing, and signed by the parties to be charged under it. If, therefore, you agree to take Mrs Brown into your employ as cook, and she promises to come on Tuesday-week, but, in the interval, changes her mind, and refuses to come into your service, you have no remedy against her for breach of agreement, unless that agreement is in writing, as the hiring would have been for more than a year. If Mrs Brown had entered upon the engagement at the time the agreement was made, then no writing would be required.

Your servants having been hired, and actually in your service, let us set forth some of the duties which they are to render to you in return for their wages; and, be it understood, that all menial servants, whether male or female, are subject to nearly the same laws, and, therefore, in our following remarks, a 'he' will apply to 'she,' and *vice versa*, except where otherwise mentioned. Each servant is supposed to bring with him a sufficient amount of skill and ability for properly performing the duties intrusted to him. The cook, for instance, by accepting that important office, virtually undertakes to bring the requisite amount of culinary skill; and the groom is supposed to have a reasonable amount of knowledge about horses. Each servant must also conform to the general rules of your establishment, and obey all your lawful commands; but your cook is not bound to perform the housemaid's duties, nor the coachman to clean the boots, nor could a gentleman in plush—engaged for the sole purpose of opening the hall-door and flattening his nose against the window—be legally called upon to carry a scuttle of coals up to the drawing-room; so that John Thomas in *Punch*, who would only carry the governess's box as a favour, and not as a right, was, we dare say, strictly in accordance with the letter of his agreement.

As soon as the hiring is made, your servants are bound to remain in your service until the agreement is properly terminated in the manner we shall hereafter mention; but if they enter your service subject to certain special conditions, you must fulfil those conditions, or the hiring will be at an end. For instance, if Mary Ann accepts the position of housemaid in your establishment, on the understanding that 'a footman is kept,' she is not bound to remain with you after you have dispensed with the services of that gentleman; and if John Thomas, at the time of your hiring him, mentions that he has a decided objection to travel, and you afterwards make the grand tour, he will not be bound to accompany you.

As your servant is bound to remain in your service until the hiring is properly terminated, so you, on the other hand, are bound to keep him in such service during that period, or pay him the proper wages; and if you send him to the right-about without proper grounds of dismissal, or without the usual month's warning, or paying him a month's wages, he may indulge in the luxury of litigation; while in your service and living in your house, you are bound to supply him with proper shelter, lodging, food, and other necessities; but the servants are not allowed to be overnice in their meals; and therefore, if they turn up their noses at the cold mutton and such-like viands, they can make no legal complaint against you on that account; but if you wilfully, and without lawful excuse, refuse or neglect to provide your domestics with proper board and lodging, whereby their lives or health may be endangered, you will be guilty of a misdemeanour, and be liable to an imprisonment with hard labour for three years. In short, board and lodging are part of the wages which your servants receive for their work, and they may sue you if you don't provide them with both.

If your servant becomes unwell, that does not warrant you in dismissing him on that account, unless the illness has been brought on by his drunkenness or profligate conduct; and while the servant is ill, he is entitled to his wages, notwith-

standing that he may be unable to perform his services; but if the illness be of a permanent character, so as to utterly incapacitate him from fulfilling his agreement, you may discharge him. While your servant is ill, you are not legally compelled to find medicine and medical attendance for him, although I have no doubt you would consider yourself morally bound to do so; and I should advise you to supply him with ale, wine, or other food rendered necessary by and during his illness, although it is a moot-point whether you are legally compelled to do this. You must not inflict corporal chastisement on your servants, unless, indeed, the servant is under twenty-one, when, by the authority of that servant's parents, you may administer a moderate whipping. A servant is justified in refusing to do work which is dangerous, and therefore, if you tell John Thomas to turn a ferocious burglar out of the house, he may politely decline the duty.

So long as your servants remain in your service, you must pay them their wages as they become due; and unless a special agreement has been entered into, the wages of domestic servants become due once a month. If you discharge them without proper cause, or the usual warning, you must pay them a month's wages. But if, on the other hand, you dismiss them for misconduct, or other good reasons, which we shall presently specify, they then lose all claim for wages since the last payment was made or became due. For instance, suppose you pay John Thomas's wages (salary he would call them) on the 1st of each month, and on the 30th of March you dismiss him for misconduct, he forfeits all his pay for that month, or rather he has none to receive, inasmuch as he is bound to serve the whole month before his month's wages become due.

Now, Mary Ann, in common with others of her sex and station, is in the habit of smashing your crockery in a most heart-rending and ruinous manner. If, when she is carrying the tea-things down stairs, her foot catches on the stair-carpet, and the tray and its burden falls down stairs, and she, like Gill, goes tumbling after, you will, as a rule, have to bear the loss occasioned by the smash, for the law is, that where the damage is caused by accident, or in the course of the performance of the regular duty of the servant, and while using reasonable care, the loss will fall upon the master. If she is grossly negligent, or wilfully smashes your tea-things, then you may deduct from her wages a reasonable amount, so as to indemnify yourself for her negligence or misconduct, providing that you tell her then and there that you will do so; but a servant is not always answerable for negligence or unskilfulness where the service to be performed is not one of the ordinary duties he or she had undertaken to perform when entering upon the engagement. If, therefore, your butler, as an act of civility, and in compliance with your request, rides out your favourite filly, and, through his unskilfulness, its knees are broken, he will not be responsible for the mishap; and on the same principle, when Handy Andy the errand-boy was told by his master to ice the champagne, and he accordingly did so by emptying the champagne into the ice-pail, he would not have to pay for the loss of so much good liquor; but it would have been otherwise had the butler performed that bottle-trick. It is sometimes made a special condition at the time of the hiring that a reasonable

deduction shall be made from a servant's wages for loss from breakages.

So far as third persons are concerned, your servant will be to some extent considered as your agent, and can pledge your credit. If, for instance, you are in the habit of sending your groom to a public-house for spirits on your credit, the publican may fairly presume that your servant is authorised by you to make such purchases; and if the groom is of a bibulous turn, and get a bottle of gin from the publican unknown to you, and for his own private consumption, you will have to pay the cost of the liquor—for how is the publican to know whether that particular bottle of gin is not obtained on your behalf in the usual way; and even after the groom is 'no longer officer of yours,' and the publican supply him with a bottle of gin in ignorance of that fact, you will be still held liable to pay the shot; but if you are in the habit of getting your spirits from the *Pig and Whistle*, and your servant, on your credit, and without your knowledge and consent, obtains some from the *Cheshire Cheese*, the landlord of the latter house will have no claim against you. If you are in the habit of paying cash for your groceries, and the grocer supplies your servant with goods upon credit, you will not be liable to pay for them, unless, indeed, you afterwards consented to the bargain, or made use of the goods so obtained.

In your capacity of master, you are liable for all accidents that may happen through your servants while they are reasonably carrying out your orders, and in the course of their employment. If your coachman, for instance, is driving you in the brougham up Oxford Street, and, through carelessness, runs into another brougham, you will have to bear the loss—and the same if he is driving too fast, and runs over some one. If you send John out with the dog-cart on your business, and he goes out of his way on his own business, and manages to run through a shop-window, you will be responsible for the damage; but if he drives out without your leave, then he would be the responsible person.

If a servant keeps your fire so negligently that your or your neighbour's house is burnt down, such servant is liable to forfeit one hundred pounds, to be distributed among the sufferers; and in default of payment, to be imprisoned with hard labour for eighteen months.

Let us now see how the hiring may be terminated. As we have already seen, this may be done by a month's warning, given either by you or your servant; and you may also effect that object by paying the servant a month's wages. But there are cases when you can summarily and lawfully dismiss your servant without either warning or wages. If he wilfully disobeys or neglects to carry out your just and reasonable orders—if he refuses to do his work during the customary hours, or conform to the hour of dinner, or repeatedly comes home drunk, you may summarily dismiss him; so, if I tell my groom that I will not allow smoking in my stable, and he persists in having his post-prandial pipe there—or if I tell Mary Jane that followers are strictly prohibited, and she admits into my house a tall and hungry 'cousin' in the Guards—or if the cook entertains Policeman Z (*né* X) with a leg of mutton at my expense, and without my consent—or if I inform her for the fiftieth time that I will not allow any cayenne pepper to be put on my cutlets, and she wilfully ignores my strict injunc-

tions—or if I tell her that she must not have her 'Sunday out' next week, and she goes out notwithstanding—or goes to a particular place, which I have forbidden her to frequent—in any of these cases, I may give the offending party the most summary 'sack,' and the culprit will forfeit all wages for the current month; and so strict is the law on this subject, that it has been decided that you may dismiss your housemaid for leaving your house without permission, although her object in going out may be to visit a dying mother. But you must bear in mind that you may not dismiss your servants for every trivial act of disobedience, for servants are human beings after all, and are subject to the sulks, like their masters. If Mary Ann's temporary absence without leave causes you no serious inconvenience—or she 'answers again' when you are 'blowing her up'—or omits, on one or two occasions, to answer the bell or the door—or uses insolent language, or indulges in 'airs'—these, although very inconvenient incidents of domestic life, are not of sufficiently serious character to justify you in dismissing the culprit; and if Mary Ann thinks proper to chignon her back-hair, and appear in the customary crinoline, there is no law to prevent her, although she is as a rule bound to dress in a manner becoming her station in life.

You may discharge her for gross moral misconduct, and even if she gets married while in your service, you may dismiss her; and if John Thomas is too familiar with your pretty housemaid, you may send him to the rightabout. If he is dishonest—that is, steals or embezzles your goods, no matter of what trifling amount—you may discharge him; even if you give him five pounds to pay the baker's bill, and he keeps it to pay his own overdue wages. But to enable you to dismiss a servant for misconduct, you must do it at once—that is, as soon as ever the offence comes to your knowledge—for if you take no notice of it for a time, you will be presumed to have waived your right to a dismissal.

When you have dismissed your servant, or the hiring has been otherwise ended, you will probably be called upon to give him a character. It is a very difficult and delicate thing to act properly when giving a late servant a character. You are not bound to give one; and if, through your refusal, your late servant is unable to obtain another situation, his case, although a hard, is a remediless one. Although not legally, you are, however, morally bound to give your servant a character, although it may not be a complimentary one. But if you do give a character, you should take particular care that you make no statement which you do not believe to be true, or you will get involved in an action for damages. When Mrs Smith calls upon you, with reference to Mary Ann's character, you may safely open your mind to her with respect to that young person's merits and demerits, and say anything you know or believe to be true, notwithstanding that your statement may be very injurious to Mary Ann's prospects—and the latter can have no legal redress, for your communication to Mrs Smith is what is called a privileged one. But if the substance of your communication is not only untrue in fact, but maliciously made, then Mary Ann can bring an action against you for defamation. Great latitude of opinion is allowed as to Mary Ann's qualifications: you may think her a slut, and worthy of

the title you may perhaps have applied to her, of 'Mary Ann, you hussy;' while Mrs Jones may consider her a model maid; but if you represent her to be a lazy, bad-tempered, impertinent girl, and she brings forward several persons with whom she lived to contradict your statement, you must be prepared to prove your words. In giving characters, every departure from actual truth is attended with danger to your pocket as well (let us hope) as to your peace of mind.

If you personate a master or mistress, house-keeper, or such-like persons, and give a false or forged character—or if you falsely assert in writing that Mary Ann has served with you as cook when she has not, or make a false statement as to the time when she left your service—you will, in any of these cases, be liable to a fine of twenty pounds. And the same penalty will attach to Mary Ann if she offers herself as a servant, pretending to have been in service where she has not served, or with a false or forged certificate of character—or even if she says she has not been in service before, and it turns out that she has.

BROUGHT TO LIGHT.

CHAPTER IX.—JOHN ENGLISH'S SECOND LETTER.

THREE weeks after the date of his first letter, John English wrote again, as under, to his friend, Frank Mashiter:

MY DEAR FRANK—My last epistle, if I remember rightly, broke off just as I was on my way to Belair. I walked up through the park in a musing mood, but paused for a moment before ringing the bell, to take in some of the architectural details of the building before me. I found it to be an ugly, incongruous pile, of various dates and styles—the east wing, which is also the oldest, being the only portion that would come out effectively as a photograph. There is, however, as I afterwards found, a charming old picture-gallery, which will make a capital interior study.

Bearing in mind Mrs Winch's caution, I asked for Lady Spencelaugh, and after five minutes in an anteroom, was conducted to the apartment of her Ladyship, a most luxuriously furnished room. Lady Spencelaugh is a woman of fifty, or thereabouts, with a comfortable, matronly figure, gray hair, and a bright, healthy complexion. She is *bon style*, without question; and her manners are quiet and well-bred, almost to frigidity; with just a slight tinge of imperiousness, which seems to rest naturally on one who has been accustomed to receive and exact deference from all around her. Her Ladyship listened attentively to all I had to say, examined the specimen photographs I had taken with me for inspection, made a few sensible remarks about them, and then said that she did not imagine there would be any difficulty in granting my request, but that Sir Philip must be consulted in the matter before any final decision could be given. So the bell was rung, and a footman sent to inquire whether Sir Philip were at liberty to receive us. The answer was favourable; so her Ladyship rose at once, and desiring me to accompany her, and the footman to follow with my portfolio, we set out in procession for the apartments of the master of Belair.

The library, where Sir Philip is usually to be found in a morning, is in the opposite wing of the

house to that occupied by Lady Spencelaugh; indeed, the baronet and his wife, as my subsequent experience has shewn me, rarely see each other till they meet at the dinner-table. We had to traverse three or four long corridors, and to cross the fine old entrance-hall before reaching the baronet's own room, which, although known as the library, and can boast a very tolerable collection of books, is always looked upon in the light of a private apartment by every one in the house.

A tall, thin, white-haired gentleman, of sixty-five, dressed with scrupulous neatness in a costume that was more in accordance with the fashions of a quarter of a century ago, than with those of to-day; with thin, refined, aristocratic features; and with a manner that is a happy combination of the frankness of the soldier, with the high-bred courtliness of a gentleman of the old school: such was my first impression of Sir Philip Spencelaugh. Many men at his age are still robust and hearty; but Sir Philip's constitution was shattered years ago in India; and he seems to me like a man whose hold on life is now but a very feeble one. He was busily poring over some legal-looking document as we entered; and being slightly deaf, he did not hear us. He looked laboriously and painfully occupied, as though he were engaged in some duty, which, however disagreeable it might be, must yet be gone through; and was slowly spelling out the lines through his gold-rimmed double eyeglass, with such an absorbed, careworn expression on his fine clear-cut features, as would have made an excellent study for a painter in search of such an effect.

'Good-morning, my dear Sir Philip,' said Lady Spencelaugh, touching her husband lightly on the shoulder. 'That must surely be a very important document, if one may judge by the serious expression with which you regard it.'

'Eh! why, what, Margaret, is that you?' exclaimed the baronet, starting up at his wife's touch. 'It is a rare pleasure to have a visit from you at this early hour;' and he stooped and kissed her Ladyship's hand gallantly.

'I am afraid you told me a little fib,' said her Ladyship, smoothing out her skirts over the chair, which the attentive footman had already placed for her, 'when you sent me word that you were not busy this morning.'

'Did I really send you word that I was not busy?' said Sir Philip with an effort to remember, as he ran his fingers through his thin white hair. 'Pon my word, I've no recollection of having done so; but, in any case, I am never so busy that your Ladyship cannot have access to me.' These words were said with a certain formality of manner, which seemed to indicate that the bond which, after all these years of wedded life, still served to unite Sir Philip and his wife, was based on habitude, and a due regard for the *convenances* of society, rather than on any mutual liking and esteem—a view which subsequent observation on my part has fully confirmed. They shewed, too, how weak and treacherous was the baronet's memory; and I was not long in discovering that while he has generally a very clear and vivid recollection of events that happened when he was a young man, he not unfrequently forgets the occurrences of a day or two ago; or even, as in the present instance, what has happened only five minutes before.

'This person,' said Lady Spencelaugh, with a

slight wave of her hand in the direction of your humble servant, 'is a Mr—a Mr John English,' with a glance through her eyeglass at the card she still held between her fingers; and then she went on to explain to the baronet the object of my visit to Belair, adding that she saw no reason for refusing my request, but rather several reasons why it should be granted. 'He has done the Duke of Sydenham's place, and Clopford Castle,' added her Ladyship, 'so that I think we cannot be far wrong in according the permission he asks for; but I must leave Mr English in your hands, my dear. You will find the contents of his portfolio rather interesting;' and with a gracious 'Good-morning' to her husband, and a slight inclination of the head to me, Lady Spencelaugh swept out of the room.

'Come up closer to the table, Mr English,' said the baronet kindly, as soon as the door was closed behind her Ladyship, 'and let us examine this portfolio of yours. Unfortunately, my eyes are no longer so strong as they used to be.'

'You will find this glass of service, Sir Philip,' I said, 'if you will only be good enough to try it.'

'Ah! yes, that brings out the points capitally,' said the old gentleman; and with that he proceeded to examine the photographs, one after another, with an almost childlike eagerness, recognising among the foreign ones many places which he had seen when a young man making the grand tour, stopping now and then to relate to me some little anecdote of travel, the telling of which seemed to afford him much pleasure. 'Ah! Mr English, yours is a charming profession,' he said, as we finished the series; 'and although it is, to a certain extent, a mechanical one, yet there must, I am sure, be something of the genuine creative faculty in your composition, or your sun-pictures would not come out of their dark chamber so clear, exact, and beautiful, as are those which you have just shewn me. To see those familiar nooks brought so vividly before me, makes me feel a lad again; and for the moment, I almost forget my weary weight of years, and how near I am to the end.' He sighed wearily, and sat gazing silently for a minute or two at the fire.

Sir Philip kept me for more than an hour longer, drawing out of me some of my experiences of travel; and seeming as much interested in, and laughing as heartily over, my adventures as though he were a *bon camarade* of my own age.

My visit ended with an invitation to dine at the Hall on the following day—an invitation so warmly pressed on me, that I should have been ungrateful to refuse it. Sir Philip took hold of my hand as I rose to leave him. 'There is a tone, a hidden something, in your voice,' he said, 'which strikes familiarly on my ear. It sounds like the voice of an old friend heard long ago—but whose voice I cannot just now call to mind. After all,' he added with a laugh, 'it is perhaps only an old man's fancy.—To-morrow at six, remember. We keep early hours in the country.'

'I shall look rather awkward, when I reach Belair to-morrow,' I murmured to myself as I left the room, 'if it should happen that Sir Philip has forgotten all about the invitation—a contingency by no means improbable.'

Lady Spencelaugh was talking to one of the

gardeners on the terrace as I went out; she held up a finger, and I crossed to meet her. 'Well, Mr English,' she said, 'has Sir Philip raised any objections to your scheme?'

'None whatever, thanks to your Ladyship,' I replied. 'Further than that, Sir Philip has done me the honour of inviting me to dine at the Hall to-morrow.'

Her Ladyship's eyebrows went up momentarily. 'Hum! Invited you to dinner, has he? To-morrow. Let me see. Whom have we to-morrow? She consulted her tablets for a moment, and then looked up with a smile: 'Yes, we shall be very glad to see you to-morrow, Mr English,' she said; 'and pray, send up your largest portfolio of photographs: we want a little amusement these dull autumn evenings.—Good-morning;' and with another smile, and a stately inclination of the head, her Ladyship sailed back into the Hall.

I did not dream, my Frank, when I drove up to Belair the following afternoon in a rickety old cab, that I was going to meet my Fate. But so it was. People talk about presentiments and omens, but, for my part, I have no faith in such nonsense. All the chief events of my life—and my career has been a strange one—have happened to me without any premonition, visible or invisible, of what was about to occur. I can guess how you would explain the matter, for I know that you are an ardent believer in all such transcendental stuff. You would say that my nerves are too coarse and strong; that my organisation is not sufficiently susceptible to those delicate spiritual influences which thrill the being of a sensitive creature like yourself, and which afterwards, in cold blood (strange contradiction!), you gauge and analyse, and then work up as a psychological study, for the benefit of such as choose to read your literary lucubrations. Such fine sentimental theories seem to me like the caprices of a brain diseased. I thank the unknown progenitors who gave me these stout thews, that I don't know the meaning of the word 'dyspepsia,' and willingly leave the rest to dreamers like yourself.

On one point, however, my organisation proved sufficiently susceptible, for I had not been ten minutes in the drawing-room at Belair before I fell in love, ingloriously and helplessly. Such a splendid creature, Frank! beautiful as a dream. But I am not going to describe her; it would seem to me like profanation to coldly catalogue her charms. I will send you her photograph instead and then you will be able to judge faintly what the lovely reality is like—only very faintly, for all the warmth and colour, all the rich flush of life is wanting in these cold gray children of the camera. But no—on second thoughts, I will not favour you even thus far. I remember that coldly critical glance, that cynical curve of the lip, and tremble. I will neither describe her to you, nor send you her portrait. Think of the most beautiful creature you have ever seen, and then of your poor friend as being hopelessly in love with her—lost beyond recovery—and you will have some idea of what my condition has been for the past three weeks, and is at this present writing.

Her name is Frederica Spencelaugh; she is niece to Sir Philip Spencelaugh of Belair, and is the richest heiress in all Monksshire: while he who presumes to look up to her with the eyes of love—what?—a man without a name—a wretched wail and stray of humanity, without home or kindred

—'nobody's bairn.' I know that I ought to cry *mea culpa*, proclaim myself a fool for my pains, and rush away from this spot at once and for ever. But, somehow, I do precisely the opposite of all this: I glory in my love, I hug it to my heart, I bind its golden chains more firmly round me every day. I know that the time must come, and that before many weeks are over, when the last page of my life's idyl will be turned and read; when I shall awake as from a glorious dream, and have thenceforth to plod on through life with nothing but a memory to cheer me. Even so; but I will eat Love's lotus, and dream on while I may.

I enjoyed my evening at Belair extremely. What a different world it seemed from that of my common work-a-day experience! The quiet refinement of the company, which placed me at my ease directly; the splendour of the rooms—for even upholstery is not without its effect in such a case upon a novice like myself; the dinner, with all its elegant accessories, and the way in which every want was attended to almost before it could be felt; and last, though by no means least, the easy running-fire of conversation, touching lightly upon a hundred different topics, eliciting a spark from each in turn, and then gliding off to something else: all these things, I say, went to make up a species of mental intoxication, the delicious spell of which lingered in my brain for hours after I got back to my own dull rooms. And then she was there! I was introduced to her in the drawing-room before dinner, and sat opposite to her at table; and later on in the evening, when the younger portion of the company was gathered round the piano, and the elders were at cards in another room, I was bewildered to find her close beside me, turning over my portfolio of photographic views. I have no recollection now of how I answered the questions she put to me respecting some of them, but I know that we glided imperceptibly into a pleasant, genial stream of talk, travel-gossip chiefly, from which I was aroused, after I know not how long a time, by seeing the malignant glare of a man fixed full on me from the opposite corner of the room. He got up when he saw that I had observed him, and turned away with an evident sneer. 'Who was that gentleman?' I asked Miss Spencelaugh, who also had seen his evil look. 'Oh, that was Mr Duplessis,' she answered; 'a gentleman who visits frequently at Belair.' She seemed, if I may use the expression, to freeze as she said these words; the pensive softness of her face, that look which had charmed me but a moment ago, gave place to a proud defiant expression, which brought out lines of imperious beauty such as I had not imagined before. Presently she moved away, and joined the group around the piano.

That Mr Duplessis! A handsome man, certainly; very distinguished-looking, and evidently a general favourite. Shall I tell you the wish, Frank, that came uppermost in my mind as I saw him gliding softly about the room, with a smile and a honeyed word for every one, but always with a stealthy, feline glance out of the corners of his eyes, directed towards Miss Spencelaugh, wherever she might be? My wish, Frank, was, that he and I could be planted, foot to foot, in a clearing of some western forest, with a good sword in the right hand of each of us, there to fight till one of us should fall not to rise again. My old savage instincts are not quite dead yet, you see; they are only trampled

down, and will crop up at various odd times, and show their ugly faces for a moment, whatever may be the society in which I am moving. Judge, then, whether my liking for this man was augmented when I learned casually that he and Miss Spencelaugh are said to be engaged, and that the marriage will take place in the course of a few months. I could not believe it then, and I can hardly believe it now—now, three weeks later, during which time I have had opportunities of seeing them together on several occasions. Duplessis is up at Belair nearly every day, and he and Miss Spencelaugh are necessarily thrown much into each other's society; but however much he may flatter himself on that score, I cannot bring myself to think that she loves him. Regard, friendship, liking, she may, perhaps, have for him; and admiration of his many brilliant qualities; but for him, no love-light shines in those grand black eyes—of that I am certain. I am probably deceiving myself in this matter, you will say; but my chief reason for believing that she does not love him lies in the fact, that *I am not jealous of him*. If you cannot understand this without further explanation, I pity you.

But, you will urge, in a certain class of society, marriages of convenience are by no means uncommon: may not this be one of them? I confess that on this score I am more uneasy than on the former; and yet I don't know why I should be so. It seems to me an insult to Miss Spencelaugh to imagine for one moment that she would yield her hand to any man without giving her love with it. And, again, what worldly advantages are there on his side to make such a match seem probable? None; for neither in wealth, nor social position, can he pretend to equal the niece of Sir Philip Spencelaugh. No—Monsieur Henri Duplessis will never wed the heiress of Belair.

During the three weeks that have intervened between my first visit to Belair and the date of this letter, I have completed the views required for the work on which I am engaged by my employers, and have now got in hand a series of photographic studies of the Hall and its surroundings for Sir Philip. I have also taken the portraits of the family, including that of the lovely Frederica—a topic on which I dare not trust myself to write further.

CHAPTER X.—JOHN'S SECOND LETTER CONTINUED.

I am writing this long letter at intervals, when I have an hour to spare, and feel it the mood. You know that I was always fond of pedestrian excursions—my lungs never seem to play freely unless I get through a considerable quantity of walking-exercise each day—and I have found time, since I took up my quarters at Normanford, to visit some of the most lovely nooks of this lovely county. I had been out for a long excursion one day last week, and was returning homeward by a different route, when, just beyond a tiny hamlet of about a score houses, I came upon some interesting ruins, which I at once stopped to sketch without knowing anything whatever respecting them. While I was thus occupied, an old gentleman came ambling up on his cob, whom, from his garb and general appearance, I judged to be the village doctor. In these quiet country places, strangers do not stand on ceremony; and the doctor, as I shall call him, reined up his cob close behind me, and peered over my

shoulder for a minute or two before speaking. 'A tolerable sketch of the ruins, young gentleman,' he said at last; 'almost as good a one as I could do myself. Not quite, though—not quite.'

There was so much self-complacency both in his words and his manner of saying them, that I was on my stilts in a moment. 'Really, sir,' I replied, 'I cannot help feeling flattered to think that my poor sketch approximates, even in the slightest degree, to so superior a standard.'

'There, now, you are losing your temper, and talking nonsense,' said the stranger with a laugh; 'very bad things to do, both of them. I am old enough to be your father, and you have no business to get into a huff with what I said just now. You do not sketch as well as I do—there! and I very much question whether you even know the name of the ruin which you are so viciously trying to draw. That arch, by the by, is quite out of the perpendicular.'

I broke into a laugh, and tore my sketch in two, and then turned and confronted my tormentor. 'Perhaps you will be kind enough to act as my cicerone,' I said. 'You seem quite competent for the post, and I must confess that I am an entire stranger in this uncivilised part of the country.'

'An impertinence veiled under an appearance of good-humour,' answered the doctor. 'However, I have no objection, in the present instance, to act the part of a local guide-book for your behoof. The ruin before you, young man, is that of the Abbey of Seven Saints, founded in the eleventh century;' and with that he went on to give me a long description of the old place, which, as it would in nowise interest you, I pretermitt.

'Then, the village over the hill there,' I said when he came to an end, 'is, I suppose, named after the old abbey?'

'It is, and it is not,' said the stranger. 'Originally, no doubt, it was called the village of Seven Saints; but centuries ago the name got strangely corrupted, or rather, the two words got reversed, and for a longer period than I can tell you, it has been known as the village of Saint Sevens.'

Saint Sevens! Long after I and my new acquaintance had shaken hands and parted—after I got home, and while I smoked my evening pipe, and even after I got to bed, those two words haunted my memory strangely. I was firmly impressed with the conviction that I had heard them before. But when, and where? Guided by previous experience, my mind went groping back among the dim recollections of my early life, in my first home across the sea; but all my searchings into that far-off time seemed useless; my memory was decidedly at fault; and I was still musing and pondering over the subject when I fell asleep. In the dead middle of the night, I suddenly awoke, and sat bolt upright in bed; and the same moment there flashed into my brain, as vividly as though the words had been written on the black wall in letters of flame, this quaint old local distich, which the woman of whom I have spoken to you before—she who was at once so cruel and so kind to me, when, as a child, she and her husband had me in their charge—used sometimes to croon to herself as she went about her labours in the house:

We ring in the dark, say the bells of Saint Mark.
We ring you to heaven, say the bells of Saint Seven.
We ring you to bed, say the bells of Saint Ned.

Next day, I verified, by personal inquiry in the

neighbourhood, the fact, that the old country-side rhyme which I have set down above, was not a mere figment of my own brain; but that it has a real existence, probably a very old one, and is still locally popular among the housewives and children of the labouring-men living within sound of the bells of the three churches of which it makes mention, no one of which is more than a mile apart from the others.

Is this another step, Frank, on that dark road along which I am apparently being led without any volition of my own; and which I cannot but hope will ultimately bring me to a goal where I shall find a solution of the great mystery of my life—although as yet the path before me—if, indeed, there be a path at all—is hidden in densest cloud, from which neither hand nor voice comes forth to guide me on my way?

I have thought much during the past three weeks on what passed between Mrs Winch and myself, but, to all appearance, I am still as far as ever from grasping the key of the enigma. Had the widow's warning letter reached Lady Spence-laugh, I might perhaps have gathered, from the conduct or conversation of the latter, some faint clue which would have guided me out of the maze of perplexity in which I am still wandering. But the landlady has not yet come back, and her Ladyship evidently knows of no reason why I should be considered by her as 'dangerous.' I await the return of Mrs Winch anxiously.

While I think of it, let me tell you a curious little circumstance which happened to me the other day; and yet it seems almost too trivial to set down. But life is made up of trifles, and this one may have its significance as well as others.

I had ordered a box of chemicals from London, but not receiving it in due course, I walked over to Kingsthorpe, the nearest railway station to Normanford, to inquire respecting the delay. After getting the information I needed, I turned to leave the booking-office, but halted for a moment near the door to consult the monthly time-table. The afternoon was darkening by this time, and while I was peering at the figures, a porter came and lighted a lamp close before my face; and next moment the door of some inner room was opened, and a middle-aged, plainly-dressed woman, whom I had never seen before, came out, and was brushing hastily past me, when happening to look up, her eyes met mine for a moment, and in that moment she flung up one of her arms, as though to defend herself against an invisible foe, and staggered back like one stricken by some resistless terror. I, too, fell back a pace or two in surprise, and next instant the woman rushed past me and out of the office, exclaiming as she did so: 'Come back from the dead! come back from the dead!' and so disappeared in the darkness outside. I followed her out on to the platform, but she was gone already. 'Who was that woman that went out just now?' I asked the lame porter. 'Didn't see any woman, sir, therefore can't say,' he replied. I wandered up and down the platform for some time, but without seeing anything more of the woman, whom I at once set down as crazy; so you must take my narrative for what it is worth.

On quitting Belair yesterday afternoon, I took a road through the park that I had never traversed before—a road which led direct from Normanford, and which brought me, after a time, to the southernmost point of the park, and to the little church

of Belair, where, for centuries past, the chief members of the Spencelaugh family have found their last resting-place. This church is a very humble and unpretending edifice, of the early Norman period, repaired and renovated at various times since its erection. The little place abounds with records of the great family at the Hall. The oldest monument, and one that is much defaced, is that of a certain Sir Geoffrey Spencelaugh, a celebrated Crusader, who lies there in effigy, with crossed legs, and a hound at his feet. From the time of this hero, the records of the lords of Belair and their wives follow for several centuries in regular succession, some of them being written in mediæval Latin, and some in crabbed Old English; some of them being simple records of births and deaths, while others wander off into eulogistic strains of turgid prose, or, still worse, into limping stanzas of watery verse. I had nearly got to the end of the series, when my studies were interrupted by the entrance of a little bustling man in black, with a bunch of noisy keys, and an asthmatic cough, who introduced himself as the clerk of the church, and volunteered any information respecting the edifice and its monuments that I might require. As it happened, I did want some information just then, and there was no one more likely than he to furnish it; so, for nearly an hour the little man and I paced the gravelled pathway of the churchyard, on which the autumn sun was shining warm and full, I listening, while he favoured me with an outline of the history of the family at Belair for the last fifty years. I now learned, for the first time, that Sir Arthur Spencelaugh, the last baronet, was Miss Spencelaugh's father, and cousin to the present baronet, and that both he and his wife died in India; and that, consequently, Sir Philip is not in reality Frederica's uncle, but merely her father's cousin. I learned, further, that the present Lady Spencelaugh is Sir Philip's second wife; and that his first wife died also in India, within a month or two of the death of Sir Arthur's wife, the two women having been bosom-friends from girlhood. The most recent tablet in the church is one recording the death of Sir Philip's eldest-born, a son by his first wife, who died in infancy, and who was named Arthur, after the last baronet, his father's cousin.

You wonder, probably, why I should display so great an interest in the records of a family with whose very existence I was unacquainted only a few weeks ago. My only excuse is, that whatever has any, the remotest reference to Her has for me a fascination which I am utterly powerless to resist. Do I hope to win her? Ah, no! I am not insane enough to hope that. But I cannot cease to love her.

As I was returning through the park on my way home from the little church, I encountered Sir Philip himself, who, tempted by the fineness of the day, had come out for a ramble, but having wandered further than he ought to have done, was now sitting on a bench under one of the trees, doubting his ability to get back unaided to the Hall. The meeting was an opportune one; Sir Philip was glad to have the assistance of my arm back home, and I was pleased to be of even so slight a service to one whom I respect and esteem so greatly. Yes, Frank, and, strange as it may seem to you, I think I may say without flattery, that a mutual and very genuine liking exists between the wealthy Sir Philip Spencelaugh,

whose pedigree goes back for I know not how many centuries, and the homeless and obscure John English the photographer. He himself, on more than one occasion, has given me to understand that it is so. During the time that I was taking photographs of the Hall, he would come pottering after me; sometimes content to sit quietly near me in the sun without speaking; sometimes asking me a hundred questions respecting my profession, and the different places I have visited; according as his mood happened to be a silent or a talkative one. Then, when my morning's work was done, he would often have me into the library, and shew me some of the rare old volumes it contains, for he has been somewhat of a bibliophile in his time; and after that came luncheon, sometimes partaken of with him alone, sometimes in company with Miss Spencelaugh. It was pleasant to see the loving tenderness with which that fair young creature attended to the old man's wants; had they been father and daughter, the tie between them could not have been a closer one.

I left Sir Philip at the door of the Hall, but not till he had made me promise to dine there to-day; and there, to-day, I have dined—scarcely an hour has elapsed since my return home—and I am sitting up to put the last few lines to this lengthy epistle, because I am in no humour for bed.

Frederica was there—how it thrills me to write the name!—and as beautiful as ever. I know that I ought to call her Miss Spencelaugh, and to any other than you, old friend, I should not think of calling her otherwise. There were only some three or four guests besides myself, and all of them elderly people. She and I were the only young people present; for by some blessed concatenation of circumstances, that hateful Duplessis, although expected, was unable to come; and I had her sweet society all to myself for more than an hour in the drawing-room. Such moments of felicity, Frank, can come to a fellow like me but seldom in a lifetime. How will it all end? I tremble when I venture to look into the future. Nay, but I will look forward no more. I am one of Love's fatalists, to whom the sweet intoxication of the present is all in all.

I found Sir Philip's dog-cart and a groom at my disposal when it was time to depart. A low growl of thunder sounded among the hills just as we left the Hall. 'We shall have a storm before long, sir,' said the man. 'It has been threatening all evening, but we may perhaps be able to get into Normanford before the rain comes on.' After a rapid drive down the park, we halted for a minute at the lodge while the keeper came out to open the gates for us. Another vehicle, which we could just dimly make out through the darkness, drove up on the opposite side while we were waiting. Next moment the gates were opened, and we passed slowly through, while the other vehicle turned the corner of the road to enter. At the instant that we passed each other, an intensely vivid flash of lightning, the first of the storm, broke from the black sky, revealing by its momentary blaze the faces of Mrs Winch and her son Jerry. In that one brief second of time the widow's eyes and mine met: she saw her enemy, and I saw mine: next moment, the intense blackness swallowed us up one from the other; and then the thunder spoke, and the hills answered, and to these grand accompaniments of nature I rode swiftly homeward. What will be the result of Mrs Winch's

visit to the Hall, I cannot even surmise. Lady Spencelaugh will now learn how the note written her by the widow miscarried. How this information will affect my future intimacy with the inmates of Belair, is another problem which I am quite unable to solve.

The clock of the little church on the hill has just struck two. High time to conclude, is it not? Write soon, dear Frank, and believe me ever, your affectionate friend,
JOHN ENGLISH.

Postscript.—Eleven A.M. next morning. The widow's visit to Belair has already proved fruitful in effects; witness the following note which I have just received by special messenger:

'Lady Spencelaugh presents her compliments to Mr John English, and begs to inform him that in consequence of certain circumstances which it is not necessary to specify, his services will not be required at Belair to complete the series of photographic studies arranged for by Sir Philip Spencelaugh. Mr English will oblige by sending in his bill to Lady Spencelaugh, and a cheque shall at once be sent him for the amount. Lady S. thinks it just necessary to add, that the state of Sir Philip's health will entirely preclude him for some time to come from being seen by any but his most intimate friends.'

Am I right or wrong, Frank, in thinking that there is something more in all this—in all that has happened to me since my arrival at Normanford—than can be seen on the surface? If Lady Spencelaugh and Mrs Winch think that this step on their part will result in my quitting the little town, they are utterly mistaken. What may be the nature of the hidden link that connects me, John English, a humble wandering photographer, with the great Lady of Belair, and the landlady of an obscure country inn, is quite beyond my power to imagine; but here I will remain till I have sifted the mystery to the bottom. How to set about this task, I cannot tell: I see nothing clearly at present, except that by this mandate of her Ladyship I am shut out from the sweet society of her I love. This I understand and feel but too bitterly. For the rest, I must have time to think. That Miss Spencelaugh and kind-hearted Sir Philip have no hand in my dismissal, I feel firmly convinced. But as for her Ladyship, she will not get rid of me quite so easily as she imagines.
J. E.

ICHABOE, THE GUANO ISLAND.

H.M.S. *Thunderbolt* was lying at anchor in Simon's Bay, Cape of Good Hope, when our captain received orders from the admiral commanding the squadron on the station to proceed with his ship forthwith to the island of Ichaboe, on the coast of Angra Peguina, and there to keep her as a guard-ship until further orders. Fearful rumours of the state of things at Ichaboe had reached the Cape. It was said that the harbour and island were in a condition of absolute anarchy; that law and order were set at defiance; that quarrels and fights, sometimes attended with serious, and even fatal results, were of daily occurrence between the crews of rival ships, and rival gangs of labourers on shore; that the captains of some ships had not only been forbidden to land on the island, but had been ordered to quit the

harbour with their vessels; and that unless some legally appointed authority was speedily established, and maintained by force if necessary, matters would assume a still more serious aspect.

At the date of which I write, the position of the island of Ichaboe was not accurately known. It had rarely been visited, save by a few Dutch coasting-skippers, until, by some chance, it was discovered to contain, or rather chiefly to consist of, a rich deposit of guano—the great fertilising agent which had about this time begun to attract the attention of scientific farmers and agriculturists. Its position was not laid down upon any of the then existing charts of the African coast; and of the few masters of merchantmen and coasters who had visited the spot, no two were found to agree exactly in respect to its latitude and longitude.

Thus it was that, after having taken a final point of departure from Cape Volta, we ran along the coast under easy sail during the day, often 'lying to' for hours together at night. Sometimes we fancied that we could discern the indistinct lines of a crowd of ships' masts and spars behind some lofty 'hummock' of land, and were thus led to run the ships' prow into several small inlets, and creeks, and bays, with no other result than the stirring up of the huge ground-sharks, which would rise to the surface to discover what description of unknown monster had intruded into their solitary domains, and poking their hideous shovel-snouts out of the water, would gaze upon us for a few moments, with a look of sullen curiosity in their greedy lack-lustre eyes, and then sink slowly down again to their beds of mud at the bottom. In this manner a week passed away ere the welcome cry of 'Land, ho!' was heard from the man on the look-out aloft.

The reports of the officers who had gone aloft corroborated this welcome news, and in a few minutes more all doubt was set at rest. The haze over the land lifted as the sun rose higher in the heavens, and a forest of masts and spars could be seen, even from the ship's deck, rising from behind a dome-shaped 'hummock' of land, which was, in fact, the anxiously-looked-for island of Ichaboe.

The bay opened to our view as we proceeded, and disclosed a fleet of nearly two hundred vessels of all sizes and of every description, from large ships of one thousand, to small schooners of scarcely more than a hundred tons; boats were passing to and fro from ship to ship, and between the ships and the shore; while the shore itself was thronged with men, and lined—facing the harbour—with groups of canvas tents, giving it the appearance of a military encampment.

It was not, however, until we were near the mouth of the harbour that we could discern the form and extent of the island, which at one spot was separated from the mainland only by a narrow channel, scarcely fifty yards in breadth. The island of Ichaboe, previous to the accumulation of guano on its surface, was nothing more than a mere sand-bank of nearly circular form, and about half a mile in diameter; and now that the guano has been removed, it is restored to its original condition. The island is surrounded by reefs, against which the surf dashes violently from seaward, rendering a landing upon its outer shore impossible. From very near the water's edge, the guano rose in the form of a dome to the height of about one hundred and fifty feet; and on its summit

some patriotic sea-captain had planted the British Union-jack, and thus formally taken possession of the island in the name and on behalf of the British crown.

This, in fact, was one of the many sources from which irritation and trouble had arisen; for though the coast of Angra Peguina is formally claimed by no European power, and though, if any power has the right to a priority of claim, it is Portugal—the name of Angra Peguina having been conferred upon the coast by the early Portuguese navigators—several foreign ships had been prevented by the British claimants from taking a cargo of guano on board.

The chief causes of complaint were, that the masters of certain ships belonging to large ship-owning firms in Great Britain had attempted to monopolise all the guano on the island, and had in a great measure succeeded in effecting their object by retaining possession of the 'guano-pits' after their own vessels were loaded, until other vessels belonging to the same large firms arrived to take their place: also, that when other ship-masters—'outsiders,' as they were termed—who were not in the league had attempted to load their vessels, they had been prevented from so doing by force, as well on the part of the labourers on the island as on that of the rival ship-masters and seamen. On the other hand, it was maintained by those who claimed a prior right to load the guano from the 'pits,' that the owners of their ships had been first in the field, and had been at very great expense in constructing wharfs, without which it was impossible for any ship's crew to load a cargo from the island, and that those who had been at no expense in the construction of these wharfs claimed the privilege of using them.

When the *Thunderbolt* first entered the harbour, about half the guano had already been removed, and the surface from which it had been taken presented the appearance from the ship of a dark-coloured, rugged cliff. It was not until we had landed on the island, that we could form any correct idea of the nature of the guano, or of the manner in which it had accumulated in such a vast quantity.

This landing, however, was not so easily effected. I have observed that it was impracticable to load the guano without the aid of wharfs; I may add that without these wharfs it would have been impossible to land from a ship's boat, unless in unusually fine weather; and that frequently—as often, indeed, as two or three days in each week—it was impossible to load the guano even from the wharfs into the boats. Very rarely, indeed, was the water of the harbour perfectly smooth, or even the inner side of the island free from surf. A moderate breeze from the northward would send a rolling sea into the bay, and cause the surf to break with considerable violence over the reefs of rocks that surrounded the island; and a strong breeze would create a sea that rendered the anchorage dangerous, and compelled a strict watch to be kept to prevent the vessels from driving their anchors, or running foul of each other, while the surf at such times raged so violently that no boat could safely approach the shore. For this reason, it was found necessary, in order that ships should be enabled to load within a reasonable time, to allow a number of men to live constantly on shore in the tents already mentioned. The majority of these men were 'navvies,' sent out from Liverpool by


ship-owners who had a number of ships employed in the trade, while several seamen from the ships generally remained on shore with the 'navvies' while the ship to which they belonged was loading her cargo. These men, who were supplied with an abundance of provisions on shore, and to whom fresh provisions were from time to time supplied from the ships, were thus enabled to work at bringing down the guano and filling it into bags, when the surf was too violent for the boats to come to the wharfs; and thus a large quantity of guano was carried down to the wharfs ready to be tumbled into the boats as soon as the weather moderated. The bags were then taken off to the ships as quickly as possible, and their contents started into the holds, where, while some of the ship's crew trimmed the guano 'in bulk,' the boat's crew returned to the wharf with the empty bags, and received another load.

On approaching a wharf, whether with an intention to land or to obtain a boat-load of guano, it was necessary to watch an opportunity, and run the boat in on the top of a high sea. If a load were required, the bags, already on the wharf, were tumbled into the boat as quickly as possible, the boat's crew meanwhile holding the boat in position by grasping the chain-cables with all their might; and when the boat was loaded, she was permitted to go out on the top of a receding sea, the men standing ready to ply their oars the very moment she was clear of the reef, lest she should be carried back into the surf and dashed to pieces.

Once landed and clear of the wharf, we stood on a beach of fine silvery sand, which extended to the centre of the island—the guano, as I have observed, having, at the date of our arrival, been half carried away. A strong ammoniacal stench, extremely disagreeable until one became accustomed to it, and resembling the smell of a mixture of hartshorn and stable manure, pervaded the atmosphere of the island, and grew stronger and stronger as we approached the wall of guano, which now, having been cut through the centre of the dome, rose to its greatest height, and presented a compact mass of a dark snuff-colour, though the surface of the mound was of a silver-gray, elastic to the tread, and covered with a short, scanty kind of grayish grass or moss.

The mass of guano was measured into 'pits'—so termed; that is to say, a number of lines, each about ten or twelve feet apart from the other, were run up from the sand to the summit of the mound, and each division was termed a 'pit,' and claimed by the owners of the opposite wharf; the privilege to load from a pit being paid for by outsiders in the same manner as the use of the wharfs was paid for. These pits, however, differed greatly in value, as those, of course, which cut through the central portion of the mound contained a very much larger quantity of guano than those which cut through the extreme ends.

The following was the method employed to bring down the guano from the summit of the mound or dome, in order to fill the bags from the beach.

A line was drawn the full breadth of the pit, and about six feet back from the edge on either side (thus ). The navvies then dug a narrow trench about six or eight feet deep along the lines marked out, and into this trench—round the mass of guano required to be brought down—a stout rope was thrown, the two ends of which reached to the

beach beneath. A great number of men then seized the two ends of the rope, and tugged at them with all their strength, until the mass—generally weighing four or five tons—was gradually loosened, and came crumbling down—when the men ran to escape from it; though it not unfrequently happened that those who had not been quick enough to effect their escape were buried beneath the falling guano, and severely bruised, and sometimes almost suffocated before they could be extricated.

The digging the narrow trench at the summit was also a disagreeable and arduous task. After the men had dug three or four feet deep, the stench became so intolerable and so irritating, that none even of the experienced navvies could stand to the work for more than two minutes at a spell; and I have often seen them emerge from the trenches with their eyes frightfully inflamed, and blood gushing from their nostrils.

Still this intolerable effluvia did not seem to be prejudicial to the health of those who worked and lived amidst it, whether on board the ships or on shore; and though accidents of various kinds were frequent, there were very few cases of sickness, either among the sailors or the labourers. When we first landed on the island, we used to light our pipes, filled with the strongest tobacco, in order to dissipate the stench of the guano; but after a while we became accustomed to it, and scarcely perceived it.

Ichaboe had been at one time, and in all probability for many centuries, the chosen resort of sea-fowl of every description, and seals of the largest species; and the accumulation of the vast amount of guano had arisen, not solely from the deposit of the excrement of these animals, but also from the decomposition of their bodies. The seals had taken their departure from the island, scared by the appearance of man; but many species of sea-birds, and particularly boobies and penguins, continued to make it their resort to the very last.

Active and easily alarmed as these creatures are when in the water seeking for their prey, they appeared to become divested of all fear, from sheer laziness and stupidity, when on land. I have seen them, day after day, hunted and beaten down with sticks by the sailors, yet they would return to the same spot immediately. I have seen them seated on the top of a mass of guano, while it was being tugged at by the sailors, without moving, until at length they came tumbling with it to the beach; and, night after night, it was a pretty and an amusing spectacle to witness the flocks of penguins returning from the sea, where they had been fishing throughout the day, to their holes in the guano, to which they still continued to resort at night, marching along in single-file, and with stately step, as upright as so many soldiers on parade, their white breasts flashing in the moonlight, and contrasting with the glossy dark-green plumage of their backs. From a short distance off, they presented the appearance of a regiment of manikins in uniform.

In the holes in which they burrowed at night they remained when sick, or worn out with age, to die. Often they were dug out by the navvies and sailors, still alive, but at their last gasp; and never was a mass of guano brought down to the beach, in the manner before described, that did not contain several penguins' skins—the feathers still attached to the skins, though the bodies of the

animals had intermingled with the guano, and become a portion of the vast mass of ammoniacal deposit. Frequently, the skins of immense seals, that must have been as large as oxen, were found in a similar manner, though the skins of seals and birds alike, however perfect when dug out from the guano, rotted away immediately on being exposed to the air; frequently found at the depth of twenty and thirty feet beneath the surface of the mound, they had, in all probability, lain buried for centuries.

It was no uncommon thing, either, for the men to dig up tin plates and spoons from several feet beneath the surface, that had probably been left behind them, many, many years before, by sailors engaged in the seal-fishery, who had landed on the island; and one day, a strangely interesting incident occurred, which afforded us an opportunity of calculating roughly the length of time that had been occupied in the accumulation of the immense deposit that was now being carried away to enrich the soil of a far-distant land. We were surprised one morning, when several parties were going on shore in the ship's boats, to see a general rush of sailors and labourers from the beach to the summit of the mound. Thinking that some serious accident had occurred, we hastened on shore with all possible speed, and quickly made our way to the summit after the crowd, and arrived just in time to see a large oblong box, shaped like a rudely constructed coffin, raised to the surface. It had been dug out from exactly seventeen feet (measured) from the summit of the mound, and on being opened, was found to contain the perfect form of a man, changed into a substance resembling the guano in which it had lain buried, though somewhat more tenacious and clayey in its nature. The body was left undisturbed until the captain of the *Thunderbolt* was apprised of the discovery. He came on shore immediately, followed by many of the shipmasters in the harbour, who also having heard of the exhumation of a human body from the guano, were eager to see the corpse that had been so strangely preserved. Meanwhile, some of the men who stood near the coffin made the discovery that a rude inscription had been carved on its lid, and though the inscription was almost wholly obliterated, the outer surface of the wood having become as soft and porous as sponge, some of the letters and figures were still to be traced out. The letters 'bermann,' forming apparently the latter portion of a word, and the figures '689,' evidently a portion of a date, were plainly legible, when at length the guano that adhered to the wood had been carefully removed.

No one could for some time make anything of these letters and figures, until at length the idea occurred to the surgeon of the *Thunderbolt*, that the letters had formed part of the Dutch word 'Timbermann' (carpenter), and that the figures were a portion of the date 1689, when the body was probably interred. This was indeed by no means an improbable interpretation. The early Dutch settlers of Cape Colony were much occupied in seal-fishing, and had very likely often visited the island, which was a favourite resort of seals; and when any of the crews of the vessels thus employed died, it was equally probable that they were sometimes buried on shore. If, therefore, the suggestions of the surgeon were correct, and the corpse had been interred in the year 1689, at a depth of four or five feet beneath the then existing surface of the

guano—and it is not likely that sailors would trouble themselves to dig a grave deeper than four or five feet—the surface of the deposit must have been raised twelve or thirteen feet in the course of the one hundred and fifty-six years that had elapsed between 1689, the date of the interment, and 1845, the date of the exhumation. The first idea of the captain of the *Thunderbolt* was to have the coffin, which contained this singularly preserved relic of humanity, carried carefully on board the sloop-of-war, that he might convey it to England, and present it to the British Museum; but it had not been exposed for an hour to the action of the atmosphere, ere both the coffin and its contents crumbled away into a mere shapeless mass of earthy matter.

The climate of Ichaboe and the neighbouring coast is cold for its latitude—about 26° south—and though rain seldom falls, the nights are frequently damp and chilly from the heavy dews. As I have before observed, the waters of the harbour were seldom in a quiescent state. Heavy rollers, created by the full sweep of the South Atlantic Ocean, set into the harbour whenever the wind inclines to the northward, against which the harbour affords no protection. Accidents of one kind or another were of almost daily occurrence. There was hardly a ship in the harbour that did not lose one or more boats—dashed to pieces in the surf—while endeavouring to load beneath the wharfs, and the loss of the boats was sometimes attended with loss of life. Add to these disasters the frequency of accidents on shore, through the falling of heavy masses of guano, and it will be seen that Ichaboe was by no means an agreeable place wheret to load a cargo or to pay a long visit.

Three large ships, while putting out to sea with a full cargo of guano on board, were totally wrecked on the reefs at the entrance of the harbour, through being caught by the rollers during a calm, and thus rendered unmanageable; and it was only by dint of great exertion on the part of the sailors belonging to the other ships in the harbour, that any portion of the crews of the wrecked vessels were saved. As it was, several men perished, and among them two of the crews of the boats that gallantly went to the rescue.

The *Thunderbolt* remained altogether four months at Ichaboe. When we first arrived, there were, as I have before stated, some two hundred vessels lying at anchor within the harbour, and the guano that had at one time covered the island was about half removed. When we sailed—glad enough to leave the desolate spot—we left only three ships behind, whose masters and crews were busily gathering together, in the hope to complete their lading, the sweepings that alone remained of the once vast mound of guano.

The chain-cables, and kedge-anchors and planks and spars that had formed the numerous wharfs on the inner side of the island, had all been removed by their several owners; and where eight or ten months before a lofty mound had risen to attract the attention of navigators passing by, there remained a mere sand-bank, level with the water's edge, and surrounded by reefs, over which the surf perpetually broke with melancholy murmur. Where, for several months past, the busy hum of human labour had been almost incessant, a solemn silence reigned, only broken by the screams of the sea-birds that still hovered around their ancient haunt. Before many days had elapsed, the last solitary vessel quitted the harbour; and the island,

suddenly and temporarily raised into a port of importance by the commercial enterprise of Great Britain, was left to the seals and sea-fowl—its former inhabitants—a barren waste of rocks and sand.

As time passes away, the seals and sea-birds may return to the spot in as great numbers as before, and perhaps, centuries hence, a mound of guano may again cover the island, and again the busy hum of human labour may resound over the dreary solitude. But that time, if it ever arrive, must be far, far distant; and meanwhile, Ichaboe will remain unexplored, and perhaps utterly forgotten.

THE PHANTOM SHIPS.

THE phantom ships, the little ships,
Mere films of cloudy air,
Go gliding past through light and shade,
Through gleams and lustres rare;
Or where the moonbeam's silver path
Sheds glory o'er the sea,
Or where the sunbeam's splendour
Rests in its majesty.

The little ships, the phantom ships,
Mere tiny films of gray,
Go sailing, sailing, past the cliffs,
And past the frothing bay.
Are they from East or from the West?
From Turkey or from Spain?
Or but the shadows of dream-ships
Gliding across my brain?

The phantom ships, the phantom ships,
With sailing wings spread gray,
Flaunt forth no crimson pennons
In chivalrous display;
Steer down the channel, past the shoal,
With no rejoicing cheer,
With no resounding cannon,
Nor fire-flash glancing clear.

Those phantom ships are like the hopes
Of days long since rolled by;
O'er dreamland seas, they glide along,
Their gray sails mounting high.
Glide on—glide on! ye shadowy fleet,
And bear your dead away,
Past glistening sands and rampart cliff,
And little frothing bay.

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CODLINGBURY RACES.

YOU might with as much reason search the work entitled *Fistiana* for an account of the great battle between Brown *Secundus* and Tomlinson *Major*, which took place between morning and afternoon lessons in the playground of Dr Swisher's Seminary for Young Gentlemen at Turnham Green, as calculate upon finding in the established chronicles or calendars of the Turf any particulars, or, indeed, any mention of the racing occurrences which have, quite recently, been convulsing our neighbourhood. What enterprising sporting spirit first put it into the heads of us quiet denizens in the centre of a southern English county, to quit for a day our agricultural pursuits, enter upon a miniature mimicry of the great doings of Newmarket and Doncaster, lay down rules, print cards, collect sweepstakes, receive entries, announce plates and prizes, nominate stewards, a judge, a starter, a clerk of the scales, and an honorary secretary, and mark and measure out upon that Codlingbury Down we are all so proud of, a course for horse-racing purposes—it is quite out of my power to specify. We have held our Codlingbury Meeting now for some seasons, and it has been invariably pronounced a success by all concerned. But hitherto, it has hardly attracted from the general or the sporting public that attention to which we fancy it is fairly entitled. It is by no means regarded as among the 'events' of the racing-year; it is not even considered as a juvenile affair, promising in the future a prosperous maturity. I doubt if even the most sagacious and far-sighted of sporting-men has got so much as half an eye upon Codlingbury with the notion that its proceedings may ultimately develop into a likely field for the carrying on of his operations. Indeed, I take upon myself to say, that out of our own neighbourhood—a neighbourhood in such an open down-country as ours, however, representing an area of some extent—hardly a soul has ever heard of our Codlingbury races. The more reason exists, therefore, as it seems to me, that I should make some attempt to inform the world as to a subject

upon which it really ought to be informed, and to describe briefly the important goings-on upon our down-lands at Codlingbury, when, as each spring returns, we run our horses, and hold racing revel.

We are miles from any station. No railway company, therefore, makes our proceedings the reason or the excuse for an excursion-train. No white London faces appear upon our course. We are all country-complexioned, sunburnt and sun-freckled, brightly ruddled by the lusty breezes that are always blowing freshly and freely over our wide open downs. We are on high land, too, with on every side blue lines of far distance dimming and fading as they touch and mingle with the sky at the extreme horizon. An undulating country; the land-waves very wide-spreading at their base, and round and blunt at their crest; here and there crowned with thick fir coverts—for we are a hunting-people hereabouts, and duly heedful concerning the preservation of foxes—with great 'punch-bowls' where the down dips suddenly, to soar and surge up again with greater force to higher heights. A pleasant country; somewhat pale-hued, for the chalk is very near to the surface-soil, and seems to gleam through the thin earthen veneer; with little wood beyond the coverts already mentioned, and little water save here and there a pond for the sheep. We are great providers of mutton out Codlingbury-way. You can trace the highway—the old coaching-road it used to be in days when such things as coaches were still extant—a long white streak up the nearest hill, like a chalk-line upon green baize; then you lose it for a while where it descends on the further side of the declivity, to reappear a paler, thinner streak upon the upland again, finally to vanish into the merest white thread, the faintest sheep-walk in the utmost distance. Our course is not upon very level land, nor very conveniently laid out. The spectators mostly congregate at the point where a little red flag marks the winning-post; and as it is deemed desirable to let them see as much of the race as possible, the start takes place, and the finish comes off, upon the same ground; the course being

pear-shaped, defined by hurdles and little white pennons, and the beginning and the end occurring upon what we may call the stalk part of the pear. We don't possess any grand stand; a farm-wagon, trimmed with bunting, does duty in that respect; and the judge, so far as I could ascertain, simply stands upon a chair, steadying himself by means of a pole, firmly driven into the ground, the while he makes his awards.

I should recommend any stray attendant at our Codlingbury sports to dismiss from his mind, as the barristers say, any preconceptions he may have derived from the doings at other race-courses, under the notion that they will be applicable to our proceedings on Codlingbury Down. For instance, at our races, he had better not expect to find race-horses, because he won't see anything of the kind. Nobody ever heard of a race-horse running at Codlingbury races. Such an apparition would occasion something like a panic upon the course. Nor need he look for jockeys, as jockeys are ordinarily understood. Generally, at races, one is impressed by the idea that the riders are wonderfully small, the horses singularly tall and large. We reverse that principle at Codlingbury. Our riders are cast in a grand, heroic mould, and perhaps on that account our horses appear curiously small and dwarfed. It is one of the rules of our races, that all the horses are to be ridden by gentlemen, as distinguished from professional riders; and there exists no gentleman about Codlingbury but would be ashamed to get into the scales and pull less than twelve stone; indeed, in most of our races the *minimum* weight for the jockeys is fixed at that amount, the average weight of our riders being probably nearer sixteen. We are solid and substantial people at Codlingbury; our waistcoats cut into a good deal of cloth; and about our figures there is a tendency which, if I might be permitted to invent a word, that, being invented, the reader would not denounce as coarse, I should like to designate as 'stomachy.'

Of course, on horseback, in a tight-fitting orange or cherry-coloured satin jacket, the expanse of contour thus alluded to becomes remarkably manifest. But in this 'capon-lined' convexity of form, our jockeys keep each other well in countenance. No absurd stress is laid upon the advantage of feather-weights at Codlingbury; nor do we especially prize youthfulness of years any more than of figure. We prefer our jockeys, like our port wine, to have maturity and fullness, and plenty of body. We hold that horse-racing is much more a pastime adapted for middle age than for extreme youth. No doubt, a lean, adolescent bystander—supposing such, by some chance, to have strayed into the precincts of Codlingbury course—might be entitled to level at one or more of our riders the charge Mr Pickwick brought against Mr Tupman, when the latter gentleman announced his intention of presenting himself at Mrs Leo Hunter's 'fancy-dress breakfast' in the character of a bandit, 'in a green velvet jacket, with a two-inch tail.' 'You are too old, sir; and if any further ground of objection be wanting, you are too fat, sir.' But at Codlingbury we should be quite impervious to such criticism; indeed, I sometimes think that when our jockeys go into training for the races (if they ever do anything so absurd, which isn't likely), they rather adopt the system of diet upon which the famous Mr Banting augmented his bulk so signally, than the regimen he subsequently discovered, by means

of which he was enabled to restrict his proportions at pleasure. About Codlingbury, we are constantly in the habit of fattening cattle for sale, and some confusion may at times have arisen in our minds between the treatment required in preparing stock for the market, and in training jockeys for the race-course.

The usual desiderata at races, expressed in the customary formula, as to a clear course and no favour, with an added adjuration that the best horse may win, are prejudices we are quite above at Codlingbury. In fact, we don't clear the course at all; we regard it as much more the duty of the horses to get out of the way of the spectators, than for the spectators to make room for the horses. We have a rural policeman or two upon the ground; but it is evidently no part of the policeman's duty to clear the course and assist the operations of the day. He is there, like the rest of us, to enjoy himself and look on; the constable being, for the time, merged and lost in the spectator, the while he cracks nuts with his teeth—this last employment being ever, for some as yet unrevealed reasons, especially grateful to the policeman, rural or otherwise. Quite a crowd leaps the hurdles, and gathers about the winning-post, at the instant of the horses coming in at their best speed. Probably we know the horses at Codlingbury; that they won't do us any harm, and that their speed, even at 'the finish,' is not dangerous either to themselves, their riders, or anybody else. Then our course is by no means favourable to racing; we think nothing of holes and deep cart-ruts disfiguring the down; perhaps we hold that such matters give the charm of incident and variety to the running; and so far from our desiring the best horse to win, it is evident all our sympathies are awarded to the worst animal entered. We constrain thoroughbred horses to be heavily extra-weighted. If a horse has ever previously won a race, he is compelled to carry an additional seven pounds; if two races, why, then, ten pounds. There is almost a disposition to make soundness a reason for a further penalty; only it is felt perhaps that such a regulation would be somewhat supererogatory. Soundness is rather exceptional with our Codlingbury steeds; it is certainly not their *forte*. What we specially like is a race in which every horse, being well sunk into the vale of years, runs gallantly upon three legs, or roars tempestuously all the way. Many people are much interested in cricket-matches in which single-armed players contend with single-legged; such people would, I think, enjoy amazingly our Codlingbury racing, in which the lame are opposed to the blind, 'navicular' is matched against broken wind, and general unsoundness fights 'gamely' with particularly bad spavin.

I am afraid that these admissions may be somewhat detrimental to the interests of our Codlingbury races in the eyes of the sporting community. But it would be vain for me to urge, that in the matter of the running of thoroughbred 'cracks,' Codlingbury can compete with better-known meetings; I prefer to let judgment go in that respect; but I have other issues to submit to a jury of the general public, upon which I don't despair of obtaining a verdict. To those who regard a race-meeting as a pleasant day in the fresh air, in a fine country; a picnic, with interludes of horse-running; an excuse for pleasure, for meeting one's friends, chatting, flirting, laughing, eating and drinking in an unaccustomed yet not unattractive way: to such worthy

and excellent people, I say our pastimes must appear of no inconsiderable merit. And particularly have we one advantage. It is usually alleged as a charge against races, that they are so very soon over—mere affairs of the moment; brilliant but brief, like flashes of lightning. Now, such is by no means the case with our Codlingbury races; no one can fairly accuse them of being soon over. Some races, I know, are measured by seconds. We don't condescend to such affectation as that at Codlingbury; we like to linger over our pleasures; we haven't so many of them that we can afford to hurry them. So our gentlemen-jockeys go round the prescribed course in a leisurely way that is really charming; and our judge, a most pleasant, smiling old gentleman in spectacles, is quite equal to the occasion. I think it is keenly painful to him to pronounce that one horse is beaten by another; he would infinitely prefer that all the starters should come in first, if it could possibly be so arranged. However, he does the best he can for the losers; unless it happen to be a very clear case of winning—say, by two or three lengths—our judge invariably pronounces the race to be a *dead heat*; consequently, we have it all over again. He scorns such dabbling in pedantic minutiae as measuring by necks. At no races, I take upon myself to say, are there so many dead heats as at Codlingbury. We prolong our sports as much as we can; just as connoisseurs in wine drink slowly, rolling the liquor about in their mouths, and smacking their lips lustily between each sip. And our list of 'events' is no brief one: we have the Codlingbury Stakes, the Updown Stakes, the Downland Plate, the Volunteer Cup, the Porringer Sweepstakes, &c.—the utmost amount a winner can receive being about ten pounds. You see it is the sport and not the money that we care the most about. And the same horses and riders appear to start for race after race with quite a pitiless punctuality. Codlingbury Meeting is, indeed, a hard-working day for both man and beast. Add, too, the dead heats; and lastly, the hurdle-leaping, always a speciality at Codlingbury. What a crackling of wicker-work, as the hoofs strike against the hurdles! and look, only look at the gentleman-jockey in magenta! Will he slip off at the rear of his horse? or will he be tossed over its head? 'Why, I could have shot a partridge between his seat and his saddle!' says a laughing farmer of most robust build, mounted on a cart-horse—only such, short of an elephant, could have carried him. As for blue with white sleeves, he's on his back on the turf a quarter of a mile from his horse, and can't get up; is, indeed, quite out of the running. Hurt? not a bit of it. He can't rise, owing to his loss of breath; or, perhaps, rather to his possession of fat. The fact of so stout a gentleman being thrown, I take to be, at anyrate, an extraordinary tribute to the strength of his charger. No common-place animal could have accomplished such a feat.

We have no Queen of Love and Beauty to preside over the lists and distribute the prizes among the victors, any more than we have heralds to shout 'Love of ladies, Honour to the generous, Glory to the brave!' as they were wont to do at Ashby-de-la-Zouche and elsewhere, when a gentle passage of arms took place. Yet something of the old tourney character prevails, I like to think, at our Codlingbury Meeting. Our jockeys are more persons, and less puppets, than they seem to be at

other races. There is an individual and personal interest taken in them. They pervade the crowd between the events, with merely an overcoat hiding the satin splendour of their jackets. They greet their friends cheerily—and they have friends and intimates everywhere on the course—eat a sandwich at this carriage-door, drink a glass of sherry at that, or smoke a cigar and gossip together, thrashing their buckskin and top-booted legs with their whips the while, with a hearty deuce-may care air that is really impressive. And Beauty smiles upon them; if not quite constituting any one of them especially her knight, after the old, gone-by, chivalric fashion, still supporting her friend, or relative, or, it may be, lover, with considerable enthusiasm; hoping, with whole heart, for his success; betting on him and backing him to the extent of more than one pair of gloves, and very loath to lose, so loath, indeed, that she oftentimes pretermits payment of her losses altogether. But when she and her champion win, her pleasure is something worth witnessing. 'You *did* make the old mare go, William; I didn't think it was in her. I'm *so* glad you beat that bay horse. *Do* have a glass of wine.' Then such a wealth of approving smiles as she bestows upon the winner as he lifts his silken cap to dab his head all over! It is warm work for a man of his inches, both of height and girth, winning a race; yet the applause of Beauty is very compensating.

Beauty at Codlingbury, too, is not a thing about which there can be any mistake; it is so healthily solid, for one thing, and so thoroughly pronounced in form, and colour, and substance. Such brilliance of hazel eye, and rosininess of rounded cheek, and wavy gleam of auburn hair! And Beauty at Codlingbury is fond of horseback, and her skill in her saddle justifies her fondness. I think she wishes extremely that it were proper—she has great regard for the proprieties—to institute a Ladies' Plate at Codlingbury, to be run for by lady-riders only. What a pity that convention stands in her way!

'I've backed my boy Johnny to the extent of two half-crowns to win the next race,' says a rubicund, smiling, twinkling-eyed, elderly gentleman, in a very well-worn hat, and generally somewhat shabbily attired. The 'boy Johnny' is a youthful giant, over six feet in his stockings, and rather more than proportionately broad. He is about to ride an old flea-bitten horse that, fortunately, looks strong enough to carry a house if we need be, so that it is just possible that Johnny may win; and we all hope he may. We know that it will be such a pleasure to himself and his father, yes, and to the old flea-bitten horse too—the kind of pleasure that has something of the nature of a joke about it, and is the reason for a very merry kind of triumph. I suppose there will be found certain severely judging people who will censure the presence at our sports of the father of Johnny and the owner of the flea-bitten horse; but I think that the best way to keep pleasures simple and harmless is for honest, innocent people to take part in them; they can't help, in such case, leavening them with good. If any evil lurked in our Codlingbury Meeting, was it not well that we should have our parson there to exorcise it? Was it wrong of him to enter his old horse, and mount his son Johnny, and back him to the extent of two half-crowns? Well, in any case, we of Codlingbury will never think so, though we die for it. Bless him, I say! And he *did* win! How he laughed, till the tears stood in

his eyes; and he shook hands with us all round, and handed the half-crowns to his wife, to help buy a new cap with!

I have said that there were no London faces to be seen upon the course; there was one, however, but of that one I'll speak presently. Moreover, there were present certain aliens, yet they pertained to no special capital, being quite a cosmopolitan people. Of course, I refer to the great mountebank family. They were at Codlingbury in force; with balancing-poles and soiled fleshings, with rouged cheeks and spangled skirts; wild beasts, and performing dogs, and infant prodigies; with drums, and gongs, and pan-pipes, and hoarsely shouted invitations to behold wondrous feats and exhibitions; all, as usual, with them. There were lamp-black negro minstrels, too, with bones, and banjos, and comic ditties with *entractes* of countriedrums and other facetiæ. How did they find us out at Codlingbury, this strange mountebank family? How do they ever find out when and where a crowd will assemble? Can they, as other people foretell the weather by studying the sky, discover in the same way that here to-day there will be a race; there, to-morrow, a royal progress, a Lord Mayor's procession, a fair, a market, a first stone laid, a ship launched, or an army reviewed? Can they sniff a concourse from afar, as a crow scents carrion? Strange that we cannot hold our little racing meeting but this *saltimbanque* fringe should, as it were, attach itself to the hem of our garments; that these unwearied followers upon the camps of festivity should gather in our wake. Yet I think we are in a measure proud of their presence. Is it not a sort of proof that Codlingbury is becoming known and famous? that our races are attracting attention out of our own county? So we welcome and reward the mountebank family. Their performances are fresh and new to very many of us; we are seldom provided with the amusements of the kind they bring. A street organ, however abominated in London, receives the honour of much attention in our villages; a vagrant German band, discoursing most execrable music, is fêted and followed for miles. Surely for very long the mountebank family have not played their tricks before such unjaded and guileless spectators. We could wish, however, that they would pay to our sports the homage of a little interest and respect; but directly the bell rings for a race, the *saltimbanches* retire to their tents, and smoke pipes, drink beer, or count their gains, or, stretching themselves upon the sward, close their eyes in sleep. I really think they might look at our doings a little, though, of course, they are accustomed to far better things.

As I have stated, there was one London face to be seen on our down. I wish there had not been. It was by no means a good sample of London faces. Could its proprietor have been specially engaged by the stewards to appear upon our course, and by playing a part, give to our proceedings a resemblance to other and more pretentious racing-meetings? How on earth else could he have come to Codlingbury? I should fancy him to have been what is technically and infamously known as a 'welcher;' but I own I am without much learning on the subject. He was ill-looking, and ill-behaved, and very noisy. Far above the hum of the crowd, you could hear his raucous ejaculations. He was offering to make with any and everybody all manner of bets and wagers. You saw him

forcing his unpleasant presence upon all sorts of people, who speedily made room for him, and quitted him. I think we quiet Codlingbury people were a little afraid of him. Certainly, for the most part we didn't like him, or his errand, or his hideous cries. He constituted 'the ring' at Codlingbury, which isn't saying much for the ring. He flourished his betting-book, and waved his metallic pencil, and roared his offers to bet for or against this or that horse, now menacingly, now invitingly. I don't think he did much business; still he did a little, I grieve to confess. One brown horse I know he had backed to win, staking some few pounds on the issue. The brown horse came in second. 'If your bridle had but broken, you'd have come in first,' he said, with a most villainous leer at the gentleman-jockey, who, however, paid him no heed. The jockey was probably fully occupied in wondering whether he should ever get his breath back again. The charge implied was a very gross one. Is it to be supposed that we can be guilty at Codlingbury of what is known as 'roping' a horse, or selling a race? I trow not. We are ambitious, but we don't want to resemble other racing-meetings so closely as that comes to; yet this was the accusation brought against us.

THE ROYAL ARMS AND ROYAL BADGES.

HERALDIC tradition—than which nothing can be more apocryphal—asserts that the lions or leopards of England's royal arms came over with the Conqueror. According to this very doubtful authority, William the Norman and his sons Rufus and Beaulerc bore 'two lions passant guardant,' which Stephen discarded in favour of an armed centaur—in fact, our zodiacal friend Sagittarius the archer. Henry II. brought back the leopards, adding a third in honour of his queen, Eleanor of Aquitaine. All this is, however, conjecture, if not pure invention; but it is not to be disputed that *Cœur de Lion*, when Count de Poitou, bore three leopards upon his shield; in the old romance of *Cœur de Lyon*, he is described as carrying

Upon his shoulders a schelde of steele
With the lybbardes painted wele;

and so Richard figures on his second great seal of 1195. The motto *Dieu et mon Droit* dates from the same monarch. The author of the *Accedence of Armorie* informs us that 'Otho, the fourth emperor of Almaïne, for the love he bare to Richard I. and John, kings of England, bare the arms of England, impaled with the arms of the empire, the kings being well contented he should do so.' Another emperor, Frederick, sent Henry III. three leopards, in compliment to his coat. Henry's motto was a quaint one: *Ke ne dune ke ne tine, ne pret ke desire*; that is, 'He who gives not what he has, takes not what he desires.' The leopards remained leopards down to the time of Edward I., for the *Roll of Karlaverok*, a Norman-French poem, recounting the exploits of that monarch at the siege of Caerlaverock Castle, Dumfriesshire, in 1300, describes the royal banner as emblazoned with 'three leopards courant of fine gold set on red, fierce, haughty, and cruel.'

The first great change in the royal arms was made by Edward III., who, claiming the French crown by right of his mother, altered his armorial bearings accordingly, by carrying the arms of France and England quarterly; in other words, he divided his shield into four, placing the three

lions on a red field in the first and fourth quarter, and filling the remaining quarters with golden fleurs-de-lis, 'semy,' or scattered on an azure field. He made a further addition in the shape of supporters, hitherto unknown to our kings, choosing for this purpose a gold lion and a silver falcon with golden claws and beak. These Richard II. changed to two angels; and these, again, had to make way for the swan and antelopes of Henry IV. The last-named king reduced the number of the fleurs-de-lis to five; and his successor cut off a couple more, and removed his father's swan in favour of a lion.

Although, as Shakspeare says, the fleurs-de-lis were cropped and half of England's coat torn away during Henry VI.'s unfortunate minority, that weak ruler did not remove the emblems of his French sovereignty from the royal arms; but he did discard the supporting lion of the hero of Agincourt for a second antelope, an animal better representing his own unwarlike disposition. For the next six reigns, the only alterations made consisted in changing the supporters—Edward IV. taking a lion and black bull; Edward V., a lion and hind; Richard III., two boars; and Henry VII. adopting the red dragon of the Tudors and the white greyhound of the Nevilles. Henry VIII. removed the dragon from the right to the left of the shield, and took a lion in lieu of the hound. Dallaway gives him a lion and antelope, and Nisbet says he bore two angels; we can only reconcile these discrepancies by supposing that, like Edward IV., bluff King Hal had a fancy for changing his supporters. Queen Mary's supporters were an eagle and a lion.

In *The Armada* of Macaulay, we have a striking apostrophe of the 'royal blazon' of Elizabeth:

Look how the lion of the sea lifts up his ancient crown,
And underneath his deadly paw treads the gay lilies down!
So stalked he when he turned to flight, on that famed Picard field,
Bohemia's plume, and Genoa's bow, and Cesar's eagle shield;
So glared he when, at Agincourt, in wrath he turned to bay,
And crushed and torn, beneath his claws, the princely hunters lay. . . .
Thou, sun, shine on her joyously! ye breezes, waft her wide!
Our glorious *Semper Eadem*, the banner of our pride!

Semper Eadem was Elizabeth's motto: she got rid of her sister's eagle, and restored the old Tudor dragon; and not content with this, made the second important change in the royal arms, by introducing the harp of Ireland, and bearing them as they never were borne before or since, on three shields—one on the right, quartered with the arms of England and France; one on the left, bearing the emblem of Erin; and the third below the other two, representing the principality of Wales quartered in red and gold, each field bearing a lion countercharged. James I., as the first king of Great Britain and Ireland, had to re-arrange the royal shield again, which he did after the following fashion: The first and fourth quarters were appropriated to the lions and lilies, borne quarterly as of old; the second quarter was given to Scotland's lion in his double tressure fleury; and the third to the Irish harp, 'or stringed argent on an azure field.' At the same time, the lion and unicorn became the royal supporters. The motto of James was *Beati pacifici*; that of Charles I., *Dieu et mon Droit*. The arms of the Protectorate

consisted of a shield divided down the centre, bearing a cross on the left hand, and the harp on the right. Charles II. made no alteration in the royal arms; but William and Mary added the arms of Orange. Anne revived Elizabeth's motto, and impaled the arms of England and Scotland in the first and fourth quarters of the shield, the lilies of France in the second, and the harp of Ireland in the third. George I. put the Hanoverian arms in the fourth quarter, and restored the motto cast aside by his predecessor. In 1801, George III. ceased to style himself king of France, and a royal proclamation was issued, ordering that for the future the arms of the United Kingdom should be quartered—first and fourth England, second Scotland, third Ireland; over which, on an escutcheon of pretence, the arms of Hanover ensigned with the electoral bonnet. Hanover being made into a kingdom in 1816, the bonnet gave place to a regal crown, which disappeared with the arms to which it belonged, when the connection between England and Hanover was happily severed by the accession of Queen Victoria to the throne of Britain.

The dukes of Grafton, as descendants of Barbara Villiers, bear the royal arms of Charles II.'s time, which are quartered on the shields of four other ducal families—those of Buccleuch, Cleveland, Richmond, and St Albans. The last two represent respectively the unpopular Duchess of Portsmouth and the popular Nell Gwynne. The Vanes derive arms and dukedom by intermarrying with the Fitzroys; while the House of Buccleuch has quartered the arms of the Merry Monarch ever since its representative, 'the greatest heiress and finest woman of her time,' espoused the unlucky son of Lucy Walters, who came to grief at Sedgemoor. The House of Normanby quarter the royal arms of James II., that king having granted them to his natural daughter, Lady Catharine Darnley, whose heiress married Mr William Phipps. The Fitzclarences bear the royal arms as borne by their progenitor William IV. The Beaufoots quarter the arms of England and France, or rather the royal arms of Edward III., in token of their descent from Shakspeare's 'time-honoured Lancaster,' famous John of Gaunt; and the Dukes of Somerset quarter the lions of England between six fleurs-de-lis, being the coat of augmentation granted to their House by Henry VIII. upon his becoming connected with it by his marriage with Lady Jane Seymour. No less than forty-five peers still claim the right to quarter the royal arms of the Plantagenets upon their shields.

Royal badges differed from the royal arms in this—the latter might be said to be the badge of the nation itself, while the former were mere personal emblems, which the sovereigns of England used to embellish their robes of state, to adorn the caparisons of their horses, and to decorate the garments of their retainers, changing them as their taste and fancy prompted them. The badge of William Rufus is said to have been an eagle gazing at the sun; that of Stephen, an ostrich plumed; Henry II. used three devices—the broom or plantagenista; 'the gem escarbuncle, which is found within the saphir,' the badge of the House of Anjou; and a punning device representing 'a genet' passing between two 'plantes de geneste.' The broom was one of Richard I.'s badges, a star-surmounted crescent another. John chose the last named, while his successor went back to the old love of his race. Edward I. was the first English king

that adopted the rose, but his rose was neither white nor red, but a golden flower on a green stalk; he also used a bear standing against a tree. Edward II. symbolised his descent from the House of Castile by taking a golden tower for his device. Edward III. delighted in a variety of badges, sporting sometimes a griffin, as on his private seal, sometimes an eagle, and sometimes two green sprigs issuing from the stock of a tree. After his victorious campaign in France, he added a fleur-de-lis-decorated sword to his devices; but when he appeared at the grand tournament at Canterbury in 1349, he wore a tunic emblazoned with white swans, his shield bearing the same design, with the somewhat profane motto:

Hay! hay! the wythe swan!
By God's soul, I am thy man!

Another device he affected, that of sunbeams issuing from clouds, was emblazoned on the robes of the Knights of the Garter in Henry VIII.'s reign, in memory of him, as founder of the noble order.

Richard II.'s favourite badge was the white hart (derived from the white hind of his mother, the Fair Maid of Kent), which he wore embroidered on his sword-belt and velvet sheath. The white falcon was another badge of his; he had a third in the broom with the seeds dropping from its breaking pods; and a fourth in 'a sun in his splendour,' as borne by his warrior sire, the Black Prince. Jenico d'Artois, a Gascon, faithful to Richard through good and ill fortune, is said to have been the last man in England to wear the cognizance of the white hart. Henry IV. adopted the silver swan and white antelope of his wife's family, the Bohuns, and the mysterious SS, whose origin defies elucidation; he also bore the red rose of Lancaster, and 'a fox-tail dependent,' the latter advertising all whom it might concern, that when he found the lion's skin too short, he was able and willing to piece it with the fox's tail. Henry V. granted the barony of Homet to Walter Hungerford conditionally, that he should bring him a lance with a fox's tail dependent when he did suit and service for his estate, so the fox's tail must be reckoned among the badges of that famous king. After the battle of Agincourt, he chose a crowned fleur-de-lis; but his tomb in the Abbey bears a fire-beacon, with an antelope and a swan chained to it. Henry VI.'s badges were the Lancastrian rose, a panther spotted all colours, and two white ostrich feathers.

Edward IV., as in duty bound, held to York's pale and angry rose, originally the device of the Mortimers, from whom he derived his earldom of March. The golden-clawed black dragon of the Burghs was one of his badges; another was a falcon on an open fetterlock, which originated in a curious manner. Edward's great-grandfather, the first Duke of York, received from his father the grant of the castle of Fotheringhay, 'which he new-built in form and fashion of a fetterlock, assumed to himself his father's falcon, and placed it on a fetterlock; implying thereby that he was locked up from the hope and possibility of the kingdom. Upon a time finding his sons, beholding this device set upon a widow, asked what was Latin for a fetterlock, whereupon the father said: "If you cannot tell me, I will tell you: *Hic, hæc, hoc, et tacetis*," revealing to them his meaning, and advising them to be silent and quiet, as God knoweth what may come to pass. This his great-grandchild, Edward IV., reported, and bore it, and commanded that his younger son, royal Duke of

York, should use the device of a fetterlock, but opened.' At the battle of Mortimer's Cross, Edward, astonished by beholding

Three glorious suns, each one a perfect sun;
Not separated with the racking clouds,
But severed in a pale clear-shining sky.
See, see! they join, embrace, and seem to kiss,
As if they vowed some league inviolable;
Now are they but one lamp, one light, one sun—

accepted the omen as one of success; and in remembrance of the event, surrounded his white rose with sun-rays. This badge-loving king also used a pyramid of feathers issuing out of a crown, and the black bull of the Clares.

Edward V. scarcely reigned long enough to choose any badge. His unscrupulous uncle rejoiced in the rooting hog, or a silver boar with gold tusks, and when he went to be crowned, was attended by a retinue bearing thirteen thousand boars upon their coats. Shakspeare's tragedy contains several allusions to the favourite device of the crook-backed Richard: Stanley dreams the boar had rased off his helm; Richmond styles his rival 'the wretched, bloody, and usurping boar;' while the ghosts chorus:

Sleep, Richmond, sleep in peace, and wake in joy;
Good angels guard thee from the boar's annoy.

But the boar was a dangerous animal to sneer at, as the author of the couplet—

The rat, the cat, and Lovel the dog,
Rule all England under the hog—

found to his cost. After the fight was over at Bosworth, Richmond was crowned on the field with his opponent's crown, which had been found lying in a hawthorn-bush—a fact commemorated by Henry's assumption of the crown and hawthorn-bush as a badge. He also united the blood-stained roses, bearing a rose half-white and half-red, which he afterwards altered to a white rose within a red one; he likewise used the portcullis of the Beauforts, the dun cow of Guy of Warwick, and the red dragon of Cadwallader.

Henry VIII. employed the old badges of the falcon and fetterlock, the hind, portcullis, hawthorn-bush, and double rose, and not content with these, invented one for himself, emblematic of his triumph over the pope—an armed leg cut off at the thigh, the foot passing through three gold crowns. A red-wattled silver cock and a flame of fire were also two of his especial fancies. It seems to have been the custom of his time to christen the smaller vessels of the royal navy after the royal badges; and from a list of the 'pynasses and row-bargys' then forming part of the fleet, it would appear that Henry used the tiger, the lion, the dragon, the antelope, the greyhound, and the cloud-in-the-sun, besides the devices above mentioned.

Edward VI.'s badges were a rising sun and the rather inappropriate device of a cannon sending forth smoke and flame. Mary took her mother's pomegranate and red and white rose impaled on a sheaf of arrows, as well as a sword standing upon an altar—symbolical, we suppose, of her determination to use that weapon in defence of her faith. Elizabeth used a variety of badges, but her favourite one was Anne Boleyn's falcon with a crown and sceptre. Badges now went out of favour; and when we have named James I.'s red rose and thistle crowned, the catalogue of English royal badges is exhausted; but before laying our pen aside, we

may mention, as something germane to our subject, that the colours of the House of Lancaster were white and blue; of the House of York, murrey and blue; the Plantagenets' colours were white and red; the Tudors', white and green; the Stuarts', yellow and red; those of William and Mary, orange and blue. Scarlet has now held the place of honour for a long period, and it certainly has the best claim to the pre-eminence, seeing that 'gules' has been, from time immemorial, the colour of the field of England's coat-of-arms.

BROUGHT TO LIGHT.

CHAPTER XI.—A MESSAGE BY WIRE.

THE 4 P.M. train, on a certain autumn afternoon, had just left Kingsthorpe Station, a little roadside place six miles from Normanford, and Abel Garrod, the clerk in charge, was setting off home to tea, when he was summoned back into his office by the tinkling of the telegraph-bell; having signalled the sending-station that he was in attendance, he proceeded, word for word, to take down the following message: 'From Marie, London, to Henri Duplessis, Lilac Lodge, near Kingsthorpe Station.—Your address is known to me. I shall reach Kingsthorpe by the afternoon train to-morrow—Wednesday. Meet me there without fail.' When the message was completed, Abel proceeded to copy it out in his best hand, with many flourishes of his pen, and strange contortions of his tongue, on to one of the printed forms supplied him for use on such occasions, which he then put into an envelope addressed to Mr Duplessis; and leaving the station in charge of Tim Finch, an old stiff-jointed porter, who, with himself, made up the whole of the staff at Kingsthorpe, he crossed the line and the patch of gravelly road beyond it, and lounged slowly through his little garden, and so into the house, where he found the table laid out ready for tea, and his wife busily employed cutting bread and butter.

'I'm thinking of walking as far as Lilac Lodge after tea, missis,' said Abel; 'I've gotten a message by wire for Mr Duplessis.'

'A message for Mr Duplessis!' said Jane Garrod slowly and wonderingly, pausing with the knife in one hand and the bread in the other: 'and what is the message, Abel, my man?'

'Abel, with a little pomposity of tone, repeated it to her, word for word.

'A strange message—a very strange message!' said Jane Garrod musingly. 'So this "Marie" comes by the four o'clock train to-morrow, does she? Well, I shall be there to see her when she arrives.—And look you here, Abel; watch Mr Duplessis closely when he reads the message, and try to find out from his looks whether he is pleased with it or not.—And now make haste with your tea, and then set off. I would give something to be by when he receives it.'

Jane Garrod was a spare and rather sharp-featured woman, about fifty years old—a woman singularly silent and undemonstrative, but observant in her own quiet way; self-contained, brooding over her own thoughts, with one of those impassive faces that give no clue to the feelings at work beneath them. Although she had never had any pretensions to good looks, she held her simple-hearted husband with a chain far stronger than any mere smiles of beauty could have woven round

him; but her rule was a mild one, and Abel had the good sense to feel and acknowledge her superiority, and was, I am inclined to think, rather proud than otherwise of the bonds that held him prisoner.

As soon as Abel had finished his hasty tea, he put on his best hat and coat, and taking a stout stick in his hand, set out on his walk to Lilac Lodge. The distance by road was four good miles; but Abel knew all the short-cuts through by-lanes and fields, and round by the corner of Kirkbarrow Plantation, and so brought down the distance to three miles, and accomplished his walk easily under the hour.

It was quite dark by the time he got back home, and he found his wife sitting with unlighted candle waiting his return, and, contrary to her usual practice, not busy either sewing or knitting. She turned on him, as he entered the room, with a degree of animation foreign to her usual reticence. 'Well, what news?' she asked. 'How did Mr Duplessis take the message?'

'He took it in his hand; how else?' answered the matter-of-fact Abel, as he prepared to put away his best coat and resume his old one.

Jane smothered the impatient exclamation that rose to her lips, and merely said: 'Sit down and tell me all about it. But first you must have a glass of beer, and your slippers on; and I'll light a candle, and then the room will seem more cheerful.'

Abel swelled with a sense of self-importance as he watched his wife moving about the house attending to his minor comforts; and then he sighed to think of what little consequence, either to his wife or to any one else, could be the trivial scraps of news he had to retail. When everything was comfortably arranged, Jane drew her chair up to the side of her husband, and waited in silence for him to begin.

'When I got to the top of Lorrimer's Brow,' said Abel, 'I could see Mr Duplessis walking about the garden in front of the lodge, smoking a cigar, and I was right well pleased to find that he wasn't from home. Well, when I got down to the house, I just looked in over the side-gate, and touched my hat to him. "Want me, my good fellow?" says he, in his affable, smiling way—and a pleasanter way than he has with him, it would be hard to find. "What can I do for you?" says he, holding his head a little on one side, and showing his white teeth.—"I've come over from Kingsthorpe Station, sir," says I, "and I've got a telegraphic dispatch for you." "A telegraphic dispatch for me!" says he, opening his eyes very wide indeed, so that his eyebrows went up nearly to the roots of his hair. "Are you sure, my good man, that you've come to the right person?"—"It's for Mr Henri Duplessis of Lilac Lodge," answered I; "and I believe that's you, sir." "That's me, without doubt, and nobody but me," he said; "so let us have a look at this mysterious document." That's what he called it, Jane—a mysterious document; so I put my hand into my pocket, and pulled out the dispatch, and handed it to him over the gate. He stuck his cigar between his teeth, and took both hands to the envelope, and tore it open, and turned the paper to the light, for it was growing darkish by this time, and read the message; and I'm sure, Jane, it was written in as plain and neat a hand as anybody need wish to see, so that he could have had no difficulty in making it out.

'I never saw anybody's face change so suddenly as the face of Mr Duplessis changed when he read that paper. You would have thought that old Daddy Death had tweaked him suddenly by the ear. All the colour went out of his cheeks, and his features cramped up in a moment, just like my grandfather's when he lay a-dying. The cigar dropped from between his teeth, and he turned on me with a word which you would hardly like to hear—a very strong word, Jane—and his white lips seemed as if they wanted to say something more, but couldn't; and then he flung up his clenched hand above his head, and staggered out of sight, down one of the little alleys. Well, I waited without stirring for a matter of five minutes (thinking he might mebbe want to send a reply), lounging over the gate, and sniffing the pleasant scent of the flowers; and then I saw Mr Duplessis standing under the verandah, beckoning me to go in; so I opened the gate, and walked across the lawn, and followed him into the drawing-room. And then he told me to sit down, and asked me whether I would have a glass of sherry; and when I said I had no objection, he poured me out one, and held his case for me to pick a cigar from, and was quite jolly—so jolly and so agreeable, that I could hardly believe it was the same man I had seen only five minutes before looking so terribly white and ill. But he accounted for that naturally enough by saying, that any sudden news, good or bad, always brought on an old pain at his heart, from which he had suffered for years. Next, we got talking about the telegraph, and he asked me whether I hadn't some curious messages by it at odd times; but I told him that Kingsthorpe was such a quiet, out-of-the-way place that it did very little business in that line, most of the messages that did come being on the railway company's business. Then he asked me, what security people had against their messages being talked over and made public by the men at the station; to which I answered, that there was rarely more than one person at a country station who understood telegraphy, and that he was always a person of good character, and pledged to secrecy as to the messages he might receive or despatch; and that I supposed something like the same system was in use in large towns. To this he answered by saying he was sure that I for one might be trusted with a thousand secrets, and not whisper a word about any of them; and then he looked at his watch, and I took that as a hint that it was time to go; so I emptied my glass, and bade him good-evening, and was just leaving the room, when he slipped a couple of half-crowns into my hand; and laying his white finger lightly on my shoulder, says he: "There's something for your trouble in coming so far. I'll be at the station to-morrow afternoon, as my sister requests." Then with a laugh: "See you go straight home, and don't stop at the *Green Dragon* by the way;" and so he bowed me out quite grand-like; and I walked back through the little garden, with its pleasant smell of flowers; and here I am.—But, Jane, that Mr Duplessis is a real nice gentleman, and no mistake! For my part, I can't make out why you dislike him so. It's not his fault, if he's fallen in love with Miss Frederica—no man in his senses could be long near her without falling in love with her. *I'm in love with her. There!* what do you say to that?"

'Why, that you are the same simple-hearted old goose that you always were. But as for your Mr

Duplessis, so smooth and smiling, I don't know why I should dislike him, and yet'—

'And yet you do.'

'And yet I do. Well, likes and dislikes come by nature, and can't be helped, any more than the colour of one's eyebrows, or the shape of one's nose.'

CHAPTER XII.—THE STRANGER AT KINGSTHORPE.

At five minutes to four precisely, on the afternoon of the day following that of the arrival of the message by wire, Mr Duplessis lounged up to the station, and greeting Abel Garrod graciously, inquired how soon the train might be expected to arrive.

'She has just been telegraphed,' replied Abel, 'and won't be more than ten minutes late to-day.'

'Not more!' said Mr Duplessis with a smile. 'As if ten minutes were not enough! I presume that railway trains are classed in the feminine gender by reason of their unpunctuality, and general remissness in keeping their appointments;' and with that he sauntered down the platform, selecting a cigar from his case as he went, and evidently determined to while away the time as pleasantly as possible.

'A nice-spoken gentleman, surely,' muttered Abel to himself, as he bustled off to see that his signals were all right, and the line clear, and everything in readiness for the coming train; but always with a furtive glance at the little attic window of his house, plainly to be seen from the station, out of one corner of which, where the blind was pushed a little on one side, he knew that his wife, with the assistance of a small pocket-telephone, was noting everything that happened on the platform, and patiently awaiting the arrival of the 4 P.M. train.

Mr Duplessis, seated on the soft turf of an embankment, smoking his cigar, and whisking off the heads of the tall weeds with his cane, was apparently in no hurry for the train to arrive; and had some terrible accident befallen it, which would have delayed its coming for ever, he might, perhaps, have been none the less pleased.

At length, the lagging train rolled slowly into the station, and from it descended one passenger—a woman thickly veiled, having on a voluminous gray mantle, and a black-silk dress, much frayed and travel-stained about the skirts—who, not perceiving at the first glance the person she expected there to meet her, turned on Abel with alarming quickness, saying in a harsh, high-pitched voice: 'Monsieur Duplessis, n'est-il pas ici?' throwing up her thick fall at the same moment, and displaying to Abel's fluttered gaze the thin sallow face of a woman no longer either young or handsome, but who, not many years ago, had been both, lighted up by two restless, piercing black eyes, which shone out, with strange, baleful lustre, from beneath the heavy brows, black and straight, which crossed her forehead almost without a break. Before Abel had time to reply that he did not understand French, Mr Duplessis emerged from behind an angle of the building, with a treble-distilled smile ready put on, and with one white hand ungloved and held out, ready to grasp that of the new-comer. But the woman kept her hands within the shelter of her muff, and drew back a step, and seemed to look him through with her keen black eyes. The set smile still wreathed the Canadian's lips, but the

colour faded from his face, and the wrinkles, invisible to society, came out under his eyes, as he said in a voice that had lost some of its usual confidence: 'Do we meet as friends or as enemies, Marie?'

'As enemies,' replied the woman—'as enemies till death!'

'So be it; but listen to me first,' he said with an effort to regain his usual easy confident manner. And then he began to address her earnestly in French; and Abel moved away out of earshot, fearful of exciting suspicion.

The conversation between the two lasted for about a quarter of an hour, and Jane Garrod, looking from the little attic window, with her eye fixed to the end of the telescope, watched their every movement with a patience that never wearied. At first, the woman seemed to listen to Mr Duplessis with a sort of careless disdain, as though nothing he might say could influence her resolves in the slightest degree; he striving, meanwhile, to urge some important point on her consideration. But by and by, she began to shew some signs of interest in his words, almost, as it were, in spite of herself—an interest which seemed to deepen as he went on; and when with outspread hands he came to a sudden stop, as though appealing to her to confirm what he had just said, she replied with three or four words only, and then held out her hand for him to clasp, as though that were the seal of the compact between them. He took her proffered hand, and made as though he would have kissed it, but she drew it back quickly with a shudder, and thrust it into her muff. His eyebrows went up to a point for one moment, and then he turned and beckoned to Abel Garrod, who was loitering at the other end of the platform.

'This lady is my sister,' said Mr Duplessis gravely to Abel—'a sister whom I have not seen for many years. She is about to stay for a few days in this neighbourhood, and I want to know where I can obtain two decent quiet rooms for her while she is here, as she cannot bear the noise and bustle of a hotel. Two rooms—a sitting-room and a bedroom—are what she requires.'

Abel puzzled his brains for a minute or two, but could not call to mind anything at all likely to suit the lady.

'Look here, now,' said Mr Duplessis, suddenly taking him by the button: 'have you no spare rooms in your own house?'

'We have a spare bedroom,' said Abel diffidently.

'And a spare sitting-room, too—ch?'

'A parlour, which we seldom use, except on Sundays. But my wife—'

'Exactly the thing—could not be better,' interrupted Mr Duplessis. 'Leave me to settle everything with your wife. Just shoulder that bag, will you?—Allons, ma Marie;' and he strode off towards the house with Madame his sister leaning on his arm; Abel, with the black leather-bag, bringing up the rear.

In a few voluble words, Mr Duplessis explained his wishes to the quiet, serious-looking woman who opened the door in answer to his knock. Jane replied that she certainly had two spare rooms, and that she should be happy to let the lady have them for a few days, but that they were only furnished in a very humble style, and perhaps the lady might not like them. But all little difficulties were smoothed over by the indefatigable Canadian; and

Madame was at once installed in the rooms, and Jane instructed to prepare tea for her without delay.

Mr Duplessis would fain have taken his leave at this juncture till the morrow, but Madame would not hear of such a thing: it was cruel of him, she averred, to quit so soon the sister whom he had not seen for six long years. He must take tea with her and pass the evening with her, otherwise how would the long *triste* hours charm themselves away? Mr Duplessis submitted with tolerable grace, and drank tea with his sister; and after that, they had a long conversation together in French; and then they made Abel hunt up an old pack of cards, and played *écarté* till the clock struck nine, when Mr Duplessis jumped up, and declared absolutely that he must go.

When Mr Duplessis was gone, and his sister safely abed, and Abel snoozing in his easy-chair, Jane Garrod, with her apron thrown over her head, sat brooding beside the dying fire, going carefully over in her own mind all that had been said and done since the arrival of her mysterious lodger.

It is to be borne in mind that Jane had a tolerable conversational knowledge of French, having, when young, lived as lady's-maid in Paris for a couple of years; but she was particularly careful that neither Mr Duplessis nor his sister should suspect her of such an acquirement; and when, once or twice, while she was waiting on them at the tea-table, they preferred some request to her in that language, forgetting for the moment her supposed ignorance of it, she had merely stared stolidly from one to the other, till they repeated their request in English. They thus considered, and naturally so, that they were perfectly safe in talking over their secret concerns in her presence.

'If I could only have heard what they said to one another on the platform, when they first met,' said Jane Garrod to herself, 'I should have something to go upon; but as it is, I have only bits and scraps of their talk after they got here to judge by, for they had evidently settled their plans before coming to the house. These bits and scraps are just what I must try to remember, and piece together. "You thought it would be impossible for me to discover your retreat," said Madame, "so cunningly had you arranged everything; and that you would never see my face in this world again."

'To which Monsieur replied: "Let the past go, Marie; it is not a subject one would choose for contemplation. There is a pleasant future before us, if we only choose to avail ourselves of it."

'In that little *if* lies the whole question," responded Madame. "Should you ever feel inclined to play me false, remember that one breath of mine would scatter your castle to the winds."

'No fear of that," answered the brother; "so long as we act fairly by one another, the compact will benefit both of us."

'After that, they went on with their cards for a little while, till Madame suddenly flung hers across the floor. "Ah, *scélérat*! monster!" she exclaimed, grinding out the words from between her teeth.

'What a fool I must be to play cards with you, or do anything but tear your black heart out of your bosom! When I think of the horrible fate to which you had doomed me, I know not how I refrain from killing you!"

'Why do you thus excite yourself?' asked Monsieur very quietly. "I have told you already that I was misled by Van Goost. He gave me to understand that"—

"Liar!" screamed Madame. "I know of old what value to set on what you say."

"I will shew you Van Goost's letters to-morrow, and prove to you how greatly you misjudge me," said Monsiur.

Her only answer was a scornful laugh; and with that, Monsiur went quite humble-like and picked up her cards, and dealt them afresh, and then they went on playing as if nothing had happened. A strange couple, truly!

In one corner of the little simply-furnished room, hung a crayon-portrait of a child—a child of rare beauty, with long black ringlets, and black eyes, and with a skipping-rope thrown carelessly over her arm. Jane Garrod, taking the candle in her hand, went up to this portrait, and gazed earnestly on it. "They tell me, darling," she said, "that you have promised your hand to this bad man. But you do not love him, dear, I am sure of that. You are unhappy, and just now you hardly care what happens to you; and they have got you to promise to become his wife, and so make yourself miserable till the day you die. He is a bad man, darling; and you shall not marry him, if Jane Garrod can anyhow help it; no, never—never!"

"Never what, missis—never what?" said Abel, who awoke just in time to hear the last word or two, and was now rubbing his eyes sleepily.

"Never go to sleep in your arm-chair after supper," said his wife—"it's a downright lazy habit."

SOME OLD ADVERTISEMENTS.

NEWSPAPERS, like natives, are best discussed as soon as they are opened. Keep one only a day or two, and what a weary, flat, stale, and unprofitable operation the reading of it is! All the life and spirit seems to have departed, leaving it as wo-begone and dust-dry as poor Yorick's skull, once so full of jest and excellent fancy. But there is this peculiarity about the newspaper—let it be laid by for a hundred years or so, and it becomes interesting once more. Even its advertisements, which when fresh were left unnoticed, or read as it were by accident, become invested with attractions. Indeed, to our mind, there is no part of an old paper so interesting as its advertising columns; containing announcements of sales by inch of candle; advertisements of merchandise to be sold a good pennyworth; cautions against trusting truant wives, or harbouring deserters and runaway apprentices; puffs of cures for the vapours, and alluring appeals from lottery agents; besides innumerable others, illustrating bygone manners and customs, elucidating disputed points of history and biography, and throwing unexpected light upon the origin of things as familiar to us as they were new to our forefathers.

Some of these unconsidered trifles, curiosities in one way or another, we intend to make a note of here. First, let us take a batch of literary advertisements, giving the precedence its age demands to a notification appearing in the *Observer* for December 3, 1884, to the following effect: 'A Gentleman having been requested by some persons to undertake the translating of Ariannus his Epictetus into English, hath so far advanced it, that the same will in a very short time be published; and this notice is given to prevent interfering with the same design.' There is something positively refreshing about this, whether we take it to be a proof of excessive

simplicity on the part of the advertiser, or accept it as evidence of an honourable scrupulosity among the publishing fraternity, to which, we fear, a modern member of it would scarcely dare to appeal. Eighteen months after unhappy Otway died in his hiding-place on Tower Hill, the *Observer* (November 30, 1686) announced: 'Whereas Mr Thomas Otway, some time before his Death, made Four Acts of a Play; whoever can give notice in whose hands the copy lies, either to Mr Thomas Betterton, or Mr William Smith, at the Theatre-royal, shall be well rewarded for his pains.' The missing manuscript never gladdened the eyes of the managers; it had probably lit the fire of some lodging-house keeper, and perished as ignominiously as its unfortunate author.

From the *Morning Chronicle* of the 17th of July 1804, we extract the annexed modest advertisement: 'A Gentleman, whose literary productions have met public approval, undertakes to conduct epistolary correspondence, where correctness and elegance of style are necessary; whether on familiar topics, on business, or on courtship. He pledges himself to the strictest secrecy. Whatever the subject, no confidence will be abused, no matter divulged. He presumes he could use a strain the best adapted to display the feelings of the heart, and attain its object. Apply to Mr Radnor, South Windmill Street.' Poor Mr Radnor! He was born before his time. Surely he was just the man for *Colo*, who not long ago issued the following mysterious announcement: 'Wanted, Literary Co-operation. A gentleman of energy and critically literary powers of perusal and writing, able to devote leisure in such a way during the initiatory and promotive steps of a colonial matter of high and comprehensive scope, would find such the medium for ultimate position either home or otherwise.' After this, our next specimen will seem commonplace indeed, although it emanates from one who read the stars, and told

Of good or evil luck,
Of plagues, of dearths, or season's quality,

in the year of grace 1712: 'At the Old Lilly, near the Barge House, in Christchurch Parish, Southwark, at London, liveth Francis Moore, licensed physician and student in Astrology; who, by the blessing of God, cures all sorts of agues with one dose in young and old, when left off by others. He hath an excellent medicine for fits in young people or children; he has an excellent worm-powder, and a family tincture that gives present ease in colic, and carries off all pains in an instant. He gives judgment in the Astrological way. He desires all that send to him out of the country, upon their own business, to pay the postage of their letters or expect no answer.' A century and a half has elapsed since Francis Moore thus set forth his claims to public patronage, but his *Almanac* still sells by thousands, nor are believers in his present existence and prophetic powers wanting in the land.

Cock-fighting may be reckoned among extinct amusements, although the Police do, every now and then, hunt up a few furtive followers of the cruel game. A hundred and fifty years ago, however, it held so prominent a place among British sports, that county was literally pitted against county—at six guineas the battle, and a hundred guineas the odd battle. One of these grand matches is thus announced in the *Daily Courant* (1703): 'At the

New Cockpit, at the Bowling-green behind Gray's Inn Walk, this day, being the 8th of March, does begin a great Match of Cock-fighting, and will continue the whole week; between the Gentlemen of Bedfordshire and Berkshire of the one part, and the Gentlemen of Cambridgeshire and Essex of the other. They are resolved to begin at half an hour after three o'clock, because they will fight all by daylight.' Such a county contest is impossible now-a-days; to use an apt phrase, 'that cock won't fight any more.' Those who admire old fashions merely because they are old, may perhaps lament our modern degeneracy even in this matter: but for ourselves, we would rather see our county well-beaten at Wimbledon or the Oval, than victorious in the cockpit behind Gray's Inn Walk.

Another pastime, somewhat better entitled to the epithet 'manly,' is fast following cock-fighting into oblivion. The prize-ring, once patronised by prince and peer, has gone to the bad most unequivocally. A few years back, it suddenly emerged from its obscurity, and became the talk of the town and the country. It was but a dying flicker—the momentary vigour preceding the fatal relapse. The resuscitation of the Ring is an impossibility; what little sympathy the general public felt for it lies buried in a certain grave at Highgate, in which the once-coveted champion's belt might have been fittingly buried. Condemned by public opinion, and banned by the law, it is no wonder that pugilism has sunk to what it is, but it must be owned it dies hard. A man must have an extraordinary fancy for fistic battles, to endure the dangers and disagreeables inseparable to the bringing off a fight. The admirers of the noble art may well sigh for the days of auld lang syne, when the morning papers contained such advertisements as this: 'A Tryall of Skill to be fought at the Bear Garden, in Marrow-Bone-Fields, at the Boarded House, on Wednesday next, beginning at three of the clock precisely, between Edward Parkes of Coventry, Master of the New School of Defence, and Thomas Comins, Dragoon, Master of the said School.'

Diversions were not wanting for the gentler portion of the British public; here was a treat for that public Trinculo had in his mind's-eye when his corporeal eye fell upon the island monster: 'At the Great Booth, in West Smithfield, is to be seen a large collection of strange and wonderful creatures, all alive. 1. A wonderful Dromedary from Turkey, a noble creature, 22 hands high, and 12 feet long. 2. The Turkey Horse, not 3 feet high; being so little that he is kept in a box. 3. The Little English Woman, 2 feet 2 inches high, 27 years old, straight and proportionable, being the least woman that ever was seen in England. 4. Two monstrous Creatures, male and female, resembling humane Nature, from Ethiopia. 5. A Whistler from Brazil, that hangs by his tail and takes his natural rest. 6. A Picary, which charms the birds with his voice, that they fall down and become his prey. 7. A Wild Satyr, from Cape de Bon Esperance. With several other varieties, too tedious to mention. To be seen from 8 in the morning till 9 at night, without loss of time.'

Thanks to Fielding and Ainsworth having thought it worth while to portray one of the greatest scoundrels that ever passed through the hangman's hand, there is no necessity for us to explain who and what the author of the following advertisement was. It appeared in a daily paper

in 1717: 'Whereas on or about the first day of August last, there were three Burglaries committed, viz., one at the Ditchside, another at the corner of Southampton Street, and the third at the corner of Little St Martin's Lane, by three Housebreakers, two whereof are now in Custody. This is to give notice to any Person or Persons whose houses were so broken open, that if they will appear at the next Sessions held in the Old Bailey, and prove the same, so that one of the Persons now in custody shall be convicted thereof, shall receive over and above the usual Reward, the sum of L.5 for their expense and trouble. Which money will be paid by Jonathan Wild, over against the Duke of Grafton's Head in the Old Bailey. Note. One of the two persons now in custody hath made himself an evidence against the other. Note also. That the above-mentioned Jonathan Wild hath had an account of several Writings, Deeds, and Pocket-books given him from some persons lately transported, which if any person hath lost such Things, will come to him, and give such description thereof, so as they may be known to be theirs, shall have them again.' There we have Jonathan in his threefold capacity of thief-taker, suborner of evidence, and receiver of stolen property, and the idea it gives us of the way police matters were managed then, is anything but a pleasant one.

Our next gleaning is not a whit more respectable, although its counterparts, we are sorry to say, are not difficult things to find in the columns of our own papers, but they assume a decent robe if a transparent one. The least scrupulous of our journals would hesitate at finding room for such an appeal as appeared in the *Daily Advertiser* one April morning in 1804; for cool, brazen impudence, it beats anything we ever read. Let the reader judge for himself. 'Marriage is to some a happy state, to others the reverse. The unfortunate writer of this is placed in the latter situation, lately united to one of a disposition of the contrary to herself. She is lively and young, and now so very miserable, that she hopes this will meet with pity and not censure from the other sex. The person to whom it is addressed must be a gentleman possessed of fortune, generosity, agreeable deportment, and be resolved to keep this an inviolable secret. . . . He must present the lady with L.100, and settle a yearly income on her, to take place one twelvemonth after the acquaintance has commenced. Address Mrs Smith; &c. Equally plain, if not quite so explicit, was the would-be M.P. who advertised some sixty years ago that he 'Wanted, on due conditions, a seat in a certain assembly, either for a short time, or for some years.' There was no misunderstanding that: but the trader who sought for 'a sleepy partner in a respectable ready-money business,' ran some risk of his desire being misconstrued.

The *Daily Courant* of the 16th April 1714 contained the following: 'Whereas there is a new Altar-piece or Painting put up in the Chancel of the Church of Whitechapel, within the diocese of London (belonging to the Rector of the said parish), wherein the traitor Judas, contrary to all figures ancient and modern, is drawn as sitting in an elbow-chair, in a priest's gown and band, and other appearances of a dignified clergyman of the Church of England. These are to give notice that if any person or persons will discover who was the Designer and Director of that impious fancy, they

or either of them shall have ten guineas reward immediately paid upon information and evidence so given, in order to prosecute any profane fellow concerned in it, by me, Willoughby Willey.' This was the beginning of a very pretty quarrel. The parish seems to have been divided into two parties: one, High Church, led by the rector, Dr Welton; the other, Low Church, by Dean Kennet, and his staunch supporter, Willoughby Willey. A fierce paper-war ensued; one party actually asserting that the obnoxious Judas was a portrait of the dean, accused the rector of being a friend to popery and the Pretender. The tone taken by the doctor's friends may be judged from this pretty production of one of them:

To say the picture does to him belong,
Kennet does Judas and the painter wrong;
False is the image, and the emblem faint,
Judas, compared to Kennet, is a saint!

The bishop was appealed to, and sent his chancellor to examine the altar-piece: that functionary reported that the picture was calculated to give offence and scandal; the bishop ordered the rector's idol, as it was called, to be removed, and so brought the controversy to an end.

Ladies and gentlemen in search of ready-made homes have divers baits, more or less tempting, thrown out to them by letters of lodgings; but we might pore over the *Times* a long time before we found a worthy pendant to this advertisement from the *Post Boy* (1714): 'Any Agreeable Persons, of either sex, who are willing to live all the year within an hour's walk of London, if they send their names and places of abode to Mr W. Tomlinson, at Frank's Coffeehouse, they shall be received within a very delightful dwelling, without ever paying any rent for their apartments, or being obliged to any further expense, than only to bear an equal share with others for the dinners that will be daily provided for them in the house. This generous invitation is given to bring together a company of persons who love retirement and harmony.' Another would-be benefactor of his race went to the expense of inserting a warning to punch-drinkers, which speaks for itself: 'Whereas lately a dangerous experiment (fatal to two or three gentlemen) has been made with making punch with vitriol instead of lemons, this is to advise all gentlemen that drink punch to see their lemons squeezed, for what is sold for lemon-juice is often entirely a composition of vitriol, &c., very pernicious to mankind.'

One more, and we have done. In the *Weekly Journal* (1717), we find a professor of the art of beautifying, puffing her wares in a style unequalled by her successors: 'At her house, the Red Ball in Queen Street, Cheapside, liveth a Gentlewoman that hath a most incomparable Wash to beautify the face, which far exceeds all that are extant, as abundance of the greatest quality have found by experience to their great satisfaction. It takes out all manner of wrinkles, freckles, pimples, redness, morpueh, sunburn, and yellowness caused by mercurial poisonous washes; it also plumps and softens the skin, making it as smooth and tender as a sucking-child's; the young it keeps always so, and the old it makes appear fair and young to admiration; it has nothing of paint in it, neither doth any person know the secret. You may have from half-a-crown to five pence a bottle. You may have Pomatum, White Pots, the like not to

be compared with. Also a Powder for the Teeth, which makes them as white as snow. She hath a most excellent secret to prevent Hair from falling, causing it to grow where it is wanting. She alters red or gray hair to a delightful light or dark brown in a few days, which will never change. She shapes the eyebrows, and makes them beautiful. She hath a delicate Paste to whiten the hands, and a red Pomatum to colour the lips. She has a certain and infallible cure for the Toothache, without drawing, that the pain will not return. She cuts hair very fine. She hath also an excellent Colick-water, also a fine Snuff for the head, with an Eyewater, which she defies all Europe to parallel.' After that, Madam Rachel sings small indeed.

FELIX HOLT.

It is not our custom, as our readers are well aware, to 'review' or 'notice' novels; not, of course, from any disrespect for Fiction, but because the criticism of that kind of literature does not lie within our scope. But *Felix Holt*, we contend, is not a novel, in the ordinary sense of the word; or, if it be, it shall be the exception which proves our rule.

It is a pity that the author of that remarkable series of works, beginning with *Scenes of Clerical Life*, and ending, for the present, with the book before us, should have chosen a masculine *nom de plume*. To have selected a feminine one, might have had even greater disadvantages. But why not have remained nameless—a Great Unknown—second only in point of time to him who first wore that ambiguous title? The author could then have been treated as either male or female, according to the views of the critic: whereas, as the case stands, there is a ludicrous embarrassment arising from the world-known fact of the author's belonging to the feminine gender, and the courtesy (if such a thing ever affected a reviewer) which leads one to respect her original wish to conceal it. As, however, we do not believe that, from internal evidence alone, it could ever have been satisfactorily proved that for *George Eliot* should be written *Georgina*—notwithstanding her marvellous knowledge of woman's nature, and her comparative failure whenever she has to describe personal combat—we shall, for our part, still treat the author of *Felix Holt* as though he were a gentleman. And, indeed, how can he be a woman? Did you ever know a woman who was a philosopher? Did you ever know a woman who was a humorist? Did you ever know a woman who was a sound political economist? Did you ever know a woman who was *all three*? Certainly not; and yet the author of *Felix Holt* has shewn himself to be *all three*, and (if we do not use a Fenianism) a good many more too.

For knowledge of human nature, combined with philosophic humour, the first volume of this novel is not only superior, in our opinion, both to Thackeray and Fielding, but scarcely inferior to Shakespeare himself; while, besides the qualities above mentioned, it has a rich though slender vein of poetry, and a power of poetic description to which no English prose-writer has yet attained. It is easy, however, in speaking of the author of *Felix Holt*, to elevate one's subject by the simple process

of knocking down all other novelists (especially living ones), and so leaving him to stand alone; but not only is criticism by comparison always a very contemptible thing, whereby little is made manifest beyond the personal spite or prejudice of the critic, but in this instance it is particularly misapplied, since, with respect to all living writers, he is incomparable. We do not say this from the slavish sycophancy that seems to have seized upon some of our 'hebdomadal conferrers of immortality' with reference to this comparatively new idol, and which causes them altogether to forsake their ancient shrines; for we yet believe that for pathos, as well as for what people grudgingly denominate 'fun' (as though it were not one of the most rare and precious commodities to be procured in this vale of tears), the author of *Martin Chuzzlewit* has found no rival; while, as for Plot, we could name half-a-dozen novelists who possess the power of interesting us in the fate of their characters in greater perfection than the subject of the present notice. George Eliot is incomparable only in the most literal and obvious sense of the word; he can be compared with no one; the line which he has taken is his own, and one which (fortunately for them) is only occasionally trespassed upon by other novelists. The subscriber to Mr Mudie's, unless his intelligence is very much below the average (and this is far from contemptible) of that of most novel-readers, does not, after rushing through the first volume of *Felix Holt*, as though it were a literary 'bullfinch,' seize ravenously upon the third, 'to see what becomes of everybody'; if he does, he will in this case be woefully disappointed; but he will probably do nothing of the kind. The first chapter, the first page, nay, the Introduction itself, will bid him pause, and linger over the lavish wisdom, and wit, and beauty, that he finds set before him with so liberal yet judicious a hand. There are many pages which he will read again and again; not that they are not written with lucidity—for they are crystal-clear—but because the pregnant words demand an attention which the novel-loving mind is seldom indeed called upon to pay.

Now he comes upon an aphorism not unworthy of Bacon's sagacity and learning, but which Bacon could never have expressed one-half as charmingly; and now upon a reflection, deep and sad, as any uttered by the lips of the Preacher, the son of the king of Jerusalem; and now, upon a prose-poem of the woods and fields, true as a photograph, graceful as Tennyson; and now upon the vulgar gibes of the servants' hall, or the sodden, mirthless recreation of the colliers' alehouse. Whatever this wondrous writer touches, he does not necessarily adorn, unless when he wishes to do so. The last-mentioned subjects, for instance—the servants' room of a great but neglected household, and the bar-parlour of a navvies' beer-shop—are pictures indeed, the first of which might have been by Hogarth, and the second by Teniers—but set in no gilded frame: only looked at through a stereoscope, so that every figure stands out from the canvas, as like and real as life. No intuition short of Shakespeare's can have mirrored such scenes as these so faithfully; and yet, on the other hand, it is almost impossible they can have come within the personal experience of the writer. Viewed in this way, they are certainly the most remarkable things in this remarkable

book; we are also inclined to believe that they are the best; for they surpass even the alehouse scenes in *Silas Marner*.

Felix Holt, a young man, the very personification of conscientiousness, will not permit his widowed mother to sell a certain quack-medicine, invented by her late husband, and the repute of which brings her in a tolerable income; but prefers to support her, poorly enough, by watch-making and school-keeping. In her distress, she goes to her spiritual adviser, Mr Lyon, and pours forth her troubles; only too volubly.

'My husband's tongue 'ud have been a fortune to anybody, and there was many a one said it was as good as a dose of physic to hear him talk; not but what that got him into trouble in Lancashire, but he always said, if the worst came to the worst, he would go and preach to the blacks. But he did better than that, Mr Lyon, for he married me; and this I will say, that for age, conduct, and managing'—

Here the Rev. Mr Lyon inserts a word or two edgewise: but on she goes again.

'Well, Mr Lyon, I've a right to speak to my own character; and I'm one of your congregation, though I'm not a church member, for I was born in the general Baptist connection: and as for being saved without works, there's a many, I daresay, can't do without that doctrine; but I thank the Lord I never needed to put myself on a level with the thief on the cross. I've done my duty, and more, if anybody comes to that; for I've gone without my bit of meat to make broth for a sick neighbour: and if there's any of the church members say they've done the same, I'd ask them if they had the sinking at the stomach as I have; for I've ever strove to do the right thing, and more, for good-natured I always was; and I little thought, after being respected by everybody, I should come to be reproached by my own son. And my husband said, when he was a-dying—'Mary,' he said, 'the Elixir, and the Pills, and the Cure will support you, for they've a great name in all the country round; and you'll pray for a blessing on them.' And so I have done, Mr Lyon; and to say they're not good medicines, when they've been taken for fifty miles round by high and low, and rich and poor, and nobody speaking against 'em but Dr Lukin, it seems to me it's a flying in the face of Heaven; for if it was wrong to take the medicines, couldn't the blessed Lord have stopped it?'

Here the reverend gentleman exhibits his penetration by hitting on the truth, that Felix won't let her sell these valuable drugs.

'Mr Lyon, he's masterful beyond everything, and he talks more than his father did. I've got my reason, Mr Lyon, and if anybody talks sense, I can follow him; but Felix talks so wild, and contradicts his mother. And what do you think he says, after giving up his 'prenticeship, and going off to study at Glasgow, and getting through all the bit of money his father saved for his bringing-up—what has all his learning come to? He says I'd better never open my Bible, for it's as bad poison to me as the pills are to half the people as swallow 'em. You'll not speak of this again, Mr Lyon—I don't think ill enough of you to believe that. For I suppose a Christian can understand the word o' God without going to Glasgow, and there's texts upon texts about ointment and medicine, and there's one as might have been made for a receipt of my

husband's—it's just as if it was a riddle, and Holt's Elixir was the answer."

This spiritual Mrs Nickleby is one of the most natural characters in the book; and Mr Lyon himself is also a very admirable, although, like many most excellent persons in real life, a little tedious. He probably produces exactly the effect upon the reader that he would have done had he met him in the flesh. George Eliot has indeed done for dissent what Mr Dickens did, a quarter of a century ago, for the middle classes—he has introduced it, through his fictions, into polite society. Before *Adam Bede* was written, the ideas of the novel-reading public concerning that religious world which lay outside the Church of England, were as vague as Miss Selina Debarry's in this present work:

"How did Dissenters, and Methodists, and Quakers, and people of that sort, first come up, uncle and all these wrong things; why didn't government put them down?"

"Ah, to be sure," fell in Sir Maximus, in a cordial tone of corroboration.

A few years ago, the final agreement of poor Mrs Holt's, for instance, with respect to her patent medicines, would certainly have been considered in the light of a caricature, if not of a blasphemy:

"What folks can never have boxes enough of to swallow, I should think you had a right to sell. And there's many and many a text for it, as I've opened on without even thinking; for, if it's true, 'Ask, and you shall have,' I should think it's truer when you're willing to pay for what you have."

We all perceive the naturalness of this now; and some of us, perhaps, even congratulate ourselves that it is only among Dissenters that a misapplication of Holy Writ is ever made to suit our own personal convenience.

There are two reasons for us not setting forth the scheme of this story. In the first place, to state 'the plot' of any work of fiction is merely to peep behind the scenes, and rob the coming performance of half its witchery; and, in the second place, the plot of this particular story is of very little consequence. The main intention of the author appears to be, to describe the influence of Felix Holt's character upon a certain young woman, who, though naturally fond of the vanities of the world, rejects them for his sake; gives up her indisputable claim to five thousand a year, in order to live with him in poverty, a state which he is fully convinced is the best adapted to his idiosyncrasy: but how this comes about is a long and involved story, depending much upon an out-of-the-way piece of law called 'base-fee,' but about which our author characteristically discourses as familiarly and with as complete a knowledge of the subject, as though he were professionally retained for Miss Esther Lyon. After what we have written, out of the fulness of our admiration, about this wondrous book, we shall not be accused of malice when we say that the story, as a story, is very uninteresting; the curiosity evoked in the first volume fades and fades, until, in the third volume, where it surely should culminate, the reader cares not what becomes of anybody! Certainly, a feeling of disappointment was the prevailing one as we closed the last chapter of *Felix Holt*, and would perhaps have abided with us, had we not once more taken up the first volume, and redevoured it from end to end. We don't believe there is such a first volume in the world. If any wretch should think of publishing the 'Beauties of George Eliot,'

he would have to reprint vol. i. of *Felix Holt* entire. There are, of course, 'pickings' in volumes two and three which would amply suffice to fill his wallet, in the case of any ordinary writer; surely it is a wise saying, that 'There is no point on which young women are more easily piqued than this, of their sufficiency to judge the men who make love to them;' and again, 'Comprehensive talkers are apt to be tiresome when we are not athirst for information; but, to be quite fair, we must admit that superior reticence is a good deal due to the lack of matter. Speech is often barren; but silence also does not necessarily brood over a full nest. Your still fowl, blinking at you without remark, may all the while be sitting on one added nest-egg; and when it takes to cackling, will have nothing to announce but that added delusion.' But such plums as these, scattered with comparative meagreness in the later portion of the work, are plentiful as in a Christmas-pudding in the first three hundred pages.

The narrative, according to our author's custom, is not one of to-day. It is not indeed like *Romola*—that tale 'written with his heart's blood,' but the popularity of which both date and locality united to destroy—a story of centuries ago, nor are its scenes laid in an alien clime; but it is just so far removed from the present (its commencement is in 1832) as to admit of calm political reflection, and the description of 'things as they were.' The opening picture of the old coach-road and the scenes through which it passes, is unequalled for graphic beauty. If any common-place epithet could aptly be applied to George Eliot's writings, it is the term 'old-fashioned;' he loves to deal with that past which was the present (as we guess) of his youth, but the memory of which is, at all events, very clear and vivid. He reminds us of Walter Scott in this, as also in his old-fashioned 'headings' to his chapters, which he not seldom composes for himself, albeit he does not waggishly write the words *Old Play* beneath them, as he of Abbotsford was wont to do; but his reflections are of a very different sort from those of the author of *Waverley*. 'Suppose only that the traveller's journey took through that central plain, watered at one extremity by the Avon, at the other by the Trent. As the morning silvered the meadows with their long lines of bushy willows marking the water-courses, or burnished the golden corn-ricks clustered near the long roofs of some midland homestead, he saw the full-uddered cows driven from their pasture to the early milking. Perhaps it was the shepherd, head-servant of the farm, who drove them, his sheep-dog following with a heedless unofficial air, as of a beadle in undress. The shepherd with a slow and slouching walk, timed by the walk of grazing beasts, moved aside, as if unwillingly, throwing out a monosyllabic hint to his cattle; his glance, accustomed to rest on things very near the earth, seemed to lift itself with difficulty to the coachman. Mail or stage coach for him belonged to that mysterious distant system of things called "Government," which, whatever it might be, was no business of his, any more than the most outlying nebula or the coal-sacks of the southern hemisphere: his solar system was the parish; the master's temper and the casualties of lambing-time were his region of storms. He cut his bread and bacon with his pocket-knife, and felt no bitterness except in the matter of pauper labourers and the bad-luck that sent contrarious seasons and the sheep-rot. He and his cows were

soon left behind, and the homestead too, with its pond overhung by elder-trees, its untidy kitchen-garden and cone-shaped yew-tree arbour. But everywhere the bushy hedgerows wasted the land with their straggling beauty, shrouded the grassy borders of the pastures with catkin'd hazels, and tossed their long blackberry branches on the corn-fields. Perhaps they were white with May, or starred with pale pink dog-roses; perhaps the urchins were already nutting amongst them, or gathering the plenteous crabs. It was worth the journey only to see those hedgerows, the liberal homes of unmarketable beauty—of the purple-blossomed ruby-berried nightshade; of the wild convolvulus, climbing and spreading in tendrilled strength, till it made a great curtain of pale-green hearts and white trumpets; of the many-tubed honeysuckle, which, in its most delicate fragrance, hid a charm more subtle and penetrating than beauty. Even if it were winter, the hedgerows shewed their coral, the scarlet haws, the deep-crimson hips, with lingering brown leaves to make a resting-place for the jewels of the hoar-frost. Such hedgerows were often as tall as the labourers' cottages dotted along the lanes, or clustered into a small hamlet, their little dingy windows telling, like thick-filmed eyes, of nothing but the darkness within. The passenger on the coach-box, bowled along above such a hamlet, saw chiefly the roofs of it: probably it turned its back on the road, and seemed to lie away from everything but its own patch of earth and sky, away from the parish church by long fields and green lanes, away from all intercourse except that of tramps. If its face could be seen, it was most likely dirty; but the dirt was Protestant dirt, and the big, bold, gin-breathing tramps were Protestant tramps. There was no sign of superstition near, no crucifix or image to indicate a misguided reverence: the inhabitants were probably so free from superstition, that they were in much less awe of the parson than of the overseer. Yet they were saved from the excesses of Protestantism by not knowing how to read, and by the absence of handlooms and mines to be the pioneers of Dissent: they were kept safely in the *via media* of indifference, and could have registered themselves in the census by a big black mark as members of the Church of England.

The Coachman himself, as travelling-companion and commentator of the landscape, is an admirable sketch. He tells how the good folks about sturdily resist the rotation of crops, and stand by their fallows: how an innovating farmer, who talked of Sir Humphry Davy, had been fairly driven out by popular dislike, as if he had been a confounded Radical; and how, the parson baying one Sunday preached from the words, "Plough up the fallow-ground of your hearts," the people thought he had made the text out of his own head, otherwise it would never have come "so pat" on a matter of business; but when they found it in the Bible at home, some said it was an argument for fallows (else why should the Bible mention fallows?); but a few of the weaker sort were shaken, and thought it was an argument that fallows should be done away with, else the Bible would have said, "Let your hearts lie fallow;" and the next morning the parson had a stroke of apoplexy, which, as co-incidental with a dispute about fallows, so set the parish against the innovating farmer and the rotation of crops, that he could stand his ground no longer, and transferred his lease.

If we were to quote all the specimens of humour in this one volume, we should require one of our monthly parts to contain them; but we cannot resist rifling such a hive of a comb or two.

The Tory parson, bound by ties of self-interest as well as relationship to support his Radical nephew, who is standing for the county, thus excuses himself: 'It's a little awkward, but a clergyman must keep peace with his family. Consider! I'm not bound to love Toryism better than my own flesh and blood, and the manor I shoot over. That's a heathenish, Brutus-like sort of thing, as if Providence couldn't take care of the country without my quarrelling with my own flesh and blood.'

If, indeed, the Dissenters misquote texts in *Felix Holt*, it must be allowed that Providence is also often made the stalking-horse of the Church people. 'We may surely wink at a few things,' says Sir Maximus Debarry, 'for the sake of the public interest, if God Almighty does; and if He didn't, I don't know what would become of the country—government could never have been carried on, and many a good battle would have been lost. That's the philosophy of the matter and the common sense too.'

About the Parson and Sir Maximus, both very worthy gentlemen after their kind, our author's cynical wit flickers very pleasantly; but his humour is never more conspicuous than when he treats of vulgar brutal natures, as far apart from his own, one would imagine, as the earth from the sun. Mr Chubb, the self-seeking landlord of the colliers' pothouse, for instance, divides the world into Publicans and Pharisees, 'as a generic classification of mankind sanctioned by Scripture;' and his notion of a Radical is, that he was a new and agreeable kind of lickspittle, who fawned on the poor instead of on the rich, and therefore was likely to send customers to a 'Public.' When the stupid, half-drunken navvies are being addressed in this gentleman's beer-shop by the election agent, and he uses very plain arguments, 'there was an approving "Haw, haw." To hear anything said, and understand it, was a stimulus that had the effect of wit.' How true that is of other than collier-society, and how well it accounts for the popularity of some authors we could name! When the said agent hints at the advisability of a riot at the hustings, 'a little rolling in the dust and knocking hats off,' a 'splitting of coats in a quiet way,' he is careful to add, 'but no kicks, no knocking down, no pummeling.'

'It 'ud be good fun, though, if so be,' said Old Sleek, *aloving himself an imaginative pleasure*. Mr Chubb's brutal selfishness is admirably contrasted with the enthusiasm of Felix, whom he disgusts beyond measure, while imagining that he is making a favourable impression upon him. 'We mortals,' remarks our author, 'sometimes cut a pitiable figure in our attempts at display. We may be sure of our own merits, yet fatally ignorant of the point of view from which we are regarded by our neighbour. Our fine patterns in tattooing may be far from throwing him into a swoon of admiration, though we turn ourselves all round to shew him! Thus it was with Mr Chubb.'

The philosophy of George Eliot, although doubt-

* The italics, of course, are our own; George Eliot very properly eschews the use of such vulgar finger-posts; through the lack of which, however, there will be much loss to some people.

less deep and wise, is not flattering to Human Nature. Not only does he never sacrifice an iota of what he holds to be truth, in order to make himself pleasant, but he seems to take a cynical delight in holding the too faithful mirror close to our faces. He has not a particle of sentiment. Here is a bitter truth, not even mitigated by the epigrammatic form in which he sometimes wraps it, concerning maternal love itself:

'The mother's love is at first an absorbing delight, blunting all other sensibilities; it is an expansion of the animal existence; it enlarges the imagined range for self to move it; but in after-years it can only continue to be joy on the same terms as other long-lived love—that is, by much suppression of self, and power of living in the experience of another. . . . It is a fact perhaps kept a little too much in the background, that mothers have a self larger than their maternity, and that when their sons have become taller than themselves, and are gone from them to college or into the world, there are wide spaces of their time which are not filled with praying for their boys, reading old letters, and envying yet blessing those who are attending to their shirt-buttons.'

There are mothers and mothers, of course; but with all deference to such a student of womankind as George Eliot, we believe him wrong here, and the general opinion upon this matter to be in the main correct. Very right he is, however, when, still speaking on the same subject—the relation of self-willed Mrs Transome to her self-willed son—he adds: 'Half the sorrows of women would be averted if they could repress the speech they know to be useless; nay, the speech they have resolved not to utter.'

It is difficult for a reviewer to stay his hand when a book like *Felix Holt* is given up to him for pillage; but one more extract must close this notice—an appropriate one, as we think, because it is peculiarly characteristic of the writer. He is well convinced of what the Divines seem so slow to comprehend, that Life is not so full of charms, or Death so utterly abhorrent to men's minds. What most of us who have had a tolerably long experience of the world expect to get out of it in the way of enjoyment, is not much; and those who are most sensible are the least discontented with their lot. Hear Denner, Mrs Transome's maid, upon this point, when her mistress is bewailing her own misfortunes, and even half-angry with her attendant for not being equally cast down.

'What are your pleasures, Denner, besides being a slave to me?'

'Oh, there's pleasure in knowing one's not a fool, like half the people one sees about. And managing one's husband is some pleasure, and doing all one's business well. Why, if I've only got some orange-flowers to candy, I shouldn't like to die till I see them all right. Then there's the sunshine now and then; I like that, as the cats do. I look upon it, life is like our game at whist, when Banks and his wife come to the still-room of an evening. I don't enjoy the game much, but I like to play my cards well, and see what will be the end of it.'

Although, however, the author of *Felix Holt* does not entertain any very cheerful views of life, it is certain he makes life much more cheerful, and better worth the having, to all who have the good-fortune to be his readers.

THE PHILOSOPHER OF THE GARDEN.

I sit beneath a fluttering beech;
The leaves like Rumour's tongues are stirring;
Though inarticulate their speech,
Their prophecies are all unerring.

Could I but shape them into words—
Yet why forestall a coming sorrow?
My motto's *Carpe diem*. Birds,
Sing to me of a happy morrow.

Speak to me through your perfumes, flowers,
Of Lucy; let the limes
Fling down their blossoms in sweet showers
Upon me, as in olden times.

Love, send me omens of success—
Some golden cloud like melting amber,
Or sunbeam ray of happiness,
O'er Fortune's crags to guide my clamber.

To-day, I win a priceless gem;
Or bankrupt, beggared, and rejected,
The dusk will see my diadem
Of hope cast off, forlorn, dejected.

I shall sit here beneath the stars,
Watching the bats flit o'er the laurels;
Hailing at Venus, chiding Mars,
Hating the very thrush that carols.

Yet tell my fate has come, I love
The orchard flowers still upward floating,
While greedy bees the thyme above
On their uncounted gains are glowering.

Bring round my horse; I linger still;
Fear bids me hesitate and ponder;
The clouds go pulsing o'er the hill;
Will Lucy be at home, I wonder!

The present still is mine; indeed
All is still sunshine; quicker, swallow,
Sweep in long curves across the mead,
Yet I'll spin faster down the hollow.

Upon that standard rose in bloom
A bud has opened since I lingered;
Its blush like Lucy's—how the room
Grew merrier last night, when she fingered

That wild Mazurka, goblin tune—
Mad witches dancing round a gibbet
In storm and thunder, till the moon
Laughed out, Where did the fellow crib it?

And then the mill-stream's rippling flow,
Dolce, cantabile—it rambles
By moonlit willows row on row—
O'er floating lilies now it gambols.

No colour on a passing cloud,
No sunbeam moving 'cross a shadow,
But brings a memory of her—proud,
Sing like her, bird in lustrous meadow.

Breeze, pulse from rolling field to field;
Glad sunshine, brighten all the clover;
I feel a knight with spear and shield;
With hopes and fears my heart runs over.

Light as a swallow in the air,
Gay as a butterfly on roses—
The man is bringing round the mare;
This child this very hour proposes.

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THREE THOUSAND A YEAR AND 'THE PINES.'

I WAS a good deal shocked the other day at being told by a young fellow of my acquaintance that he was going down to L—s—d (I withhold the full name of the place for obvious reasons) to marry an heiress. Not that there is anything to be shocked at in a man marrying an heiress, or in his going down to L—s—d for the purpose; but the levity of the speaker proved to me that love, as far as he was concerned, played no part in the matter. I could not let the observation pass without comment, so I said to him at once: 'Of course, the fact that the lady is an heiress is not what induces you to marry her?'

'By Jove, but it is, though!' he answered, with the shameless laugh of the true fortune-hunter.

'But you have some love for the poor girl, I presume!' said I.

'Love!' returned the fellow. 'Never saw her in my life.'

'Well, you intend to love her, at anyrate?'

'Quite out of the question, my good fellow,' said the miscreant; 'and so you'd say yourself, if you saw her portrait.'

'Then, may I ask, what inducement you intend to hold out to bring her to marry you?'

'Well, I flatter myself,' he said, with a self-satisfied air, which his handsome face to a certain extent excused—'I flatter myself, personal appearance has something to do with these matters. Then I must of course assume a passion, though I have it not. When one fishes in the matrimonial river for gold-fish, one spins an artificial heart, you know. But what's the good of telling you this? You married for money yourself, and know all about it.'

That is always the way. I am always having that thrown in my teeth: I, with whom honourable motives were of paramount importance; I, whose strict sense of what was due, not only to the lady, but to myself, would not let me stir a step towards gaining Angelina Quelch's affections, till I was convinced that my own were irreparably

engaged. I marry for money! The charge is grossly unjust; but it is the way of the world. If a man marry an heiress, more especially if her beauties do not appear in the face of her, he is sure to be set down as a mere fortune-hunter. What! are plain heiresses never to marry? Is their money during their life to advantage no one but themselves, and at their death, to swell the store of some distant relative perhaps already over-rich! If they are not the kind of people with whom one would fall desperately in love at first sight, is love for them, therefore, a thing impossible! Do not believe it. A man may fall in love with any woman he likes, if he will but make up his mind to it. Marriages are made in heaven, says a proverb. Possibly! I won't take upon myself to deny it; but, says another proverb, Heaven helps them that help themselves, which is entirely my view of the matter. Love may be acquired, may be cultivated as certainly as mangold-wurzels; and love once secured, the charge of marrying for money falls impotently to the ground. Take my own case.

Angelina, only child of the late Gabriel Smith Quelch, Esq., of 'the Pines,' Honeyton—three thousand a year and 'the Pines,' bless her!—first shone upon my view some five years ago, when I was seriously considering the necessity of settling down, and taking to some regular and respectable mode of obtaining an income. From my youth up, however, I have had a hearty dislike for trades and professions, and, in fact, for everything which comes under the head of getting your own living; so what wonder that, as I was ruefully reflecting upon the various disagreeables connected with Law, Physic, and Divinity, or chewing the cud of still bitterer fancies regarding cotton, silk, and indigo, the vision of Angelina should break in upon the darkness of my thoughts like a flash of inspiration into the soul of a poet—like a ray of sunlight into the gloom of a prison—like the distant shout 'Reprieve!' upon the ears of the despairing wretch with whose neck-gear Calcraft's accursed fingers are already fumbling! A marriage with her, it was quite clear, would deliver me from all my perplexity; so, without losing a moment, I took

measures to ascertain that it was all right with regard to the three thousand and 'the Pines,' and then proceeded to consider whether or not the alliance was practicable.

My honourable feelings at once pointed out to me that the first necessity in the matter was, that I should fall in love with the lady. This I resolved to do in as short a time as possible. It is a process of no very great difficulty to the well-regulated mind. You cannot certainly order so much love at a shop, or get it down from London packed in cotton wool—this side up: very fragile—but you can get it nevertheless. Let the would-be lover give his whole mind to it, and success is certain. I don't mean to say that you can—if I may be allowed the term—'coach' that boyish, weeping, rhyming, next-door-to-suicide, unreasoning passion that you read about in novels. You may, for all I know to the contrary, be able to go as far even as this; but as I am only speaking from my own experience, I will not assert it. In my own case, I succeeded in getting a neat, durable, respectable article enough; one in which I had no fear that the colours would run, or that, from its over-brilliance when new, it might come to look tawdry. But how did I get it? I will tell you. What is the first element of success? What is that quality which in time may make an occupation, at first sight disagreeable, interesting, nay, even seductive? Earnestness. Good. I was terribly in earnest about it: I determined to do or die. 'A coffin,' said I, or 'St George's, Hanover Square.' I made Angelina Quelch the great fact in my life; I thought about her the first thing in the morning; I meditated upon her the last thing at night. I asked myself, when in doubt about anything: 'What would Angelina say? Would Angelina like it?' I spoke of her to myself as 'My Angelina.' I made affectionate diminutives of her name; I would style her playfully, Angy; more pathetically, Leena; passionately, and in the accent of Gaul, Ange. I would rally myself occasionally upon the subject of my passion; I would say: 'If you don't take care, old fellow, you'll get spoony in that quarter;' or: 'It strikes me, my friend, that we are getting rather sweet upon the Quelch;' or such like. I kept up the fiction of Angelina's being an object of vital interest to me, of there being some secret sympathy between us, so constantly and perseveringly, that in time I began to think of it not at all as a fiction, but as something real. This was the first step.

I then set myself vigorously to discover beauties in Angelina Quelch; a rather hopeless undertaking, at first sight. To any eye but that of affection, she was a very ordinary-looking girl. Her features were certainly not beautiful. No artist would have taken a single one at a gift. Wangles, who painted a full-length of her, called her 'Faulty'; Stipple, only commissioned to make a chalk-drawing of the head, called her 'Ideous.' Her beauty was necessarily, then, to be looked for in the expression, and abundance of expression she could of a surety lay no claim to. She had a habit, probably a displeasing one to any but the eye of love, of leaving her mouth ajar, as if, when she had finished speaking,

she had forgotten to shut the door after her, and in consequence all the expression of her face had seized its opportunity, and escaped; and I am bound to add that, when she remembered herself, and closed her mouth, strangers might be excused for thinking that the remedy had been delayed too long, and that the door was not shut till the steed had been stolen. Even to my eyes, I confess it was for some time difficult to make much out; but after close study I perceived that the strong point in her character, which her expression interpreted to admiration—and how true it is that the plainest things often puzzle us the most—was simplicity—a singular and beautiful simplicity. If I love one thing in a woman, in these days of affectation and disguise, it is simplicity; and in every line of Angelina's face there was an astonishingly simple, I had almost written vacant, air. I at once confessed that here was the wife for me; my heart told me instantly that this was the woman for my money, as my reason had long since told me that I was the man for hers. That night I dreamed about her, and then I knew that it was all over with me; that I was irretrievably in love.

The first impediment to the marriage being thus satisfactorily got over, I had no longer any hesitation about going in for Angelina heartily; accordingly, I made myself as agreeable to her as I could, paid her as much attention as opportunity would allow, and was, as I hoped, getting on very well, when I was exceedingly disturbed by a conversation which I had with Purkiss. He met me one morning not far from the lodge-gate of 'the Pines,' as I was strolling along thinking how decidedly the composers of the marriage-service had missed my case when they arranged for the bridegroom to say that with all his worldly goods he her endowed; he stopped me, and addressed me thus: 'Ha, Lobbs, my friend, how are you? Always at your post, eh? Watching for your prey like a spider, ha, ha! "Where the carcass is, the eagles"—you know all about it, I see. O my ducats and my daughter! But it can't be done, old fellow; it can't be done.'

Though there was no mistaking the offensive significance of these remarks, I concealed my disgust, and inquired, with well-feigned indifference, what the business was *quod non erat faciendum*?

'Come, come,' said Purkiss; 'let's have no false shame. I know perfectly well that you are making a dead set at the Quelch. Don't be ashamed of it, at anyrate.'

'Ashamed of it, Mr Purkiss!' I returned stiffly. 'If you are alluding to my affection for Miss Quelch?—'

'Not at all,' said Purkiss; 'nothing of the kind entered my head, I assure you.'

'Then I beg you to understand,' I said, 'that my affection for that lady is real and earnest. I worship her; I idolise her.'

'Just so,' said Purkiss. '"And covetousness, which is idolatry." Isn't that how it runs? But, my dear sir, you surely don't mean to say that you are ignorant that the Quelch has vowed never to marry, because she's certain that the men will come for her money, and not for herself? Why, what chance do you think you've got? Jove! continued Purkiss, with anything but a complimentary glance at my figure, 'don't you remember Fokesall? Fine tall fellow was Fokesall! [I am not tall]—six feet two, if he was an inch: man of

most fascinating manners, and the best hand at a compliment I ever knew. Well! she gave him notice to quit incontinent, when he offered his hand and his six feet too. Much obliged, but had decided not to marry.—Then there was Pagnell, Captain Pagnell: you recollect? Remarkably handsome man, you know, he was. [I am not—not remarkably handsome.] 'He came down on purpose to marry her, and thoroughly understood the business too. Went in for it methodically; sighed, flattered, made her presents, and all that sort of thing; proposed, and yet, Right about face; march! was the word; and away went the captain, utterly discomfited. Bless my soul, she has had a hundred offers, and refused them all! In fact, it's not the least use; and it's a pity that all her suitors can't come to the poor girl in the shape of an amatory Briareus, so that she might refuse all their hundred hands at once, and have done with them. Give it up, my good fellow; take my advice, and give it up.—Charming weather, isn't it? Bye, bye.'

I don't know an unpleasant man to talk to than Purkiss.

Here was matter for very serious reflection. Should I take Purkiss's advice, and give it up? What ground had I for expecting success, when Fokesall, six feet two inches high, singularly fascinating, and a wonder at a compliment, was declined with thanks; and when Pagnell, though remarkably handsome, and thoroughly understanding the business, was driven back in confusion? What chance was there for me, possessed neither of Fokesall's extraordinary stature and fascinating manners, nor of Pagnell's remarkable beauty and thorough knowledge of business? None, certainly, if I used the same means which failed with them. But to attack her with the ordinary weapons of love-making, was to fight your enemy in a way which you knew he had made every preparation to resist. How if I tried another plan? Here was Angelina Quelch, the victor, according to Purkiss, of a hundred fights, quite prepared against flattery, sighs, soft looks, and all the ordinary artillery of love. How if I were to make use of none of these practices—if I were to be as unlike her other lovers as possible? They, forgetting that the great point was to quiet her suspicions, and to persuade her that they were in love with herself, had affected to see in her extraordinary beauty and attractiveness, and so represented themselves as in love with something which she could not but feel was very unlike herself. This might have succeeded with some women: if she had not been an heiress, it might have succeeded with Miss Quelch; but as matters stood, it had utterly failed. How would it do, then, if I, instead of ascribing to her all manner of grace and beauty, as if such qualities were necessary to make her worthy of my love, were to shew that I thought of her only as she knew herself to be, and loved her for what she was. This should be my line. Common-sense and, to a certain extent, candour, should characterise my treatment of her, and a leaf out of her own book should, I hoped, aid me more than volumes of the ordinary Art of Love. That very afternoon, I started a report that I had resolved never to marry, and that I had devoted myself to a missionary career in the Feejee Islands.

A decided change in my behaviour to Angelina was now of course necessary. I had before lost no opportunity of throwing myself in her way, and of

pressing my attentions upon her. I now changed all that. I did not seek her society; I avoided quiet after-dinner conversations with her. I, on one occasion, gave my voice in favour of fair beauties—Angelina was dark, not to say tawny—and on another, with seeming reluctance, expressed my opinion that height was essential to perfect beauty—Angelina was short, not to say dumpy. I asserted strongly that *carte-de-visite* portraits only did justice to very plain women, that they spoiled pretty faces; and then, after a decent interval, warmly praised her own photograph with the emphatic commendation that it was as like as life. Anxious, however, not to discourage her, and desirous, besides, to suggest that beauty which pleased the eye might not always be calculated to satisfy the heart, I said that the real charm of a woman's face lay not in regularity of feature, but in expression; and, mindful of the case in point, I added that very much even of that was not necessary. In spite of the success which these tactics deserved, I do not know what I should have done without Miss Suffle's assistance. Miss Suffle was my friend in the enemy's camp. Young ladies who have taken the senseless resolve not to marry—every one who has had any acquaintance amongst plain heiresses, and hysterical girls with anti-nuptial notions, will bear me out in this statement—habitually form exaggerated friendships for some person of their own sex. They must have some confidante to whom they can perpetually repeat their unreasonable resolution, and with whom they can argue and argue again upon its wisdom. These friendships, though, while they last, very passionate, are not very enduring; and it would be against reason that they should be so. They have to supply the place of that tender feeling which the heiress, but for her unhappy position, would glory in entertaining for a lover; and it is no matter for surprise, that, the desire for a warmer love unsatisfied, they should wax and wane, should grow up in a night and perish in a night, like Jonah's gourd, and that the heiress, disappointed in one, should try another, and then another, only to be disappointed in all. I confess that I have known one or two cases where a friendship of this kind has been a wonder of constancy, but this was either because of some very extraordinary merit in the object, or else—the much more probable reason—because the heiress had for the object's brother a sneaking kindness, which she would not confess even to herself. However, in the present case, Miss Suffle was the object of Miss Quelch's devoted affection, and Miss Suffle had no brother. Now Miss Suffle and I were great friends; we always had been friends from our childhood upwards; a thorough brother-and-sister attachment existed between us, so it was no wonder that I should inform her of my love for Miss Quelch, and ask her assistance.

'I will do all I can for you, Gustavus,' she said; 'but I can't give you any great hopes of success. Dearest Angelina is so suspicious of mercenary motives in all the men who approach her, that I am afraid you have very little chance. I wish it could be otherwise, I am sure, for she is quite the dearest girl in the world.' Then, after a pause: 'Gustavus.'

'Emilia.'

'You, Gustavus, would not affect a love that you did not feel, I am sure.'—Meaning, of course, that she suspected very strongly that I would. I

laid my hand upon my heart, and solemnly closed one eye, as if to convey some faint idea of my singleness of purpose.—'You would not, for so many thousands a year'—

'Three and "the Pines,"' I murmured, rather incautiously.

Emilia paused a moment, and then laughed. 'You are like all the rest of them. It's the gold frame, and not the picture, that's valuable in your eyes.'

This, after all the trouble I had taken to get up a *bond-fide* attachment, was too bad.

'Look here, Milly,' I said: 'I am severely in love with Angelina Quelch; you can believe it or not as you please, of course; but it's the truth. Now, will you help me or not?'

'You are really in love with her?'

'I am.' And the reader knows I spoke truly. Hadn't I dreamed about her?

'Very well,' said Milly; 'then I will do my best.'

I pressed her hand, and in a low voice confided to her the little rumour which I had started bearing upon my views with regard to matrimony and the Feejee Islands. I hinted that she might refer to this rumour in conversation with Angelina, and express some regret at the loss which the neighbourhood was about to sustain. It might then be advisable to refer more particularly to the vow of celibacy, and to profess much astonishment that a man of such strong domestic tendencies should have formed such a resolution. She was carefully to mark how these communications were received by the Quelch, and lightly to bring me word. And exceedingly kind it was of Milly Suffle to help me in this way, though I suppose any other woman would have done the same. For when you come to think of it, what woman could resist the offer of a part in a drama of courtship and marriage? Bless them! if they can't play the first lady, they will play the second, or the first bride'smaid, or the last, or the faithful or unfaithful friend, or anything you like, sooner than be out of the piece.

The first intimation I received that the Suffle agency was doing its work, was at a dinner-party at old Suffle's, a few nights after my conference with Milly. I was seated, by Emilia's arrangement, between herself and the Quelch, who, after sitting without uttering a word for some time, while Milly and I carried on a—well, to tell the honest truth, a not quite impromptu conversation, calculated to convey the notion, that for candour, generosity, and high principle, I might safely back myself at long odds against all-comers, suddenly addressed me: 'Mr Lobbs.'

I turned towards her; my natural frankness, as shewn by my conversation with Miss Suffle, struggling against a certain constrained manner which I now thought proper to assume in my conversation with Miss Quelch.

'Mr Lobbs, the Feejee Islands'—mind, not a soul had referred to them—'where are the Feejee Islands?'

Now, this question, though very gratifying when taken as evidence that Milly's influence was at work, was at the same time rather embarrassing, for, upon my honour! I did not know; I had forgotten to look. I glanced for help to Milly; she raised her eyebrows, and gave her head a little shake.

'The Feejee Islands!' I said.

'Yes, where you are going to, you know.'

I imitated a forced laugh with some success, and said: 'Not fair, Milly. What have you been telling Miss Quelch about the Feejee Islands?'

'I only mentioned that you were going there,' said Milly, 'and how sorry we all were.'

'Why do you go, Mr Lobbs?' asked the queen of my affections.

'The benighted ignorance of those unhappy savages, Miss Quelch,' I answered, 'imperatively claims the aid of every one who has no ties to bind him to his native land.'

'What sort of ties do you mean?' inquired the Quelch.

'Oh! a wife to protect, or—or property to look after, or such like.'

'Why don't you take to yourself a tie of the first kind, and not go to those horrid savages, then?' said my soul's desire in a low voice.

I listened with pricked ears, and my heart beat wildly. This seemed so far surpassing my hopes, that I thought I might venture upon something to the purpose.

'Ah, Miss Quelch,' I said, imitating her low tone; 'if she whom I—— But pshaw!'—for I did not altogether like the composed look of her face—'it's folly to think of it.'

'Folly!' said the Quelch. 'Ah! you don't know how fond she is of you.'

'Who?' I said, with difficulty suppressing my feelings.

'Who!' whispered the Quelch. 'Why, Milly, of course.'

'The Feejee Islands, Miss Quelch,' I said, 'to which I am proceeding in a very short time, are in the North Atlantic Ocean, latitude 30° north, longitude 24° west.'

This was not quite correct: in fact, on referring afterwards to an atlas, I found that the islands were in the South Pacific, latitude 18° 30' south, longitude 178° west; but I was so thoroughly thrown out of my own bearings by her answer, that I scarcely knew where I was myself, much less the Feejee Islands.

'You've done it now, my fair friend,' said I very sulkily to Milly when we were in the drawing-room; 'you've done it now, and no mistake.'

'What have I done, Gus?' inquired Milly.

'Done! Why, given Angelina to understand that I'm in love with you; at least, that you are in love with me, which is just as bad.'

'No! have I?' said Milly laughing. 'Never mind; I'll soon set that right.'

'You'd better say, I said, 'or the game's up. Oh! and I say, we'd better fix a day for my actual departure. What do you say to this day-week? Do you think we can bring her to the point by then?'

'Well, Gus,' said Milly, 'if you are not the most conceited—— Why, do you suppose that Angelina is to fall desperately in love with you—for it must be real love in her case, mind—in the space of a week?'

'I don't see why she shouldn't,' I returned. 'And you have, let me tell you, a very unpleasant way of speaking of my feelings on this subject. Real love, indeed! Do you think, if mine were not real love, that I should give myself all this confounded trouble about the girl?'

'And do you think,' said Milly, 'that if yours were real love, you would talk about trouble in that fashion, you dreadful hypocrite?'

Queer girl, the Suffle—full of strange, romantic,

exaggerated notions. Well, we fixed that day-month positively, no abatement, for my departure.

As it was very desirable that I should be, during this month, as much as possible before Angelina's eyes and in her thoughts, I asked her whether she would allow me to have a few lessons from her gardener, an acknowledged master of his useful art, in the planting, gathering, and general culture of the potato, as a thorough acquaintance with the manners of that esculent plant might be of the greatest use to me in my future career. She willingly consented; and during the next week, I laboured, always within sight of her windows, and with my sleeves turned up, to shew my earnestness of purpose and my forearms, which is remarkably fine, at the digging of those detestable roots. I have had a mortal hatred for potatoes ever since. Occasionally, she and Milly Suffle would come out and talk to me for a short time while I was thus employed; and when they made their appearance, which I took care never to perceive till they were close upon me, I would start, and make a pretence of cheerfulness, which evidently was not unnoticed by my adored mistress. 'Well, Dixon,' she said to the gardener one day, 'how does your pupil get on?'

'He works like a 'orse, mum,' said Dixon. 'He'll teach them Fijjy'uns a thing or two con-sarn' tatars, I warn't. But I think it's a pity he don't stay at 'ome, and leave them Fijjy'uns to their own devices.'

Said the Quelch: 'I wish you could persuade him to think so too, Dixon,' and retired with Emilia. If Dixon did not get drunk that night, it was not because he had not the means.

So the first week passed; and though I hoped that she was rather interested in my case, yet I felt that it would be madness to venture upon any disclosure of my feelings at present. The next week, at the suggestion of Dixon, who assured me that if there was one vegetable production better fitted than another to soften the manners of a cannibal, and prevent him from being ferocious, it was 'sparrrgrass,' I devoted myself to the study of asparagus; and, as before, my precious jewel would often come, arm in arm with Emilia, and pay her slave a visit; and she scarcely ever left me without, in some way or other, expressing her regret at my rash undertaking, to which I would make some reply, so artfully managed, that, while it could not fail to awaken an admiration for my heroic devotion in a good cause, was, at the same time, calculated to create and foster a suspicion that there was a secret sorrow somewhere. And so the second week passed, and still I dared not speak.

As half the time had now gone by, and as I could not flatter myself that I had made any decided progress, it was quite clear to Milly and myself that the enemy must be brought to closer quarters. Accordingly, we held a council of war, which resulted in my asking Angelina to allow me to search in her library—a very well-stocked one; for old Quelch, when he furnished the house, went in most lavishly for library shelves, and gave an eminent bookseller *carte blanche* as to the filling of them—for any works bearing upon the subject of missionary labours, and the natural history of the savages of the South Pacific. By this arrangement, I was in Angelina's house daily for some time, and, in consequence, saw her constantly; to the great disgust of an old lady who lived with her—a tenth-cousin ten times removed, or some near relation of

that kind—and who, the wish in her case being decidedly not father to the thought, never, I am certain, thought that I really meant to go to the Feejees, although, I am equally certain, she wished it with all her heart. In spite, however, of these constant meetings, and in spite of my being beholden to Angelina in this way—and there is nothing more likely to influence a woman in your favour than putting yourself under an obligation to her—and in spite of the never-failing support of Milly, my faithful ally, it seemed to me that at the end of this, the third week, I had not advanced a step. So desperate a case required a desperate remedy; Milly and I took serious counsel together, and at last resolved to set the success or failure of the whole business upon one throw. Milly was to tell her that she had found out my secret; that I was in love, passionately in love, with Angelina; and that, unable to conquer my passion, and, from my honourable feelings, still more unable to disclose it, when mercenary motives might be attributed to me, I had desperately resolved upon abandoning happiness and home, and going in for celibacy and exile. My cue was to avoid my soul's desire resolutely; to keep out of her sight carefully, and not to exchange a word or a glance with her till the day before the one fixed for my departure, when I was to go and wish her farewell. This was a week of awful anxiety to me; any one who has been really in love will, I am sure, understand my feelings, and sympathise with me. Supposing this were to fail—this last resource—I should have to go away, and live in London, or Brighton, or somewhere; and then the disappointment of it, after hoping that I was about to secure an establishment for life!

I never spent a more terribly trying week since I was born. I seemed to have set my very soul upon the cast; for I could not but fear that all my better nature would give way under so terrible a disappointment, and would leave me a treacherous, heartless, unprincipled man. Ah! people laugh and jeer at the anxieties and sorrows of lovers, but, by Jove! there's nothing laughable about them. Well, Milly reported that when she communicated my secret to Angelina, the light of my eyes blushed a good deal; stared considerably; laughed a little—which looked bad; cried a little—which looked better—wished she had been born a beggar—charming little idiot—and prayed her own dear Milly not to refer to the matter again; to say no more about it, to oblige her. I did not know what to think of this conduct, neither did Milly. The days passed, and still she said nothing; and whenever Milly tried to say a word for me, Angelina stopped her with: 'There! don't talk about that, please, darling;' or some confoundedly provoking speech of that kind. Indeed, the only satisfactory or sensible thing that my blessed angel said the whole time, so far as I could learn, was, that she supposed Mr Lobbs would not go to his horrid savages without wishing her good-bye first. And in this state of utter darkness, on the day before my day of departure, I took my way to 'the Pines,' and asked to see Miss Quelch. She blushed amazingly when my name was announced, and looked a good deal embarrassed; and, as regarded myself, my emotion may be imagined; for, as I saw her sitting in that tastefully furnished room, most expensively dressed, and with a bracelet on her arm that must have cost a couple of hundreds at least; and when, through the window behind

her, I caught sight of the splendid timber in the avenue, and the flower-beds glowing with a thousand gorgeous colours—I felt that she who was the mistress of all these was indeed the mistress of my heart also; I vowed anew, that where her home was, mine, if I could so arrange it, should also be; and, trembling like an aspen leaf, I ‘owned thy power, mysterious, mighty Love.’

‘I am come to wish you good-bye, Miss Quelch, I said, with a quaver in my voice that was genuine, upon my honour! and then, as I have seen a skillful rider shew off his horse by alternately loosing him and checking him, I gave a sigh its head, pulled it up again suddenly, executed with triumphant success—for I saw myself in the glass—a sickly smile, and awaited her reply.

‘Are you really going, then, Mr Lobbs?’ said the Quelch, so pensively that I took heart a little.

‘Off to-morrow early,’ I replied, as if with feigned cheerfulness; ‘before you will be awake, I dare say. Sail on Thursday.’

‘Are the Feejee wretches cannibals?’ asked Angelina. ‘Milly thinks they are. But they’re not, are they? Say they’re not cannibals?’ And there was in the remark a tone of sincere interest that I very highly approved of.

‘Cannibals!’ I answered; ‘alas, yes. But what does it matter? So long as one is in the path of duty, what does it matter whether one’s fate comes in the shape of a rifle-ball or a Feejee Islander, whether we meet it in the mouth of a cannon or of a cannibal? Cannibals they are indeed.’

‘Then how foolish, how—how cruel of you to go,’ said my angel petulantly, turning her face away, and resting her elbow on the mantel-piece. My heart commenced singing a psalm.

‘Cruel!’ I said softly. ‘Cruel! to whom?’

‘Why, to a-a-all your friends,’ said the Quelch, with a decided sob.

‘My friends won’t break their hearts about it,’ I replied, rather bitterly.

‘You evidently know nothing about their hearts, though you are so c-c-clever,’ returned the Quelch, trying to be sarcastic, and not succeeding, the bewitching little fool.

‘I know as much as I care to know about the hearts of all except one, and’—said I, determined to hesitate no longer, and speaking rapidly, as if my feelings were at last too strong to be restrained—‘and that heart is yours, Miss Quelch. Oh! Angelina, when I felt long ago how deeply I loved you, fearing that you would think me a mere mercenary suitor like the crowds that have fluttered round you, I made a desperate resolution never to marry, gave up all thoughts of happiness, and determined to carry my shattered hopes and broken heart to the man-eating savages of Feejee. Even now, I am on the point of departing. I come here this morning to bid you farewell; my resolution taken, my boxes packed up, and the bus already instructed to call for them early to-morrow. One thing alone can prevent my going now, and that is a word from you. If you say, Go; farewell, I am gone; but if you say, Stay!’—and I threw the major portion of my soul into my eyes, drew her hand gently from her face—the rings on her fingers were a dowry in themselves—and looked fixedly at her. She gave three distinct sobs; looked hard at a diamond ring upon her finger, and muttered: ‘Is it real? is it real?’—which I can positively assure her it was, for I had been remarking it for some time—shed a flood of tears—and tears don’t suit

her—cried out: ‘O stay, stay for my sake!’ and my triumphant arms caught lovingly to my throbbing breast three thousand a year and ‘the Pines.’

And yet I am accused of having married for money! Oh, the uncharitableness of this world!

THE NEEDLE-GUN AND CARTRIDGE.

INVENTORS more frequently wear their lives out in endeavouring to get their inventions adopted, than succeed in realising a fortune by the production of their brain. This has not, however, been the case with Herr von Dreyse, who has not only lived to see his invention adopted, but, what is even more rare, has, we are told, acquired a handsome fortune by it, and been ennobled into the bargain, on the ground of the eminent service he has rendered to the state in providing it with a weapon and ammunition possessed of such destructive powers as the needle-gun. How a man feels, or ought to feel, who has invented an instrument which enables a greater number of his fellow-creatures to be maimed and killed, than could be accomplished by any other means, is a matter which none are more competent to discuss than German metaphysicians; we doubt whether our own slumbers would be altogether tranquil if we had served the state in a similar manner; but, on the other hand, we might find compensation, if not consolation, in the title and the fortune.

The needle-gun, by means of which the Prussians have achieved victories with a rapidity that has astonished Europe, is no new invention, or one which has only just been made known; it was offered to France, and, no doubt, to other continental states; and we can quite well remember that its merits were discussed in this country many years ago; but the general opinion among those who professed to know more than others of such matters was, that its demerits were greater than its merits. We think, however, that a description of the gun and cartridge, and the manner in which the Prussian soldier is trained to use it, will shew that the objections that were made to it were more theoretical than real, and that as a good, useful weapon, it will hold its ground against any of its brother breech-loaders which have of late been shewing their qualities at Wimbledon. We do not, however, intend to advocate the use of this particular breech-loader, or to institute a comparison between it and others; we merely propose to give a description of the arm, the fame of which is ringing throughout the world, and causing a degree of excitement which almost amounts to a panic in those countries which are unprovided with it.

The appearance of the needle-gun is not so very different in externals from an ordinary muzzle-loader as to attract sudden attention. The hammer is absent, but in place of it there is a stout knob or handle, which would make it a very formidable weapon in the hands of the Brandenburgers, if used in the manner which is said to be a favourite one with them when at close quarters—as a kind of battle-axe or club. When the gun is loaded, this knob is held in a notch deep enough to keep it firmly in its place, and prevent the cylinder to which it is attached from being blown out by the explosion. When it becomes necessary to reload the gun, the thumb draws back a slide to which the spring is attached, the complete performance of which is announced

by a little click, and the right hand then grasps the knob or handle, and brings it to an upright position, which allows of its being drawn back towards the stock. When this is done, a cavity is revealed, in which the cartridge is placed; it is then pushed forward towards the barrel, and the breech is closed. In the cylinder is contained the coil or spring to which the needle is fastened. This spring is drawn back in the manner we have mentioned, and only the point of the needle can be perceived projecting ever so little through the hole drilled in the tube of the cylinder, which keeps it in its position, and guides it straight to the point desired.

The cartridge used in this weapon is an invention in itself, and shews the inventor's intimate acquaintance with a fact which we understand to have been little known at the time, and which is not generally acknowledged even now, but respecting which there can be no doubt whatever in the minds of those who know anything of such matters. Even so small a quantity of powder as is contained in a cartridge, when the grains are pressed closely together as they are in that position, does not explode simultaneously, and by igniting the gunpowder at the part nearest the bullet, the whole force of the gas generated is directed on the bullet, and the escape of gas from the breech, which some assert takes place, is diminished, if not altogether prevented. A more important consideration than this is, that when the ignition takes place in front, the strain on the gun is lessened. As for the escape of gas in the case of breech-loading guns, of which so much is said, when a gun is effective at a range of a thousand paces, as the needle-gun is said to be, and as we know it to be at eight hundred paces, we may be sure that the gas which escapes must be so infinitesimally small that it need not be taken into account. It was doubtless owing to his knowledge of this advantage of igniting the gunpowder in front, that the inventor placed the fulminating powder between the ball and the gunpowder, for which, too, he might have had another reason—namely, diminishing the risks of accidental explosion. When the coil or spring to which the needle is attached is released, the needle enters the cartridge at the base, passes through the gunpowder, and strikes against the fulminating compound, which instantly explodes, and ignites the gunpowder.

The fulminating powder does not occupy the whole of the space between the bullet and the gunpowder; if this were so, there would really be the danger from accidental explosion by concussion which has been brought against it. Between the bullet and the powder, the paste-board is so thick as to allow of a hole being drilled in the very centre of it, in an exact line with the point of the needle, and this hole is filled with the fulminant, which is thus protected from pressure on all sides, so effectually as to account for the entire absence of accidents, notwithstanding the careless treatment they are certain to receive from the soldiers, who, from long familiarity with them, we may be quite sure, do not treat them with especial gentleness. Every man on going into action is supplied with sixty of these cartridges, which he carries in two pouches, moving on a belt, so placed that they balance each other. When he has fired away the contents of one, he pushes it out of the way, and substitutes

the other. As the operation of loading consists merely in dropping the cartridge just as it is in the cavity prepared for it, without biting or any other preliminary, there is no difficulty in firing the gun ten or twelve times in a minute; but the soldiers are directed, even in the hottest part of the action, not to fire more than five times in a minute. As a matter of fact, they seldom fire even at this rate, and for the very sufficient reason that, as the picked shots begin firing at the enemy when they are at eight hundred yards' distance, the whole of their ammunition would be exhausted before they came to close quarters. Much of the destructiveness of the Prussian fire arises from the accurate aim taken by the men. Full of confidence in their weapon, and its superiority over the muzzle-loaders at close quarters, they watch the approach of their antagonists with calmness, and do not throw away any of their balls in random shots: the old saying, that every bullet has its billet, applies with greater truth to Prussian bullets than to those of any other army. To this cause must be assigned the large proportion of Austrians who are to be seen with their arms in slings, suffering from what are merely flesh-wounds, of which they speak with a kind of contempt; but inasmuch as these wounds were severe enough to disable them, the shot may be considered to have done its work as effectively as if it had shattered the bone.

The objections raised against the needle-gun in France, and repeated over here, possibly on no better authority, have been completely met by its performance in the campaign which it has been the principal means of rendering victorious. The gun does not foul rapidly; the cartridge does not explode spontaneously or accidentally; and, greatest objection of all, as it was considered, the needle does not easily or often break. When it does, we are told that the remedy is always at hand. Every man carries one or more needles always with him, and is competent to remove the broken fragment and substitute a fresh needle in an exceedingly short space of time.

That any weapon could be more effective in action, or less liable to be thrown out of good working condition by exposure to night-dews or rain, it is not easy to believe; but it is evident that much of its destructiveness will depend on the amount of instruction which each individual soldier receives in its use. Generally, the soldier, to whatever country he belongs, takes far less interest in the result of his practice than is manifested by the members of Volunteer corps, and for reasons that are obvious. In the first place, the incentive of prizes is wanting; and in the next, in many armies, the soldier does not expect that he will ever be placed in circumstances where his life will depend on the accuracy of his aim. So far as the French army is concerned, the Italian campaign taught them not a little, and judicious encouragement and explanations at the camp of Chalons, at Vincennes and elsewhere, have enlightened them still more; so that they have now, in certain corps, a large number of exceedingly good shots. The Prussian soldier has long been trained to fire his regulation number of balls as though they were objects to be deposited in an assigned position, and not to be merely got rid of with the least possible trouble to himself. The infantry of the line, during their military training, are required to fire one hundred balls a year per man. These have to be

fired on succeeding days at a rate not exceeding ten per day. Five shots will decide whether a man remains for a time in the third class, or if he goes at once into the second; but no man is placed in the second class of marksmen who has not proved his right to be there by the accuracy of his fire. The ordeal through which he has to pass before he is admitted into the first class, is of course proportionally severe. The conscript begins his practice at one hundred and fifty paces from the target. Before and after every shot, he receives from the instructor a brief lecture explanatory of the why and the wherefore. Every shot he fires is recorded on his card by the marker; and as soon as he has obtained a fixed number of marks by five balls in succession, he is put back fifty paces additional; and the same thing goes on until he has reached the maximum distance for the majority of them, including those of the first class—namely, six hundred paces. There are many who think little of this range, and these are allowed to fire at the target from a greater distance, as are the whole of the men composing the corps of fusileers, who, moreover, have to fire two hundred shots a year in lieu of one hundred. The targets used are of different kinds; some are fixed, others are in motion, and the soldier under instruction will sometimes be called upon suddenly to transfer his fire from one to the other. It will be seen, therefore, why it was that every man in the Prussian army, with the exception, perhaps, of the newly-joined conscripts, was able to make such effectual use of the advantage which the breech-loading needle-gun gave him over the more antiquated weapon in the hands of the Austrians.

LIFE IN THE MOUNTAINS OF JAMAICA.

NOTWITHSTANDING the semi-monthly communication between England and Jamaica, and the constant influx and reflux of visitors either on business or pleasure, it is surprising how little is known in Britain of the mode of life pursued by creole ladies in the mountains of Jamaica. Even the meaning of the word creole is not clearly understood. Creole simply means the product of a West Indian island; thus, we have creole horses and creole pigs, creole corn, creole negroes, and creole whites.

It must be premised that I write only of mountain-life; that of the towns, with the exception of the furnace-like heat and dust, does not differ essentially from life in any county town of England or Scotland. Evening-parties and calls are interchanged, analytical discussions are entered into with regard to the birth, parentage, and character of absent friends, and an ardent desire is displayed to be the big apple amongst the little ones.

To speak of the *far-niente* life of a lady in these mountains is sheer twaddle. In no other clime are the wives of the clergy or other officials, whose salaries average from two hundred to four hundred per annum, subjects of such slavishness to domestic routine as one of these ladies. At day-dawn, she makes her appearance in morning costume in the back-hall, and dispenses tea, coffee, and toast to the several bedrooms of her husband, her sons, her daughters, and the strangers that are within her gates. Her servants, her dogs, and her cats are regaled upon hot water—that is, warm water made exceedingly sweet with new

sugar, from which the molasses have not been drained.

The heavy mountain dews preclude children from walking out in the morning. Those who are old enough to ride are therefore mounted on sure-footed ponies, and sent out with a servant, to enjoy the bracing morning air. The two infants are carefully packed in hampers, on a Jerusalem pony; and nurse, with the aid of a string round her waist, tucks up her garments knee high, leads forth Neddy with her charges, and oblivious to dew or mud, plucks a beautiful Orchid here, and points out a Doctor* humming there, flitting about from blossom to blossom, to the delighted little ones. But woe betide the mother who has not personally and carefully examined the girths, buckles, and other matters appertaining to the trappings of the ponies and donkey; for, assuredly, if she has left matters to the groom and nurse, one or other of her lambs will come to grief. However, the darlings having made a fair start, it is time to proceed to cater for the day—rather a difficult operation, considering there are no markets, and fresh meat only to be had once a week. For the ensuing six days, she must depend upon her own resources. Calling her cook, she proceeds to the poultry-yard: 'I gave out twenty-four cocoa-nuts to be cut for the fowls: how comes it there are only twelve here?' Answer: 'Don know; spouse rats must be eat dem.' Selecting a fat capon for dinner, and having a sucking-pig put in durance vile, until his shaving-water is ready, the next visit is to the garden, where she finds the beds of thriving creole carrots and creole turnips, which she had directed should be weeded, are lying on the walks, dried up, and dead; whilst the weeds are flourishing as only such things do flourish. 'Me tink missus say must leff de grass,' is all the excuse given by the gardener.—'Pray, where are the grenadillas that were ripening on the vine yesterday?' Answer: 'Me no see dem, na'am.'—'Why did you not bring in the bunch of bananas and maiden plantains I told you of yesterday?' Answer: 'Dem all gone; somebody tref dem.'—Proceeding to the goat-pen, having in view a nice fat kid for the children's dinner, behold, no kid is there! To the servant: 'Are you quite sure you shut up that kid last night?' 'Don see him dis tree night back.'—'Then why did you not tell me of it?' 'After him gone already!'—'Where is the milk for the children's breakfast?' 'De pan fall down, and milk run away; nebber see such a stupid, worthless pan like dat, to fall down so.' There can be no moral doubt but that the negro in the garden helped himself to the fruit, the cook to the cocoa-nuts, and the other negro to the kid and milk; but you have no redress. To discharge them, would be no punishment to them, nor could you procure any of a more trustworthy character.

From the intense heat of the sun during the day, a lady is compelled to look after such domestic matters in the cool of the morning. This will occupy her for fully three hours. When retiring to her bath, she dresses for the day. The little people come in from their ride, and by the time they are dressed, breakfast is ready. Papa is vexed his children should have to eat unwholesome salt butter, instead of nutritious goats' milk, with their rice; and scolds his man, who shrugs his shoulders,

* The negro name for the Long-tailed Humming Bird (*Trochilus polytaurus*).

and mutters to himself: 'Dere's a temper massa get in dis day.'

Breakfast being over, and massa having gone to attend to his business, a vain attempt is made to devote a couple of hours to 'teach the young idea.' Books are produced, and a few preliminary remarks made, when two gentlemen ride up; breakfast has to be given them, and an hour or so passes before they take their leave. 'Missus, a lady in de back-hall want you.' The said lady is black as jet, with a basket of yams on her head for sale, for which she asks an exorbitant price. Then an old negress makes her appearance, with a multiplicity of wrappers on her head, claiming sympathy and assistance for a series of complaints that would stagger the whole college of physicians to fathom. 'Me head hurt me; me hab toppage of de tomach; and me skin yam me all over.' A little blue pill and dose of oil are given, with advice to take the *pill first and oil afterwards*, or likely as not it would be *vice versa*. Scarcely has the old woman been sent away, when a girl comes in, and undoing a bundle she carries in her arms, produces an infant of tender age. 'My sweet missus, do beg you look 'pon dis picny; him sick for true.' Well, it takes some time to ascertain its ailings, and mix up the physic it requires. Meanwhile there arrives a huge negro in great excitement. 'Missus, de way dat Mr John Thomas treat me is vile, missus; I tell him I will bring complaint to you; him say him don't care; he's rude, very rude—him curse me awful!—If Mr John Thomas makes use of bad language, tell him I'll bring him up before the minister on Sunday.' 'Him bad, bad! nebbber see a nigger to curse so.' 'What were the words he made use of?' 'Dem too bad; can't talk dem to you.' 'But I must be told, or how can I report them to the minister.' 'Me shame to tell: him say, me must go to me grandee learn to suck eggs. Me, missus! a gentleman like me go to learn suck eggs; he really hab impudence to talk such an a word.'—Presently, Mr John Thomas appears, and complains: 'Dat worthless nigger dere, he keep constant laff after me.'—By the time they are got rid of, second breakfast, which serves also for children's dinner, is on the table. After that, the washerwomen, with their trays of family-linen, arrive: the washing-books shew a variety of little articles to be missing; and the total number of pieces, when added up, come to a considerably less amount in money than Ma'am Dinah or Miss Judy make it out to be. A considerable time is wasted before the matter is settled, when a messenger from papa arrives to say: 'I shall bring home two or three gentlemen to dine and sleep.' Rooms have to be prepared, which Materfamilias must see to. Strong in her pig and capon, she is at ease as far as solids go; and calling the cook to ascertain if piggy has been 'shaved,' to her dismay is told: 'De good-for-nuttin' young hog walk out of de barrel since first breakfast, and don come home yet.'—Take a pair of Guinea-fowls out of the coop, and roast them.' 'Can't; dem don dere; dem gone in Bush wid wild one.'—Who let them out? 'Don no—can't rightly say myself.' Here, again, there is no redress.

Proceeding to her store, the poor lady selects various tins of preserved fruits, vegetables, and meats, supplied her from Mr Gadpaille's excellent establishment in Kingston, and, at double the cost it ought to have done had her orders been properly

carried out, succeeds in placing a dinner before her husband and his guests. About five o'clock, the gentlemen arrive, enjoy their repast, and at nine, Materfamilias says: 'Good-night.' The heat of the climate and worry of domestic affairs have quite worn her out; but in her first sleep, a loud rat-a-tat at the door startles her. 'Young massa quite sick.' Rushing to the crib—the child's face is hot and flushed—his breathing comes in gasps. Dreading fits, the agitated mother gives an emetic; up come portions of green guavas and undigested pine-apple. The boy is relieved; perspiration comes on, and he sleeps the sleep of peace and innocence, while his mother anxiously watches him. Towards morning, she snatches an hour or two's repose, makes her appearance at the usual morning coffee, and inquires who gave young master those proscribed articles of food. 'No me, ma'am, say the servants. The child points to the groom as the delinquent, who is rebuked severely. He defends himself: 'After massa say I must gib him de pine and de guava, what for me to do?'

It is rarely one 'white woman' visits the other: the difficulty of travelling over bad roads, and of procuring faithful nurses to attend to the little flock at home, form insuperable barriers to anything like visiting. 'It is nearly five months since I have seen one of my own kind,' said one friend to another; 'and you can't imagine what a treat it is,' she added, in a tone of deep feeling. But 'black ladies,' in hoops, hats, gloves, military-heeled boots, and an alarming quantity of mosaic, are to be seen wending their way to church and chapel, chattering like so many crows, and enjoying life to the utmost, according to their lights.

The houses in general are large and rambling, built of wood, with very little accommodation, considering the ground-space they occupy. The roofs are unceiled, crossed and recrossed with heavy beams and rafters, the crevices of which form abiding-places for spiders, cockroaches, centipedes, and scorpions; occasionally, a screech-owl may 'squat' there also, and, like most such gentry, it will be found rather difficult to evict him. The walls are unpapered, and a coating of whitewash is from time to time bestowed upon them, and this with such liberality on the part of the negro mason, that every article of furniture, together with the flooring, is profusely bespattered. The numerous jealousies are, in the writer's estimation, an atrocious invention of the dark ages: it is seldom their transverse blades shut sufficiently close to prevent a tropical rain driving like spray through them, rendering the room damp and uncomfortable for some hours. During the heat of the day, the sun's rays will stream in, curling up the binding of one's favourite books like fried whittings, or disturbing the veneration of the young ladies' piano. The servants' apartments, kitchen, pantry, &c., are situated a little way from the main dwelling; and as bells are unheard of, when one wants a servant, he goes to the door and calls out: 'Somebody, somebody!' When nearly hoarse from shouting, somebody at length pokes his turbaned head out of an outroom. You ask for the groom. 'Me don see him,' is the reply (Anglicé, 'I don't know where he is'). After a while, you learn 'Quashee come look for his breakfast.' It will depend how far he has travelled to find the particular mango, orange, or other fruit-tree to suit his taste, when you see him again. Your infant may be dying, your eldest hopeful have broken a limb, your

husband be in his office six miles off, yourself in agonising distress, but—helpless—no medical aid can be obtained until Quashee has found his breakfast.

The furniture of these mountain houses is very scanty; a capacious cellaret; a huge sideboard, adorned with glasses of every size, from the goblet, for a long drink, to the tiny liqueur glass, holding no more than a lady's thimble; a set of dining-tables and an array of chairs, ranged grimly along the wall, complete the furniture of the dining-hall. The bedrooms are still more scantily supplied: a Brobdingnagian bed; a huge wardrobe, or a chest of drawers, the top of which answers for a toilet-table, is all that is to be found. Indeed, the aspect of the whole house is that of a Scotch dwelling on flitting-day—the best part of the furniture removed, and the rest about to be so. The kitchens are dark, dingy hovels, with walls black as Erebus, from the smoke of the green wood negroes delight in burning. The cook's household gods consist of some three-legged iron pots and an oven built of brick. Her throne is an old box, turned bottom up, seated on which, with a pipe in her cheek, she watches her pots bubbling; and without one of the numerous appliances a white domestic would demand, will turn out a very well-cooked dinner. She excels in soups, and her baked meats would do credit to a Soyer. Of time, however, she has no idea: order dinner at five, it is seven before you get it. To induce her to keep every utensil for its own purpose, is simply impossible. You ask for a little warm water—she has to go to the spring for a supply; but as she is washing plates in the water-bucket, she poises a large cedar bowl on her head. On reaching the spring, two or three pigs are enjoying a cool bath; this entails a longer journey to find clear water. On her return, as the rice is boiling in the tea-kettle, she heats the water in a frying-pan; and after an hour's delay, the water is produced, redolent of salt cod or pork chops, or whatever the pan had been previously used for.

These mountainous tracts of land are extremely fertile, and all the most useful English vegetables grow readily from English seeds; the rivers teem with most delicious fish; the woods abound with flocks of pigeons, quails, butter-birds, ortolans, and many others. With all these accessories, it is an enigma to casual visitors and tourists why families with limited means do not live more within themselves, and depend less upon Mr Gadpaille's supplies than they do. The fact is, the negroes are so afflicted by a certain disease called kleptomania, that it is futile for any of the class we write of to endeavour, by cultivation on a small scale, to eke out their means. No sooner are the yams, corn, and other provisions ripe, than the rapacious marauders come in gangs by night, and carry everything off. We have heard of as many as one hundred bunches of plantains being taken from provision-grounds in one single night. It is very well to talk about the whip for these gregarious robbers, but the difficulty is to catch them. Nay, if you do in the long-run succeed in convicting one of the predal tribe, and he is sent to the penitentiary or county jail, it is a mere nothing to him. He will be better lodged and better fed than he was in his own hut; and at the termination of his penal service, he will be received into the bosom of his family and friends with open arms. 'Me more dan glad for see you come home, Mr Cuffee. How dem do treat you when you in

the pemepetentiary?' *Ans.* 'Dem treat me very well; only dat big fat bucca dat call hisself inspector, him got no manners; him cock up him foot, and say him won't 'low no nigger hab pipe. Him is one of de vilest men; him don't want nigger to hab no comfort.'

An Englishman came out here, some two years ago, whilst the cotton-fever was raging. He started upon the best (European) principles; he would shew us all what he would do, and how he would live; he would grow his own yams and his own corn; he would grow his own vegetables, and rear his own poultry; he would have a cotton plantation and farm combined; he would practically and personally illustrate the fact, that all that was required was energy, activity, and industry on the part of the whites, to enable them to make a handsome living. What was the result? From want of continuous labour, his cotton failed; as soon as his vegetables were fit for use, he was robbed of them. 'I'll hire an able-bodied watchman,' cried he; and hire one he did; but notwithstanding the able-bodied watchman, matters became rather worse: poultry and goats disappeared mysteriously; the windows, doors, and portions of the flooring of an old building vanished; any question put to the able-bodied watchman only produced the reply: 'Me no know where dem tings gone; me don't see dem.' Now our friend rests all his hopes on a beautiful field of cassada; but we are safe in predicting he will never glut the market with cassada cake,* for as soon as the roots are fit to take out of the ground, Mr Cuffee, Mrs Cuffee, and all the little Miss and Master Cuffees will pounce upon them, and leave not a vestige behind.

'I reared ninety turkeys, and thought they would have been such an assistance to us,' said a lady in reduced circumstances; 'but the negroes have stolen them all but ten: when those are fit to eat, I presume they will be stolen also.'

So it is throughout the length and breadth of the land: the predal excursions of the hale, hearty negro, guided possibly by the very people you have employed to protect your property, stultify the efforts of the poor white man to realise a living by his own industry, and neutralise the power of the white gentleman to form a permanent home for his family in Jamaica.

BROUGHT TO LIGHT.

CHAPTER XIII.—MARIE'S DEPARTURE.

MR DUPLESSIS drove up to Kingsthorpe Station in the dog-cart of his friend and admirer, Mr Frank Challis, at nine the following morning—in fact, before Madame had arisen, as Jane Garrod told him when she went down in answer to his summons. It was no matter, he said; he would go on as far as Lea Wood, where he had a little business to transact, and be back in the course of a couple of hours at the latest; in the meantime, Mrs Garrod would perhaps oblige him by taking that package of prepared chocolate, which he had brought specially for his sister, knowing her tastes of old, and by mixing a little of it for Madame's breakfast; and greeting Jane with a nod and a smile, he flicked

* Very much like a Scotch barley-bannock, when rolled out thick, or like an osten cake when made thin, both sorts being cooked on a girdle.

a fly off the mare's left ear with his whip, and drove rapidly away.

'Chocolate! How came you by this?' demanded Madame, when Jane took her a cup of the beverage to bed.

'It was brought this morning by Mr Duplessis specially for you,' answered Jane.

Madame, with a shudder, put down the cup she was raising to her lips. 'Ah, Henri, *mon frère*, we are not quite so simple as we seem!' she exclaimed; then, leaping suddenly out of bed, she flung open the casement, and with something like an imprecation, muttered under her breath, she dashed the cup and its contents into the garden below. 'Take my advice,' she said, turning to Jane, 'and put that package behind the fire; and bring me up a cup of coffee, together with a *petit verre*—that is, a small glass of brandy—just to compose my nerves.'

In the fresh light of morning, Madame looked even more sallow and haggard than on the preceding evening; but when her toilet was completed, and she sat down to breakfast in the little parlour, there was a youthful bloom on her cheeks, such as many a maiden of seventeen might have envied—had it only been natural.

'What excellent coffee you make!—quite in the French style,' said Madame. 'You have never been in France, have you?' she asked, turning suddenly on Jane with her suspicious black eyes.

'I was in service, when I was young, where there was a French cook, and he taught me how to make coffee,' answered Jane, skilfully evading a dangerous question.

Madame was satisfied, and toyed indolently with her toast. 'My brother promised to be back in two hours, I think you said?' she remarked to Jane after a while. 'Poor Henri! how surprised he would be to receive my message!' she went on, with a little sneering laugh. 'He had not seen me for so long a time, that I believe he had got the idea into his foolish head that he would never see me again. Let me think.—How many months has he been in this neighbourhood? Ah, yes, about eighteen, to be sure. He hinted something to me last night about having fallen in love with some Miss—Miss— What was the name?'

'Miss Spencelaugh, perhaps,' suggested Jane, who was quite willing, for a purpose of her own, to hear all that her lodger might have to say on this subject.

'Yes, that was the name—Miss Frederica Spencelaugh of Belair,' said Madame. 'The young lady is both rich and beautiful—is it not so?'

'Both,' answered Jane.

'And does she favour the suit of Mr Duplessis?'

'That is more than I can take on me to say,' replied Jane. 'Folk do say that the old baronet takes very kindly to the notion, and that he is very fond of Mr Duplessis, who is up at Belair most days.'

'But Mr Duplessis, although he has enough to live on in a quiet way, is not rich; how, then, is it that so wealthy a man as this Sir Philip Spencelaugh looks with such favourable eyes on his suit?'

'Why, you see, Madame, Mr Duplessis was fortunate enough to save the baronet's life at some place abroad, and from that time the old gentleman seemed to take a fancy to him; and then, as he says, his niece is rich enough to wed a pauper from the workhouse, if she thinks proper to do so. But, besides all that, Sir Philip is getting old and

infirm, and would no doubt like to see Miss Frederica comfortably settled before anything serious happens to himself.'

'But this Miss Spencelaugh has already had several suitors, has she not?'

'Yes; several.'

'And rejected them all?'

'So I have been told.'

'Which would seem to imply that there is some one more favoured than the others, whom she cannot have, and that she will not, in consequence, have any one else. Is it not so?'

'On that point, I can say nothing. It is a matter best known to Miss Spencelaugh herself.'

'If he has won the consent of the uncle,' said Madame, 'that of the niece will follow in due course, or else she must be very different from most other young ladies I have known, and Monsieur Henri Duplessis must have lost some of those powers of fascination which, years ago, he knew so well how to exercise.'

A dark shadow seemed to settle down over Madame's face as she finished speaking, and her thick black eyebrows came together without a break. For a minute or two she seemed lost in deep thought, then with a stamp of her foot she rose from the chair, and began to pace the floor of the little room, muttering disjointed sentences to herself in French, the import of which Jane caught only by fitful flashes.

'Yes, he was very fascinating, ten—fifteen years ago, this charming Monsieur Henri. He had always a grand passion for black eyes, and hair to match; to-day, it seems, his tastes remain unchanged. But behind all, always the gold—always! You are a dangerous man, Monsieur Henri. One—two fortunes are not sufficient for you: you now crave a third. But is that my affair, to-day? Ah, no, no, no! The chain is broken, and each for the future makes his own road.'

Jane Garrod, in her conversation with the sister of Mr Duplessis, had not allowed that lady to suppose that her knowledge of Belair and its inmates was derived from anything more trustworthy than vague hearsay, whereas, it was, in fact, of a much more special and intimate character; for Jane Garrod had lived for many years as maid with Frederica's mother, to whom she was much attached; and after that lady's death, she stayed with the motherless girl till the latter was committed to the care of her first governess. Even after she had a husband and home of her own, Jane's humble love for the heiress of Belair lost nothing of its warmth from absence; she watched the child grow in beauty from year to year, and still persisted in looking on herself as one of that family of which she had for so many years formed a part. Her interest in the sayings and doings of the inmates of Belair was kept up by weekly visits from her niece Kitty, who was still-room maid at the Hall, and whose Sunday evenings were invariably spent with her Aunt Garrod, in pleasant gossiping respecting everything that had come under Miss Kitty's sharp eyes in the course of the week. Thus it was that Jane Garrod learned all about the frequent visits of Mr Duplessis to Belair; and almost from the first mention of his name, she learned to hate the man—no milder word would convey the intensity of her dislike—with one of those blind, unreasoning, instinctive hatreds, which seem even more inexplicable than love at first sight, especially when, as

in the present instance, no personal feelings are engaged in the case. She had seen Mr Duplessis some half-dozen times at church, and once or twice when he had called at the station respecting the trains; but not all his winning smiles and handsome looks could soften ever so little the feeling with which she regarded him. 'False, false, false!' she muttered to herself every time she saw him; 'for all you look such a fine gentleman, you are a true son of the Father of Lies!' To Kitty she would sometimes say, as she was seeing the girl home through field and coppice on balmy Sunday evenings: 'Why can't Miss Frederica make up her mind to wed Lord Blencowan, and he such a nice gentleman, that worships the very ground she walks on? But there's something more in my darling's heart than you and I know of, Kitty. There's somebody that she loves in secret—somebody that she can't have, and so she won't try to like anybody else. See how she's changed, from the happy, light-hearted girl she used to be! I'm getting old, Kitty, but I'm not quite blind yet: they it is who are blind who can't see that the darling is eating her heart away.'

Mr Duplessis coming back from Lea Wood about eleven o'clock, found his sister in quite an affable mood, and stayed and partook of lunch with her. He came again in the evening, and stopped till a late hour, playing *écarté*, and drinking cognac; and intimated on leaving, that he should call for her the next day but one, and take her away on a visit to some friends.

Madame passed a great portion of the second day in bed, reading a French novel, and was rather inclined to be captious and fault-finding; but ultimately she was brought into a better frame of mind by the nice little dinner served up by Jane, to procure the materials for which, Abel had been turned out of bed at 4 A.M., and started off by the early carrier to Eastringham. Twice she asked Jane whether it were really true that Miss Spencelaugh was such a great heiress as people represented, and on being assured that such was the fact, expressed much satisfaction.

True to his promise, Mr Duplessis drove up to the station on the afternoon of the third day. Madame had been expecting him for half an hour past, and was therefore quite ready to start. Having settled Jane's very reasonable little bill, and having, over and above it, pressed on her acceptance a liberal douceur, which she as steadily refused to take, Mr Duplessis assisted his sister into the gig which he had brought to fetch her, and resumed the reins; and was just on the point of starting, when Madame arrested him for a moment by laying her hand on his arm. 'Let me get down, Henri Duplessis,' she said to him in French, loud enough for Jane to overhear her. 'I am afraid of you. I will not go with you to-day. Let me descend, I say!'

The only answer was a mocking laugh, and a sharp angry lash with the whip, which made the horse bound madly forward, and drowned all further words.

Jane Garrod standing on the step outside the door, saw a white frightened face turned to her for a moment, and then the gig and its occupants were lost round a turn of the road. 'He did not say to what place he was taking her,' muttered Jane to herself as she turned into the house; 'he only said that he was taking her to some friends. Pray Heaven that no harm befall her! It seems

to me that I've seen that gig before to-day. It surely belongs to Luke Grayling, landlord of the *Silver Lion* at Fairwood.'

CHAPTER XIV.—MRS WINCH IS SOLICITED TO NAME THE DAY.

'I must say, Martha, that black becomes you amazingly.'

The speaker was Mr Brackenridge; the hour 11 P.M.; and the place, the snuggerly behind the bar of the *Hand and Dagger*. The last of the parlour company was gone, the house was closed for the night, the servants were in bed, and the two who sat there were at liberty to do their courting unwatched by idle eyes. The chemist, portly but slightly bloated, lolled back in an easy-chair, a steaming glass of grog at his elbow, and a freshly-lighted cheroot between his lips; while the widow, more pale and serious-looking than ever in her mourning-dress, sat gazing steadily into the fire, with her feet resting on the fender, and her chin dropped into the hollow of one nervous masculine-looking hand.

'I should like you much better, Gurney, if you were not such a flatterer,' she said, but in a tone by no means indicative of displeasure.

'I ain't a flatterer, upon my soul, Martha—at least, not in the present case,' responded Brackenridge. 'You do look nice, and I shouldn't care who heard me say so. You look more of a lady in a black dress than in anything else.'

The widow shook her head dissentingly, but her pale cheek flushed slightly: she loved, as much as it lay in her cold nature to love any one, this burly, loud-voiced chemist, who, if he were coarse and dissipated, had at least his share of good looks; and was, besides, considerably younger than herself; and his words fell pleasantly on her ears.

'Now that we are here by ourselves, and everything jolly,' resumed the chemist after a few silent pulls at his cigar, 'I may as well tell you, Martha, what is uppermost in my mind, and has been for a long time, only this unfortunate business of your mother's death has made me put off speaking about it till now. Without further preface, here it is: Martha, oblige me by naming the day.'

The widow's cheek flushed more deeply than before; then she sighed; then she picked up a cinder with the tongs, and deposited it carefully on the fire; and then she spoke.

'Lady Spencelaugh'—said Mrs Winch.

'Oh, hang Lady Spencelaugh! a fig for her Ladyship!' interrupted Brackenridge with an angry snap of the fingers, before the widow could say another word. 'I hope you are not going to fling that old woman in my teeth again. I've had enough of her, I can tell you. Here have I been courting you these eighteen months past; you have agreed to take me for better or worse; but whenever I speak a word about marriage, Lady Spencelaugh is straightway pitched at me, and I am expected to sit down quietly, and never say a word in return. But I can't do it, Martha; and what's more, I won't! What is Lady Spencelaugh to me, I should like to know, or I to Lady Spencelaugh, that she should be allowed to stand between the happiness of two people who are fond of one another? And why this woman should be so set against me, is past my finding out. She has never seen me above half-a-dozen times, and then only

for a minute or two in the shop. And why a sensible woman like you should allow yourself to be so guided by her, is a still bigger puzzle.'

A wintry smile flickered round the widow's thin lips. 'If you had not interrupted me so rudely,' she said, 'I was about to observe, that Lady Spencelaugh's prejudice against you, whether reasonable or unreasonable, is still a fact, but one which is not quite insurmountable.'

'Go on,' said Mr Brackenridge, as he took a hearty pull at the contents of his glass. 'It's all a mystification to me; I'm blessed if it ain't.'

'To you, Lady Spencelaugh's opposition may seem a matter of little importance,' resumed the widow; 'to me, it is a very awkward fact; and I may as well tell you at once, that to marry in direct opposition to her wishes would be a course that would be very painful to me. There is, however, one method by which you might at the same time win Lady Spencelaugh's cordial support to our union, earn a handsome wedding-present for yourself, and be at liberty to name whatever day might suit you best for a certain ceremony.'

Whatever playfulness the widow's words might seem to imply, was certainly belied by the anxious and care-worn expression that sat on her pale features.

'More riddles,' said Mr Brackenridge sententiously. 'In the name of common-sense, what is it you are driving at, Martha Winch?'

'Listen, and you shall learn.'

She drew her chair closer to his, and laid her hand on his arm, to add weight to what she was about to say. 'You know Mr John English, the photographer, who stayed here two nights, and who is now lodging next door to you?'

The chemist nodded.

'Lady Spencelaugh is anxious that he should quit Normanford at once and for ever; I am anxious that he should quit Normanford at once and for ever. Now, do not ask what reasons her Ladyship and I have for wishing this, because I tell you frankly that you will never know them.'

'What! not when you and I are married?' burst in Brackenridge.

'Not when you and I are married—if that event ever take place,' answered the widow calmly. 'There are some things which I cannot tell even to you, and this is one of them.'

'Hang me! if I haven't always thought there was some secret between you and that old madam up at Belair.'

'Then your usual penetration was not at fault,' responded Mrs Winch. 'There is a secret between us, and be assured that a secret it will remain. Once for all, I wish you to understand this.'

'Some rubbish, I daresay, not worth the knowing,' said Brackenridge contemptuously. 'But about this other business—what is it you want me to do?'

'I want you to set those quick wits of yours to work, and try whether you cannot devise some scheme by which this man could be induced to leave Normanford.'

'Well, supposing that were done,' said the chemist, 'what could her Ladyship afford to stand in return?'

'Oh, her Ladyship is not a person to tie herself down to any terms—in fact, she would not appear at all in the matter; but any one who acted the part of a discreet friend would have no cause to think himself illiberally treated; everything,

however, would depend upon the style in which the business was conducted.'

'Very pleasant, but very vague,' said the chemist. 'For my part, I like something definite. Would that be considered as too much to give in case it was done well?' and he held up two fingers as he spoke.

The widow pursed her lips, but did not speak.

'Perhaps the case would stand that?' said Brackenridge, elevating three fingers.

The ghost of a smile flitted across the widow's sallow face.

'Would it stand another?' said the chemist, with four fingers in the air.

The widow's eyebrows lowered ominously. 'Leave everything to her Ladyship,' she whispered.

'A very fine idea that!' said Brackenridge. 'But, however, we won't shave it too fine just at present, especially as all the work has yet to be done; and now I come to look at the matter more closely, I'm blessed if I see how this fellow is to be got rid of, if he's determined to stay. It looks blue.'

'If the matter had been an easy and straightforward one, your assistance would not have been required,' said Mrs Winch coldly. 'On one point let me warn you: there must be no violence, no scandal, no exposure—that is imperative.'

'Should you call it violence if he were found dead some morning, and it were never discovered how he had met his fate?'

The eyes of the widow and the chemist met across the little table. 'You have no business to ask such a question, Gurney Brackenridge,' said Mrs Winch sternly. 'Neither Lady Spencelaugh nor I wish any harm to the young man—we only wish him away, never to come back. You are too headstrong and impulsive; it was foolish of me to mention this business to you at all. You have not discretion enough to carry it through with safety.'

'I know one thing about this affair, Martha Winch,' said Brackenridge, 'and that is, that if this young fellow were found lying stiff and stark to-morrow, both you and Lady Spencelaugh would be anything but sorry—your good wishes go as far as that. As to being discreet or not, that will be shewn best by the event. Remember, not a farthing less than three hundred.—There goes the quarter to twelve: it's high time to be off.' He threw away the end of his cigar, finished his grog, and got up with a yawn and a stretch of his huge muscular arms. The widow rose also. Brackenridge slid an arm round her waist, and stooped and kissed her cheek. 'Ah, Martha,' he said, 'you do not really love me, or else you would not refuse to tell me this secret.'

'I do love you, Gurney, as I never loved man before,' said the widow; 'and if the secret were mine alone, I would tell it you this minute. But it concerns the interests of Lady Spencelaugh, and I have sworn never to reveal it to living soul; and I will keep my word.'

'Well, well, you know best, I suppose,' replied the chemist soothingly. 'We won't quarrel about it, anyhow.—And as to this other business, I'll think it over, and give you my opinion to-morrow night.'

'Above all things, Gurney, remember there must be no violence, no scandal, no exposure.'

'And a wedding as soon after as I like, eh, old girl?'

'That is a matter which I must leave entirely to

you,' said the widow as bashfully as though she had numbered but seventeen summers. Then might have been heard the sound of a discreet double kiss; and after a whispered good-night, Mr Brackenridge found himself standing in the solitary moonlit street, and heard the door of the *Hand and Dagger* bolted behind him. The expression of his face changed in a moment; he shook his clenched hand at the door he had just quitted.

'You think to come the old soldier over me, do you, you ugly cat?' he muttered with an evil scowl. 'You intend to keep this secret from your own Gurney, do you? But I'll wring it out of you when we're married, or else I'll wring your neck. That old madam up at the Hall has more money than she knows what to do with, and would stand squeezing beautifully.—I always felt that I was born to be a gentleman.'

STARS IN THE EAST.

A DINGY, crowded, East-end thoroughfare is broiling and bustling in the dusty sunshine of one of the hottest days the mercury has registered this summer. Ponderous wagons labour along its stone-trams, laden with sugar-hogsheads perspiring treacle; omnibuses rattle past, with passengers stewing within, and passengers set out to bake in batches on the knife-board. The dirty boots of cabmen, taking their siesta within, dangle from the doors of battered cabs. An irrepressible longing for beer appears to have seized the majority of the population. The bars are crowded, and people who have passed them suddenly turn back and dive in, taking off their hats and mopping their brows, and expressing aloud, as though onlookers required an apology for their vacillating conduct, their conviction that 'a feller *must* have a swig on such a day as this.' Impeccuous personages loaf about the taverns, on the look-out for familiar friends and chance acquaintances, 'safe to stand a pint.' Sailors, whose bronzed faces shew that they are familiar with tropical suns, seem—at anyrate so far as the necessity for extra drink is concerned—to have been quite as much overcome as landmen by the English heat. In red shirts that annoy the eye like scarlet geraniums in a hot-house; in blue flannel and dreadnought, in which they have doubled the Horn; in cooler duck and dungaree—they 'stagger' across the footpath, with glazed gaze, and idiotically solemn lips, and are easily hauled into another series of beer-shops by their hideous sirens, who are already abroad, without bonnets, and in low-necked white dresses. Guardsmen from the Mint and Tower booze sleepily in filthy bars, nodding their caps, stuck on awry, and greasing their scarlet elbows, over fish-porters' scaly knots and baskets; or stride along with unio-tails tucked back, loosened stocks, and flushed, fierce faces, as if inclined to run a muck at all they meet. In the doorways of the stifling ittle drapers' shops, the master and his maidens jasp together in a bower of drooping 'crino-lines'; too deliquescent to care whether customers come or not—half hoping, indeed, that they may not be yet a while forced to go again inside. Cross-legged Jew brokers doze stertorously in the easiest easy-chairs to be found in their dusty tock, set out beneath most welcome awnings. The sun-broiled 'block ornaments,' the blue-

bottles, the stagnantly loathsome atmosphere of the butchers' shops, are enough to make you abjure meat for ever. There is some relief in seeing a street-fishmonger break up a case, and haul out a big salmon from a bed of knobby ice; but, when you note the flabby, sanguineous section of the wares already on his stall, fish, too, seems likely, as the Scotch say, for ever after to 'give you a scunner.' His neighbour is languidly watering, with a 'rose' that has half its holes stopped up, halfpenny slices of shrivelled, gritty cocoa-nut, temptingly arranged on blue paper mottled with brown patches, on whose greasy surface the water stands in dirty beads. Limp lettuces and wilted onions, beyond the power of water to freshen, form the attractions of the next emporium. The cherries on the fruit-stall are wrinkled and half baked; and the cheap damaged strawberries are piled in an amorphous heap of dusty jam, out of which sluggishly trickles juice that looks like semi-coagulated blood. Altogether, life in the East End seems a hopelessly squalid form of existence, as you walk along that busy thoroughfare, and glance up the suffocating lanes that give on it, with their inhabitants sitting in slatternly dishabille upon their doorsteps, panting open-mouthed like dogs.

Suddenly, however, you get a glimpse of dewy stars in the sultry East-end gloom.

A white-and-red banner stretches across the mouth of one of the lanes, announcing the 'East London Flower-show.' You dive down the double row of meanly-built houses, of the colour of ginger-bread burnt in the baking, or a negro afflicted with jaundice, and looking so peevishly weary of having nothing better to stare at from week's end to week's end than their uninteresting opposites. You pass a swarthy Coliseum of a gasometer, and see at the bottom of the lane a pepper-and-salt church, and opposite it, a handsome red-and-black school-house. Across the road stretches a gay string of bunting. Flags, too, flutter from the school-house windows. In front of the door is congregated a crowd of male and female infantry—every other little girl nursing a child only a size smaller than herself, and all staring in solemn silence at a couple of boardmen, stationed like mutes on either side of the doorway. From the bills, you gather that within the school-house is to be opened a 'window-garden' exhibition, to which sixteen East-end parishes have contributed. Ragged schools and workhouses are amongst the exhibitors. Down one side of a lofty room on the ground-floor of the school-house, sprawls an extemporised counter, covered with white cloths, on which are somewhat sparsely spotted little archipelagos of cheap refreshments. Behind it stand extemporised waitresses in their Sunday best, with rosettes of ribbon on their bosoms, and though nobody as yet appears to require their services, in a high state of gleeful excitement, caused by freedom from everyday-work, and a sense of official importance. At the end of this hall are displayed a few of the chief prize-plants; and some of them are downright bushes. You pay your shilling to the money-taker, when he can spare a moment from nicking the free-admission cards of exhibitors who are surging about his desk, and struggle with them up some stiffish flights of steep stone stairs. Every window in the room at the top of the house is open, and not without need, for otherwise the temperature would be Black-holish. Flagstuffs are thrust

out of the windows, and through them you get glimpses of a prospect which is a strange surrounding for a show of locally-reared flowers: a wilderness of smutty tiles and stumpy chimneys, above which tower tall factory-stalks, gas-works, grimy steeples, and the masts of ships that appear completely hemmed in with masonry. Their presence in such places is as puzzling as the flowers. Both would seem to have dropped from the skies. The plants are ranged in sloping stands, on all sides of the L-shaped room, with banners above, emblazoned with the names of the exhibiting school, parish, and so forth. Sooth to say, the show, for brilliant colour, is considerably more indebted to its bunting than its blossoms. Besides these banners, there are others with texts of Scripture on them; texts of Scripture stretch in party-colour along the wood-work of the open roof, and in the corners of the room flags fall in folds. A very pretty sight it is; and as such, it is loudly appreciated by the little boys and girls who form the majority of the spectators. They interrupt the reading of the prize-list, and have to be silenced by reproachful *hush, hush, hushes* from the chairman, and perspiring activity on the part of indignant schoolmasters and mistresses, who dart hither and thither amid the throng, seizing on chief offenders like colliers in a wilfully confused flock of sheep. Some of the girls are very stylishly got-up in white muslin mantles, gilt combs, and such-like finery, and condescend to their less smartly-dressed school-fellows with an evident consciousness of constituting a social *élite*. There are no swells amongst the boys, and fewer clean hands and faces than could be wished for in little neighbours, whose bashful anxiety to get out of your way generally results in their shoving some other little boy up against you.

Seated in a horse-shoe are a dozen or more of those admirable men, the 'working clergy' of the East End. (By the by, is there not something either invidious or satirical in the epithet 'working' so distinctively applied? Ought there to be any clergy who do no work?) Their faces are a pleasant study. To begin with: in spite of the unpleasant places in which the lines of clerical life have fallen to them, they almost all look cheerful; and gilding this habitual look, there is a gleam of abnormal excitement. The peculiarity of their 'business look' is also piquant. You can see that they go heart and soul, and with a considerable sense of personal importance, into what most men would consider the unprofitable and peddling details of parochial book-keeping—the finance of 'penny-banks,' and such like. But their business has left no furrows of carking greed and unscrupulous knowings upon their countenances. They slave cheerfully for others, and as to all extra-professional matters, look as unsophisticated as children. A good many of the children with whom they come in contact, indeed, in their court and alley visitations, have a much more 'worldly aspect.' Nearly one hundred prizes are announced, six shillings and eightpence being a frequently recurring amount. Then the excellent chairman, who is looked upon with affectionate awe as having written letters to the *Times* about the show, makes a pleasant little speech, all the 'points' of which are rapturously applauded. Then the incumbent of the parish makes a pleasant little speech, which is similarly received. He praises the perspiring chairman, but praises still more

loudly the perspiring curate, and finishes off by proposing a vote of thanks to him, which, of course, is carried unanimously; the small boys holding up a couple of hands apiece. The curate returns thanks, and is applauded. A layman proposes a vote of thanks to 'our respective chairman,' and is applauded. The vote is unanimously carried amid great applause. Everybody appears inclined to applaud everything; and when the chairman in returning thanks, announces that a real live member of parliament will distribute the prizes in a day or two, the assembly becomes ecstatic. Finally, again amid great applause, the exhibition is formally declared to be open, and the company begins to circulate to inspect it.

The show of blossom, as I have hinted, is comparatively small; but that such fine healthy plants should have been reared in the mephitic air of the East End, appears astounding. And if the show of blossom is small, what there is of it is brilliant. In the whole exhibition, there is only one cluster with the faded, sickly look that might be supposed typical of East-end flowers. A few of the plants, moreover, are in splendid blossom. There is a huge musk with almost as much gold as green in it, and an appropriately named 'Daniel Lambert' geranium that would do credit to a conservatory. Balsams appear to be a favourite plant with the East-enders, and still more, Creeping Jennies. There are oak-leaf geraniums, ivy-plants, a little fig-tree, and a Japanese honeysuckle. Some of the pots are tastefully swathed in tissue-paper. That a large proportion of the plants are literally the products of window-gardens, you can tell from their fan-like form. The upper sides of the leaves all turn the same way. It is curious to remark the long curved stalks which some of the geraniums have thrown out from behind, in their eagerness to drink in the light at every pore.

Every one first rushes to see his own plant. The officials experience a little difficulty in explaining to disappointed competitors how their 'exhibits' could possibly have been excluded from the prize-list, and the explanation at last is evidently taken under protest. Still the harmony of the meeting remains unruined. The disappointed ones fully believe that the judges meant well, but are not quite so firmly convinced as the successful ones of their infallibility, and cherish more fondly than ever a silent faith in the unsurpassability of their own pet products. Parochial feeling is strong in the parsons. They delightedly clap prize-taking parishioners upon the back, and carry off their lady-friends in triumph to look at 'our stand'; expatiating on the merits of musks, as if they were most rare exotics. One clergyman sees a 'highly-commended' ticket unappropriated, and sticks it into a parishioner's pot, observing: 'It may as well be there as doing nothing.' The joy of the youthful prize-takers is comically pompous. 'Have you got a prize, Jim?' asks a half-incredulous little girl of a beaming little boy.

'Yes,' says Jim curtly, trying to look as if he had been certain of it.

'How much, Jim?'

'Oh, five bob,' answers the boy with affected indifference.

The little girl gazes on him with worshipful eyes, and is quite proud of being seen in his company, and on sufficiently familiar terms with such a public character as to be able to call him Jim.

The mothers of the Jims more plainly shew their exultation. With big babies at their breasts, they wander about, stopping every minute to talk over their sons' triumph with their gossips. Heat and happiness combined have made the good women's faces as red as poppies. The men who are going round with syringes to water the flowers, take pity on the flushed, hand-tied matrons, and hold up great water-jugs to their lips, out of which they drink like horses out of pails.

Altogether, it is a pretty scene of good-fellowship amongst all; and the character of the show, no doubt, has something to do with this good-fellowship. There is a humanising influence in the culture of flowers: they remove cantankerousness from the moral atmosphere, as well as carbonic acid from the air. All honour to the clergy who, not in the East End alone, have enlisted the services of these mild home-missionaries.

SISTER GRACE.

SISTER GRACE in wimple white,
Hood of gray, and robe all sable,
Comes from where the convent casts
Shadows from each tower and gable.

Blue forget-me-nots grow thick,
Meadow-sweet is nodding gaily;
Green the flag spears keenly rise,
To the sun birds sing their *reale*.

Sister Grace the abbess sends,
With her hazel-rod and basket,
Fish to catch for convent supper.
Her meek nature, how they task it!

Swallows fly in crescents swift
O'er the ripples and the shallows,
Where, bowed down with tearless grief,
Bend the melancholy shallows.

Clear and loud she chants the psalm,
Clear it sounds across the covert;
Laughing echoes, words return,
Answers from some phantom lover.

Dragon-flies, in emerald mail,
Glance around her float, that's bobbing;
On the yellow bough above,
Chirps his little hymn, the robin.

Flashing springs the silver trout;
Stately black-browed swans come steering,
Where the willow-flowers bloom pink,
Where the swirling current's veering.

Sister Grace is all intent
On the scarlet float that's swimming,
Where among the osier stems,
Brown and full, the tide is brimming.

The *Magnificat* she sings,
While her hazel-rod is bending;
Benedicite she chants
For the day so softly ending.

Clear and loud, the holy psalm
Sounds across the sloping cover;
Laughing echoes, words return,
Greetings from some phantom lover.

Still the echo answers her
From among the leafy beeches—
Laughing answers, sweet replies,
Sounding like a lover's speeches.

Where the green flags, sharp and keen,
Cast their waving zigzag shadows,
Sister Grace sits there, and hears
The thrushes singing in the meadows.

Lazy ripples move around
The yellow water-flowers so stately:
Still sits Sister Grace alone—
Calm, contented, and sedately.

Swallows' shadows come and go;
All the eastern hill is sunny;
To and fro the lingering bees
Cruise half-wearily for honey.

Clear and loud, fair Sister Grace
Sings, and far across the cover,
From the hillside comes the echo,
Answers from a phantom lover.

Come the white moths to the flowers,
Purple water-buds are quivering;
Pulsing breezes o'er the grass
Creep with slow and gentle shivering.

Sister Grace waits till the rod
Bends with strange and mighty fishes:
Orange, golden, barred, and striped—
Ornament for convent dishes.

Wind comes shaking lily stems,
Tossing, surging through the beeches—
Wind that bears the echoes soft,
As of a phantom lover's speeches.

Suddenly between the reeds
Laughs a face, and greets the Sister;
Then a hand stole round her waist,
And a living lover kissed her.

Benedicites they sang—
Aves many—night and morning;
But the watcher never saw
Truant Sister Grace returning.

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WANTED, A DRIVER.

THAT the law is equally severe upon rich and poor alike when they do wrong, is a theory which nobody believes. It is so in the case of great offences, or rather, it is then of necessity *more* severe upon the rich; for no one will deny that—their offences being equal—a term of penal servitude is a greater punishment to an Old Bailey attorney than it is to one of the class whom it is his ordinary mission to defend. But what in the mouth of the private soldier is rank blasphemy, is in that of the captain but a choleric word, and so it must ever be in this world, notwithstanding that the angels weep to see it; nay, times have been, when what was shop-lifting in the distressed needlewoman, was in the lady of fashion kleptomaniac. There is no more fear of social position being 'respected' than of the sun being shorn of its beams; the anarchical periods when it ceases to be so being about as few, as brief, and as far between, as are total eclipses. Mr Tennyson, while confessing himself 'a Tory to the quick,' narrates how, when at school, he stole 'the fruit, the hens, the eggs' of a flayflint in his neighbourhood; nay, he and his fellows even stole his sow, and hauled her, great with pig, up to the leads upon their college tower; and when she farrowed, one by one they took her progeny and roasted them, until she was 'left alone upon her tower, the Niobe of swine.' This was really a very strong measure, and nothing is more certain than that, if the culprits had been workhouse boys instead of young gentlemen, they would have been sent to jail, and we should have had some graphic reminiscences of Pentonville in the Laureate's *Ode to Memory*.

Poaching, a crime so dire in the 'eyes severe' of the justice, has seemed to himself, in his third and fourth age, a venial offence enough, and one the discovery of which only entailed 'a row' between his 'governor' and some neighbouring squire; but poor Hodge is punished, notwithstanding his youth, by hard labour and the treadmill. I don't know how much truth there is in the

assertion, commonly made by the poor in London, that 'the bobbies' are unjust; but the difference of tone in which that supposed embodiment of even-handed Justice, the policeman, addresses a man with a good hat and a man with a bad one, is without doubt very marked.

Certainly, a person of position, with money and friends behind him, may venture to do things which might bring very unpleasant consequences to a less fortunate person. He may no longer wrench off knockers and bell-handles, and keep a Museum of such stolen property with impunity, as young gentlemen of fashion were wont to do half a century ago; and if, while driving his mail phaeton in the Park at dangerous speed, he is requested by the guardian of the law to slacken his pace, and the temptation seizes him not only to disobey, but to apply his whip-lash to the shoulders of the blue-coated one—he will have to repent of it in sackcloth, or at least in prison garb: his money (very properly) shall be of no avail; the magistrate will in these days take no fine; and for that mad freak, his head shall assuredly be shaved, or at least cut uncommonly close by the warder's shears. Still, let us who are of the upper ten thousand be of good heart. The Law will still think twice before it condemns persons of our condition, when it would not hesitate at all in the case of the vulgar.

It is whispered that one of her Majesty's judges, in his youth—or at least before his judgment was matured—was so imprudent as to steal a horse. It was absolutely a matter of extreme doubt—his attorney called it 'a very narrow shave'—whether his Lordship would not have to be called to the wrong side of the bar; but, however, a miss is as good as a mile, and he is now on the Bench. It is something to have stolen a horse, and yet to be a judge; but an incident happened to a gentleman of my acquaintance the other day which even still more exemplifies the advantages of position. He is only a barrister, to be sure, and not 'my Lud'; but, on the other hand, he stole a horse *and cab!*

In this wise. Mr Nathaniel Carmairs, as we

will call him, is, by nature, doubtless as little inclined to larceny (let alone more serious offences) as any other gentleman in Stone Buildings. Being a lawyer, it would perhaps excite ridicule to call him strictly honest; but, apart from his professional practice (which is not large), I never heard a whisper against his principles. Even if his intentions were less honourable, indeed, he is too fond of repose, to what the wise do call 'convey' what belongs to others into his own keeping; if it could be done by absorption, I might have my doubts; but he would scarcely lift a finger (far less a shop) for the sake of gain, nor even to defend his own, so long as enough was left him upon which to live with comfort. If ever there was a philosopher since the good old Grecian days, it was Nathaniel Carmairs; in whom, said his enemies, was united the keenest Epicurean sense of self-gratification, with the most Stoical indifference to the misfortunes of others. But one of the advantages of being a philosopher is not to care what one's enemies say, which was the case with Nathaniel. The opinion of his friends may be equally valueless; but I cannot help saying, that he has always seemed to me to be much too good-natured to deserve so harsh a judgment, and I only wish that everybody who talked as little said as few malicious things. There is a story told of him at his club in connection with a railway accident, which is very characteristic. On the *Great London and Shatterham* line there is a tunnel very favourable to collisions, and which, although a long one, has already cost the company more in compensation to their victims than they expended in its original construction. But a board of directors is not a body to be dictated to by experience; and in the summer months, when the accident-season is at its height, the Shatterham tunnel is sure to create its sensation. Mr Carmairs, having a villa residence upon this line of railway, uses it very frequently, and at last, of course, came in for the accident. He was all alone, and fast asleep, in a first-class carriage, when his train met another train face to face in the tunnel, with the usual results. He described himself as being rudely awakened by a clap of thunder, followed by an earthquake, which shook his compartment until it became more like a bundle of spalls than a place adapted for repose. All was pitch-dark, save for a few glimmering lamps; and the cries of the wounded, or of those who fancied themselves wounded, reminded him (for he has no little knowledge of music) of nothing so much as the *Battle of Prague*. It was of no use appealing to any of the company's servants to bring him another carriage; the cruel necessity had arisen for personal exertion; and my friend resolved to act with vigour. He made his way, amongst the *débris* of vehicles and people, until he discovered another first-class carriage in a tolerably intact condition, climbed up in it, placed his umbrella in the cradle, and his hat in the straps, put on his travelling-cap, and *fell fast asleep again*.

It is impossible to imagine that a gentleman of this placid disposition could wilfully commit a crime. But some men are born thieves; others achieve for themselves a reputation for thieving; and a few have felonies thrust upon them. This last was the case with Nathaniel Carmairs. On the

occasion which I have in my mind, he had been dining at a friend's house in the neighbourhood of Clapham, and did not leave its hospitable gate till the small-hours. Perhaps his host was a congenial spirit, and they both fell asleep after dinner, and did not wake till 2 A.M.; but, at all events, it was past that time when my friend found himself in the wilds of Clapham, and he knew not how many miles from Lincoln's Inn. The notion of *walking* that distance was not repugnant to Mr Carmairs's feelings, simply because the possibility of the thing never entered into his mind. He had too good an opinion of the general system of the universe to suppose that a person of his consequence could be driven to that extremity. He confidently looked forward to be driven in a cab. His friend had informed him that there was a night cab-stand at a particular place, and thither he strolled, nothing doubting, and with a cigar in his mouth. Nor had he been deceived; the cab-stand was there; a long strip of pavement to prevent the horses standing on wet ground; and the bucket belonging to the waterman. Nay, there was even a Hansom casting its weird shadow in the moonlight. But as for a driver, there was none to be seen. We have it upon Mr Carmairs's own testimony that he 'called aloud' for this 'missing link' between himself and the horse, but nothing came of it except a bray from the common. 'It was not an echo,' says Nathaniel, anticipating satire, in his quiet way; 'it was a donkey.'

Having summoned the absent cabman three times, Mr Carmairs, although not of the common-law Bar, concluded he had done all that was legally necessary, and deliberately climbed up into the vacant seat, and drove away. A more timid person might have shrunk from the responsibility of such an act; a more mercurial one might have exulted in it, as in any other mischievous prank; but Mr Carmairs only felt that he was performing an irksome duty in the unjustifiable absence of the proper official. As he drew nearer town, he was more than once hailed by benighted revellers; but he had no desire to make a penny by the transaction in which he was engaged, and refused every one of them. 'Tired,' 'Going home,' or a shake of the head, whenever that response was found sufficient, were replies that shook off these importunate persons; although, if he could have relied upon any of them to drive him, he would have surrendered the reins with cheerfulness, got inside, and been asleep in a moment, and when they reached Chancery Lane, the man should have had both horse and Hansom for his trouble. But although these would-be fares strove to tempt him by pecuniary offers, as well as propositions to 'stand' a pot of porter, and even spirits, it never struck them to make the particular overture that Mr Carmairs would have listened to, but which he himself could scarcely propose. The consequence was they had to console themselves with satire; reflections upon his white cravat and embroidered shirt-fronts, which they maintained had been feloniously acquired through the circumstance of his mother being a washerwoman; or upon his elegant gold waistcoat buttons, which they did not hesitate to stigmatise as brass; while he, on his part, had to drive himself all the way. Arrived at Lincoln's Inn, he left the horse and cab at the gate, for the convenience of any other member of the Bar who might be in need of a vehicle, and went quietly to bed.

I doubt whether Nathaniel Carmairs ever gave

himself a thought about that horse and cab again, for he is of a very forgiving disposition, and always endeavours to forget any trouble he may have been put to; at all events, he never mentioned it to me; and as I happened to be at his chambers when the following interview took place, it afforded me some considerable surprise, as well as amusement.

Nathaniel was hard at work as usual—colouring his pipe—and I was watching him, for it was too hot for active exertion, when there came a knock at the door, and immediately after it, two persons of the lower orders. The one looked like a Methodist parson out of employment; the other wore a white hat, a red neckerchief, a green waistcoat, a buff coat, and a pair of old drab trousers, with an enormous patch of new drab on the left knee; he did not therefore require the metal ornament round his neck to proclaim himself the driver of a Hansom cab, who, as everybody knows, are, except the military, the gayest dressers in London.

'You know what I am come about, Mr Carmairs,' observed this rainbow in a menacing voice; 'or, if not, here is my solicitor, who can inform you.'

'Take your seats, gentlemen,' said Nathaniel; 'it is not often that I see a solicitor in these chambers, I do assure you.'

'You were at Clapham this day-week, sir, as I am informed,' observed the person in black severely; 'and on that night, or rather on the following morning, between the hours of two and three, you took a horse and cab from the public stand near the *Roysterer's Arms*.'

'Yes,' said Mr Carmairs yawning, 'I did; but not being before the court at this particular moment, it is necessary, my dear sir, to be so tedious; My friend here is a professional man; this forensic display is therefore thrown away.'

'He owns that he was at Clapham; he owns that he stole the cab,' cried the man in black, moistening his lips in preparation for another flight of eloquence: 'now, see what follows.'

'He is going to weary us,' said Carmairs in an agonised tone; 'I know he is.—Now, cabman, listen to me, if you can direct your attention from your learned friend for half a minute.—[For he was looking at 'my solicitor' as though he were the embodiment of the wisdom of the Court of Chancery, Ecclesiastical, and Common Law in one.] 'I dare say, you are under the impression that you have a grievance: there—there—I thought so. Well, as a matter of fact, you have none: it is I, and not you, who ought to complain. But sooner than have to listen to you, and still more to this other gentleman, I will give you—what I very seldom get myself—a guinea. There.'

So saying, the philosopher languidly tendered those two coins, the combination of which is so dear to the physician and the barrister (and, indeed, is generally acceptable to all conditions of men)—a sovereign and a shilling.

The cabman's eyes grew bright as his raiment, and his hand mechanically sought his forelock in the act of grateful obeisance. He would certainly have taken the money, had not 'my solicitor' intervened.

'Not so fast,' said this learned gentleman, who had no idea of giving up a case just because his client was satisfied: 'you are not going to get off so easily as that, Mr Carmairs. It is in our power to punish you very severely, and the compensation,

if we forbear to do so, must be proportionate to the offence.'

'I *knew* he was going to weary,' sighed Nathaniel, putting the coins back into his purse, and shutting his eyes: 'will you kindly wake me when he has done?'

'I suppose, sir,' continued the man of law with pompous gravity, 'notwithstanding you affect to treat this affair with levity, that you know the *Hact*?'

'The Act that relates to cabmen leaving their vehicles on the street without any one to look after them?' murmured Mr Carmairs dreamily. 'Yes; it's a *misdeameanour*, isn't it?'

At these pregnant words, the cabman and 'my solicitor' held a whispered but animated conference, and then the latter proposed his *ultimatum*. 'I am instructed to say, sir, that for the sum of five pounds, we will abstain from further proceedings, the mere publication of which, as you are well aware [how little he knew Nathaniel!], must seriously affect your reputation. Considering the expenses my client has been put to, I can say no smaller sum, which also includes our loss of time.'

'You are losing it now,' responded Mr Carmairs yawning; 'and what is worse, you are losing mine. You oblige me to recapitulate—which of itself, in the present state of the atmosphere, is an exhausting word. Your friend commits a *misdeameanour* by leaving his cab; I do not prosecute him for it; I have no intention of prosecuting him for it, although it caused me great inconvenience, by compelling me to drive myself home. I return good for evil, by offering the offender one pound one.'

'We want five pounds,' observed 'my solicitor' drily.

'Just so,' continued Mr Carmairs with a faint smile. 'We all *do*. The majority of us, however, do not have their aspirations realised. I most sincerely wish you may get it—out of somebody else.'

'Come, sir, what *will* you give?' inquired 'my solicitor' suddenly exchanging his menacing gloom for an agreeable frankness. 'The fare from Clapham, to begin with, is three-and-six.'

'Now, look here,' said Mr Carmairs, speaking with what was for him considerable distinctness and effort, and holding his hands out, as if for air; 'a gleam of reason seems to have penetrated into what, I daresay, you call your brain. Take advantage of that lucid interval, and accept these terms, which are the last which I shall offer you. I put aside all the trouble and exertion which your client's carelessness entailed upon me on the occasion in question. I *make no charge for driving myself home*. Here is a half-crown and a shilling in satisfaction of all demands. Do you take them, or do you leave them?'

'My solicitor' placed his head upon one side, with an embarrassed air, and scratched it thoughtfully. But 'cabby' stepped briskly forward, and before the other could interfere, had transferred the proffered coins to his own pocket, concluding that manoeuvre with a slap upon their place of deposit, which evidently meant: 'Signed, sealed, and delivered;' and so the transaction terminated.

Upon the whole, and considering the attempt that was undoubtedly made to extort money, perhaps no less was done than the Justice of the case demanded. But supposing Mr Nathaniel Carmairs, instead of being a barrister-at-law of Lincoln's Inn, had been (say) a dog-fancier in Seven Dials, who, wishing to ride instead of to walk from Clapham,

had driven himself home in a cab, under precisely similar circumstances—I shrewdly suspect that the Police Report that described the occurrence would not have been headed, like this paper, *Wanted, a Driver, but, Stealing a Horse and Cab.*

THE ALBERT N'YANZA.

THE completion by Dr and Mrs Baker of the great enterprise of which Captains Grant and Speke were the pioneers, is the most interesting event which the chroniclers of geographical progress have had to record of late. With the solution of the mystery of ages comes the revelation of many other wonders, equally, although differently mysterious. The anomalies of civilisation are many and great; but they are easily understood, readily borne with, in comparison with the anomalies of savage life, of which Dr Baker's narrative gives a vivid and terrible picture.*

It is a grand story, grandly told, many-sided, and interesting in all its aspects to those who follow its details from Gondokoro, which seems to be the Charing Cross of African travel, to the great basin of the Nile. The imagination follows the brave man and woman who did this great thing with ever-increasing interest; the details of the physical characteristics of the ancient land whose recesses they explored, have a magical charm; the heart beats with an answering exultation to the exultant words which tell how, after months of hardship, terrible even in the recapitulation, the goal was reached at last, the hill was climbed, and the glory of their prize burst upon the weary eyes of the searchers. Fancy revels in the sight *they saw*, when, 'like a sea of quicksilver, lay far beneath the grand expanse of water; a boundless sea-horizon on the south and south-west, glittering in the noonday sun; and on the west, at fifty or sixty miles' distance, blue mountains rising from the bosom of the lake to seven thousand feet above its level.' But under the grander aspects, there are considerations which have power to throw all the interests of science, all the *éclat* of discovery and of personal heroism which adorn the narrative, into the shade. They are considerations of the condition of humanity with which the travellers became acquainted.

No foot of European had ever trodden the sand of the shore of that vast inland sea; no white man's eyes had ever scanned the expanse of water; its immensity had never been presented to any mind capable of understanding its meaning. The dwellers by its shores, all unconsciously of its mighty beneficence, knew of nought beyond it. They knew nothing of the sacred river whose majestic source was here; of the enormous continent through which its fertilising volume rolls to the sea; of the men beyond that vast ocean; of all the beautiful, awful world in which this water, meaninglessly to them, is one of the most awful and beautiful objects. Time had given an answer at last to the question asked of the ages, but the question had no sense for them, the answer no significance. Eyes have they, and see not, those wretched human creatures who people the fairest regions of the African continent; ears, and they hear not.

Their faculties of enjoyment are only of the lowest kind, almost too low for our comprehension and acquiescence; but they can and do suffer, so variously, and to such extreme extent of suffering, that all the land seems to lie under an ever-present curse of pain. They are utterly unlike the typical negro of any of the pet forms of European theory, as much opposed to one order of fanaticism as to another. The Exeter Hall 'gentleman in black,' equal to the Englishman in intellect, and superior to him in virtue and morals; the pious negro, of gushing sentiments, and equally adapted for 'bar, bench, or bishop,' is not a more outrageously absurd phantom of the philanthropical imagination, when looked at by the stern and steady light shed from these pages, than the opposition type supplied by proslavery theorists. The banjo-playing, bright-kint-bandana-wearing, grinning, dancing, 'pumpkin-sarse'-eating nigger is only an 'allegory on the banks of the Nile.' Sober and serious thoughts, very painful fancies, and speculations devoid of all guidance, are awakened in the mind, as we follow the track of the explorers through scenes, now of sublime natural beauty, anon of hideous desolation, in which the very deepest abysses of human degradation yawn before the startled gaze, and the limits of the sufferings incidental to human wretchedness are reached. Captain Grant's savage acquaintances were infinitely superior to the human creatures whom Dr and Mrs Baker 'discovered' on the White Nile; and Dr Livingstone's friends, even those who wear the *pelele*, were desirable associates in comparison. This conviction is irresistible; and yet, the truth is told with much modification, and a great deal is absolutely suppressed.

The first instance of certain characteristics, worse and lower than those which we habitually associate with the African savage, is afforded by Dr Baker's account of the Kytch tribe; the saddest episode among many which are very sad, in the story which he has to tell. In no other account of savage tribes is anything so melancholy and so repulsive to be found as in Dr Baker's description of these wretched people. The violence, the brutality, even the cannibalism which characterise so many miserable races of human beings, are less haunting to the imagination, less disturbing in their influence on the mind, than the hideous physical degradation, the appalling condition of chronic want found among the Kytch tribe. Their country might be the domain of Giant Despair; it is a succession of vast, treeless marshes, swarming with mosquitoes, and covered with ant-hills. The people are inconceivably degraded; mere apes, never tasting meat except when they find the carcass of a dead animal, which they enjoy the more the greater the pitch of decomposition which it has attained. They will not work; and exist upon rats, lizards, snakes, and such fish as they can spear by random casts of their rude harpoons. Men and women are entirely naked, and are mere skeletons, with a wasted, gnaw-like appearance, sickening even in the picture which presents it to our imagination. They have no dwellings of any kind; merely herding together like wild beasts among the ant-hills, crouching at night in the smoke of their wood-fires, rubbing themselves with the ashes, to protect their shivering bodies from the cold, and spending hours in digging out from their burrows the field-mice, which are

* *The Albert N'Yanza, Great Basin of the Nile, and Explorations of the Nile Sources.* By Samuel White Baker, M.A., F.R.G.S., Gold Medallist of the R.G.S. Macmillan & Co.

dainty items in their list of comestibles. They devour the skins of dead animals, and pounding the bones between stones, boil them to a horrid kind of porridge, thus utilising every scrap of their chance provision, while they have no notion of providing a regular supply. Hapless wretches that they are, they have all the suffering of their animal instincts, but are so degraded that they cannot even 'consider the ant,' which abounds in their country, from whose industry, wisdom, and art, they derive their sole shelter—the only little trace of comfort in all their woful lives. If it be admissible to use such an expression at all in connection with them, their moral system is lower than any among even the worst specimens of savage tribes; and the Austrian mission, the priests having laboured among them utterly in vain for years, has been finally abandoned. No spark of intelligence, however faint, that the hardly-trying Faith, Hope, and Charity which inspire such exertions all over the world, could blow into ever so feeble a flame, was discernible in these wretched beings' nature.

Arrived at the Latooka country, a tribe presented themselves who differ physically from any of the various types of the savages of the White Nile. They are tall, shapely, finely developed, with handsome features, pleasing countenances, and high, straight foreheads. Their trade is in cattle, and they are a fine warlike race. So far, the picture is pleasing, but only so far; the degradation and brutality of their lives and habits are appalling, and Dr Baker sums them up by the following extract from his journal: 'They have neither gratitude, pity, love, nor self-denial; no idea of duty; no religion, but covetousness, ingratitude, selfishness, and cruelty. All are thieves, idle, envious, and ready to plunder and enslave their weaker neighbours.' These creatures leave their dead unburied, perform 'funeral' dances of a description more than grotesque, wear no clothes, place all their personal ambition in constructing intricate and ponderous head-dresses, mostly helmet-shaped, of their own hair, and which take eight or ten years in their construction. They are entirely ignorant of the art of cultivation of anything but corn, vegetables being quite unknown in their country. The women are wretched, overtasked slaves, horrible to look upon, with their fantastically gashed faces, and hair plastered with red ochre and fat; and their dwellings have to be entered on all-fours, and do not boast even the most rudimentary attempt at a window. Yet the Latooka people are very much superior to any of the Nile tribes with whom Dr Baker was brought into contact, and he details a conversation between himself and Commoro their king, which ought to make Dr Colenso's controversial Zulu look to his argumentative laurels.

The African elephant abounds in the Latooka country, but the people, upon whom the noble brute is a terrible satire, only destroy, it has never occurred to them to domesticate, him. In strong contrast with the Latooka are the Makkarikas, a cannibal tribe on the west bank of the White Nile, concerning whom Dr Baker relates particulars which throw M. Du Chaillu's stories into the region of tania probability and business-like social organisation. The mutual exchange system in the human-flesh trade which he describes as obtaining among the Fannas, does not necessarily, except things are depressed, and

corpses at a premium, imply murder; but the noble savage called a Makkarika loves, like the tiger, to kill his own meat, and has, besides, a peculiar predilection for dogs' flesh. How horrible these wretches are, the mildest of the anecdotes related of their doings will suffice to prove. From the horror of this picture, it is almost pleasant to get to that of the natives of the Obbo country, whither the travellers proceeded from Latooka, journeying through a beautiful park-like country, bounded by a range of noble hills, and diversified by grand granite peaks, rising abruptly from the soft bosom of the dense vegetation in the valleys. The Obbo people are rather good-looking, particularly the women. They are not so wholly devoid of religion as the other tribes, if superstition may be accepted as a proof of the capacity for faith; for though they have not the faintest idea of a Supreme Being, they are craven and abject believers in sorcery. They invest their cunning old chief, Katchiba, with supernatural power, and ceaselessly propitiate him, with a view to future favours. He is excessively cunning, and perhaps deceives himself; at all events, he makes the popular belief pay, and being a really superior man, he is a very good ruler for the wretched creatures who come to him for spells to procure the preservation of their crops, and the increase of their families. Dr Baker trusted the old humbug with the care of his wife during a short absence on an exploring expedition; and as he was perfectly faithful to the trust, and received an excellent character from the lady, presented him with beads, bracelets, and a pair of sun-goggles, in which, as they formed his entire costume, he must have presented a very droll effect. He was extremely pleased, and exhibited himself to his people with much graciousness and complacency.

Next to Mr Boyle's friend, Gasing, the Bornean chief, old Katchiba is the most amusing savage of modern times. His royal progresses are thus simply contrived and conducted. A very strong subject is first selected, and the chief is mounted on his back, his faithful liege gripping his Highness under the legs, and his Highness holding very tight about his strong subject's neck. 'He generally has two or three spare men, who act alternately as guides and ponies, while one of his wives invariably accompanies him, bearing a large jar of beer, with which the old chief refreshes himself so copiously during the journey, that it frequently becomes necessary for two men to carry him instead of one.' Dr Baker declares that Katchiba was a good old fellow—by far the best he met in Africa.

At Obbo, the real hardship and suffering of this terrible undertaking fairly commenced. It is not from the point of view of the explorers and their feats that we are examining the book, but we cannot pass over the sentence—a terrible, simple picture, to which nothing can be added—with which the first volume ends: 'My stock of quinine is reduced to a few grains, and my work lies before me; my cattle are all dead. We are both weakened by repeated fever, and travelling must be on foot.'

They did not travel on foot, however, for fever held them in its gripe four months, during which time the indefatigable Dr Baker purchased and trained three oxen in lieu of horses. He called them 'Beef,' 'Steaks,' and 'Suet'; but was obliged to change 'Beef' into 'Bones,' in consequence of the unfortunate animal having his flesh worried off

him by the flies. In the intervals of fever, he also did a good deal of elephant and boar hunting, and discovered that the wild pigs, with intelligence worthy of imitation by the natives, live underground in cool and secure retreats. The march, when Dr and Mrs Baker were in a condition to undertake it, lay through exquisite scenery, and brought them speedily to the comparative civilisation of the Ungoro, or Kamrasi's country—the king, to whom it is really not absurd to give that title, with whose condition, policy, ambition, and attainments Captains Grant and Speke have made the western world already familiar. He was a treacherous, cruel, grasping coward; and none of the dangers of that frightful journey were more terrible or prolonged than those the travellers incurred from the mingled cupidity and ferocity of Kamrasi. It was the old story of delays and evasions, of continual exaction and habitual deceit, and when the king had given his permission for their departure, and pointed out a chief and a guide who were to take charge of them, affairs then proceeded thus: 'He concluded by asking me,' says Dr Baker, 'for my watch and a number of beads; the latter I gave him, together with a quantity of ammunition for his guns. He shewed me a beautiful double-barrelled rifle that Speke had given him. I wished to secure this, to give to Speke, on my return to England, as he had told me, when at Gondokoro, how he had been obliged to part with that and many other articles against his will. I offered to give him three common double-barrelled guns in exchange for the rifle. This he declined, as he was quite aware of the difference in quality. He then produced a large silver chronometer that he had received from Speke. "It was *dead*," he said, "and he wished me to repair it." This I declared to be impossible. He then confessed to having explained its construction, and the cause of the "ticking" to his people, by the aid of a needle, and that it had never ticked since that occasion. Thus he had plundered Speke and Grant of all they possessed before he would allow them to proceed.'

The final interview between Dr Baker and Kamrasi was exquisitely ludicrous, and all the more so because it is impossible to avoid seeing that the African potentate had the best of it. Everything was ready, and the glad moment of adieu had arrived, when Kamrasi coolly observed that Dr Baker might go, but he must leave his wife with him! This was a startling announcement, and required to be met with presence of mind. Dr Baker met it so, and with his revolver, which he held close to the sacred person of the king, telling him if he repeated the insult, he would shoot him on the spot. Mrs Baker stormed at him in Arabic, which he did not understand, but which a female interpreter rendered so faithfully, that no doubt Kamrasi perceived that he had proposed to do something which in Ungoro would be equal to 'catching a Tartar,' and replied with some astonishment, but much composure: 'Don't be angry! I had no intention of offending you by asking you for your wife. I will give you a wife, if you want one, and I thought you might make no objection to give me yours; it is my custom to give my visitors pretty wives, and I thought you might exchange. Don't make a fuss about it; if you don't like it, there's an end of it—I will never mention it again.' After which he speeded the parting guests very effectually, and, in particular,

provided them with an escort, three hundred in number, who were like a troop of yelling demons, being attired in leopard or white monkey skins, with cows' tails strapped on behind, antelopes' horns fitted on their heads, and false beards, made of the bushy ends of cows' tails sewed together, and attached to their chins. These creatures capered, danced, screamed, fought, and gesticulated incessantly, and made themselves useful by going on in advance, and plundering the villages, so that the travellers could procure no food, except by purchasing it from them for beads. Some time afterwards, Dr Baker learned that he had been skillfully deceived; that he had never seen the real Kamrasi, but only M'Gambi, his brother, accustomed to personate him, to incur all the risk, and do all the dirty work.

The lake discovered, or rather their previous faith in its existence justified by sight, they embarked in canoes upon its majestic bosom, and made a perilous but most interesting voyage, which surely can never have been surpassed in romantic association since first

He made him a boat of a hollow tree,
And Man became lord of the awful sea.

Quite incomprehensible to their savage attendants, and only interesting in so far as they might be robbed with success and impunity, strange must have been the companionship, wonderful the mutual associations, of the two, who saw and touched, who sailed upon and drank of the mysterious source of the Nile—the problem, the puzzle, the ambition, and the faith of sages and of centuries. A wonderful sense of combined power and helplessness must have come upon them, as they made their explorations and their measurements, as they named the 'Murchison Falls' (as Lord Milton named the magnificent cataracts of the Saskatchewan a little earlier), and finally landed on the island of Patooān. But now they were again struck down by remorseless fever, and the greater number of their men deserted them, carrying off the canoes, so that they were apparently left there to starve. They did not starve, and they ultimately got away; but after two months of such suffering as it is terrible to read of, and which to realise is, of course, impossible to any fancy unquickened by solitude, exposure, starvation, cruel disease, in the midst of a country never before trodden by a white man, and hundreds of miles from even the outposts of civilisation.

They had lost the boats at Gondokoro; they were both so ill that their being alive at the end of the year, for which they must now inevitably remain in Africa, was eminently improbable; there was no doubt they had been deserted by order of Kamrasi, who was then within thirty miles of them, and who was endeavouring to starve them into an alliance with him, for he was at war with an illustrious prince called Fowooka, and Dr Baker's fourteen guns would have made an important figure in its fortune. What a travesty of the *ruses* and dodges of diplomacy, but with a terrible truth in its deadly meaning for the unfortunate victims of the scheme of the astute savage! Not death, indeed, fortunately for the world, was before Dr and Mrs Baker, but dreadful danger, suspense, and suffering, even after they were released, to witness the revolting scenes of savage warfare, and helplessly to behold the exercise of Kamrasi's fiendish cruelty. The remembrance of the

magnificent deed they had done, became as necessary now for their sustenance, as the hope, the faith, the confidence they had felt in the beginning. It sufficed; they confronted every danger, they surmounted every difficulty; they have reached their native land in health, safety, and renown.

BROUGHT TO LIGHT.

CHAPTER XV.—ANOTHER LINK IN THE CHAIN.

THREE weeks had passed since the return of Mrs Winch to Normanford, and John English's polite dismissal from Belair. The young photographer had kept his word, as far as his stay at Normanford was concerned, going about his business here and there in the daytime, but always making his way back to Cliff Cottage at nightfall. The chain, one end of which he had succeeded in grasping, had broken in his hands, and he knew no more than a blind man where to find the missing links. Being of a straightforward, unsuspicious nature, and not prone to think evil of others, the idea of any cunningly-devised scheme of deception, with himself for the victim, and reputable, well-to-do people for its authors, was one that made its way but slowly into his mind. There were times when he was disposed to consider all his suspicions as so many wild chimeras of his own fancy, without any foundation in fact; and it is not improbable that in some such mood he would have quitted Normanford for ever, had there not been another attraction pulling powerfully at his heart-strings, which made him loath to leave the little country-town, and so quench positively, and for ever, his last faint hopes of again seeing her whom he so dearly loved; for, to see her again, by chance as it were, some day when she was walking or riding out; to see her at a distance, and without her knowledge; was the utmost that he could now hope for. He was banished from Belair; her sweet society was lost to him for ever; his very existence was probably forgotten by this time; but day passed after day, and still John English lingered purposelessly in the little town. From this state of indecision, and restless moody communing with his own heart, he was roused after a time by the receipt of a letter from his friend, Frank Mashiter—a hearty, wholesome letter, which acted as a mental tonic, endowing his faded purpose with fresh vitality, and counselling him in a cheerful friendly spirit to subordinate his day-dreams to the clear practical duty before him—the duty of doing his utmost to trace the hidden links of the chain which evidently connected him in some mysterious way with the landlady of the *Hand and Dagger*.

'Frank's letter is like a shower-bath—bracing, but severe,' said John to himself, as he finished reading his friend's epistle. 'Here have I been dreaming away one day after another, like the veriest lotus-eater; forgetting everything but that sweet delusion which is at once the pain and the gladness of my life. But nothing in this world is ever won by dreaming, and I'll build castles in the air no more.'

'I think I see my way to the next step in this matter,' resumed John after some cogitation. 'I want certain information, and if any man can give me it, my friend Mr Edwin can. I'll stroll down to his place this very evening.'

Mr Edwin was, literally and truly, the oldest inhabitant of Normanford, being over ninety years

of age. He had been master of the Foundation School for half a century, but had retired, years ago, on a small annuity, and now lived with his sister, a maiden lady of seventy, in a little cottage on the outskirts of the town. How John English came to know the ex-schoolmaster, was in this wise. He was one morning visited at his lodgings by a little old-fashioned lady with very white hair, and very black eyes, who introduced herself as Miss Edwin, and then went on to say that she had come to ask whether Mr English would do her the favour of taking a photographic likeness of her brother, who was the oldest inhabitant of Normanford, and confined to his house by an infirmity of the feet. Her brother had one son, who had emigrated to Australia many years ago. Father and son would never meet again in this world, and the portrait was wanted as a souvenir to send to that new home across the sea. She, Miss Edwin, was quite aware that portrait-taking was not in Mr English's ordinary line of business; but under the circumstances, he would, perhaps—; and the little white-haired old lady put her two hands together, and looked up so entreatingly in his face, that John had no heart to refuse her request. John called on Mr Edwin the same afternoon, and found him to be a little withered gentleman, very sprightly and cheerful, despite his great age and the ailment which confined him to the house. The portrait was duly taken, as well as one of Miss Edwin, and the two duly despatched to the antipodes; but John's visits to the little cottage did not cease with this; he had grown to like the society of the old gentleman and his sister, a liking which was cordially reciprocated; and he not unfrequently strolled down for an hour after his day's work was over, for the sake of a pleasant chat with the Nestor of the little town.

Mr Edwin, with his sister by way of supplement or addendum, might be considered as a living chronicle of the sayings and doings of Normanford for the last half-century; and John English could not have found any one more likely to supply him with the information he needed. With the propitiatory offering of a packet of genuine Kendal Brown in his pocket—for Mr Edwin was a great snuff-taker—the young photographer went down to the cottage on the evening of the day on which he received the letter from his friend at Nice. It was not difficult to bring the conversation round to the required point, for the ex-schoolmaster was always ready and willing to talk about any person or thing that referred in any way to his beloved town.

'Yes,' said Mr Edwin, in reply to a question of John's, as he balanced a pinch of his favourite mixture between finger and thumb—'the landlady of the *Hand and Dagger* has certainly been a resident of Normanford for many years.—For how many years? Let me consider. Why, for two-and-twenty years, this past summer. She came to Belair with Lady Spencelaugh—with the present Lady Spencelaugh, that is—who is Sir Philip's second wife, his first lady having died in India, poor creature! a few years after marriage. Martha Winch was a young unmarried woman at that time, and a great favourite with her Ladyship. After a time she married Job Winch, a pudding-headed fellow, who originally was hostler at the very hotel of which he afterwards became landlord. I remember it was currently reported at the time that it was her Ladyship's money which put the newly-

married couple into the *Hand and Dagger*; and through all these years, Mrs Winch has never quite broken off her connection with Belair; she still goes frequently to see Lady Spencelaugh.

'How do you account,' said John, 'for the existence of so strong a tie between two people so different in social position as Lady Spencelaugh and Mrs Winch?'

'All I can tell you with regard to that is from hearsay, and not from observation,' replied the schoolmaster. 'Lady Spencelaugh is the daughter of a poor Yorkshire squire. When young, her health was very delicate; and her father, with the view of improving it, sent her to be brought up in the house of a small farmer, one of his tenants, who resided somewhere in that wild stretch of country between Ingleton and Hawes, in the North-west Riding. Mrs Winch that is now, was the daughter of this farmer; and the two girls, living under the same roof for five or six years, became firmly attached to one another; and not all the chances and changes of after-life have been able to trample out this early liking: the great lady up at Belair has never forgotten the friend of her youth.'

'Had not Mrs Winch a brother, when she first came to Normanford?' asked John.

'To be sure she had,' replied the old gentleman; 'and a drunken, dissolute, gambling dog he was—a surgeon by profession. He came to Normanford, and began to practise here soon after the arrival of Lady Spencelaugh; but he was too fond of shaking his elbow to do any good either to himself or others; and after leading a useless, bankrupt-sort-of life for two or three years, he left the country, and has not been heard of in this neighbourhood since.'

'Do you remember his name?' said John.

'To be sure. His name was Jeremiah, or Jerry, as he was more commonly called.'

'But the surname?' urged John.

'Ah, there I confess I'm at fault,' said Mr Edwin, after a minute or two of silent cogitation. 'It was rather an uncommon name, I'm sure; but'—

'Kreefe,' broke in Miss Edwin hastily, and then went on silently with her knitting.

'Ah, to be sure,' said her brother. 'The fellow's name was Jeremiah Kreefe.'

'Was he married?' said John.

'Yes. He brought his wife with him when he came here, and took her away when he went.'

'Any family?'

'No—none,' said Miss Edwin sharply, considering, perhaps, that it was within her province to answer such a question.

'Stay a moment, Janet, my dear,' said Mr Edwin with lifted forefinger. 'Have you forgotten what I told you when I came back from Liverpool?'

'No, I have not forgotten,' answered Miss Edwin; 'but I still hold to the same opinion that I did then, that it was not the child of Dr Kreefe and his wife whom you saw.'

'The child might have been put out to nurse, you know, without any one in this neighbourhood being aware of it,' said her brother.

'A most unlikely thing,' replied Miss Edwin. 'If the child were their own, what necessity existed for any concealment of the fact? Besides, I remember to have heard Mrs Kreefe say more than once, that she thought her husband would love her more, and be a better man, if there was only a pretty baby-face to entice him home of an evening. No, you may rely upon it, Gustavus, the child whom you saw was not their own.'

'Then you incline to the belief,' said Mr Edwin, 'that it was the child of some relative or friend whom they were taking over with them for reasons best known to themselves.'

'I cannot think otherwise,' answered the little lady.

This dialogue was listened to by John English with breathless interest. 'I have a particular reason,' he said, 'for wishing to know all that can now be learned respecting the antecedents of this man. Pray, oblige me by giving me whatever particulars you can recollect of the little incident just spoken of by you.'

'Willingly,' replied Mr Edwin; 'but there is really nothing worth telling. However—to begin at the beginning—Kreefe and his wife had been about two years at Normanford, when it was given out that they were about to emigrate; and sure enough, a few weeks later, the house was shut up, and we were told that they were gone. The fact of their going did not make much impression on my mind, the acquaintanceship between us being of the most distant kind; besides which, I was busy just then fitting out my boy Jack, whose mind was firmly bent on going to Australia. About a week or nine days after the departure of the Kreefes from Normanford, I found myself at Liverpool with Jack in tow. Well, sir, I saw my boy safely on board ship, took my last gripe of his hand, saw the vessel he was in fairly underweigh, and was walking slowly along among the docks and basins, for I lost my way going back, but felt just then in too disconsolate a mood to care whither I was wandering, when I saw a cab draw up a few paces before me, from which, much to my surprise, there descended Mr and Mrs Kreefe, and a child, a boy, apparently about five years of age. They did not see me, and in the humour in which I then was, I did not care to go forward and make myself known. I waited a few minutes, and saw their luggage hoisted on board, and themselves cross the gangway, and disappear below decks, and then I came away. Janet and I have talked the matter over many times since that day, but I don't recollect that we have ever spoken of it to any one but you: you see it was no business of ours.'

John had listened to this narration with the deepest interest. Mr Edwin spoke again. 'I remember,' he said, 'that Kreefe's death was reported here several years ago, and that Mrs Winch went into mourning avowedly on his account.'

'Was there not something peculiar,' said John—'something out of the common way, in the appearance of this Dr Kreefe?'

'He walked with a limp, one of his legs being shorter than the other,' said the ex-schoolmaster.

'And had a slight cast in one eye,' added Miss Edwin.

'And a very peculiar, rugose, aquiline nose,' continued her brother. 'Take him altogether, Jeremiah Kreefe was certainly a singular-looking being; and once known, would not readily be forgotten.'

John English walked back to Cliff Cottage that night with many strange new thoughts at work in his mind.

CHAPTER XVI.—THE POSTSCRIPT.

The landlady of the *Hand and Dagger*, sitting one afternoon in a thoughtful mood in the bow-

window of her little snugery, which looked across the market-place, saw John English turn the corner of the opposite street, and make as though he were coming to the hotel. The widow's heart beat faster than usual as she drew back into the darkest corner of the room, but still with her eye fixed on the young photographer. He had been in her thoughts at the very moment of coming into view—he had been there indeed of late to the exclusion of almost every other topic. His prolonged stay in Normanford made her anxious and uneasy. Nearly a month had elapsed since his dismissal from Belair, but still he lingered; and, as Mrs Winch had heard from a reliable source, no hint had yet been received by Mrs Jakeway as to the probability of his early departure. Why did he not go? And why did he call so often on that gossiping old Mr Edwin and his sister—people who had known her (Mrs Winch) ever since her arrival at Normanford? Above all, what and how much of a certain matter did he know? That was the great question; and it was one that troubled Mrs Winch's peace of mind by day and night. And now he was actually coming to visit her! The widow drew in her breath, and her thin lips compressed themselves tightly, while her eyebrows fell a little lower over the cold wary eyes beneath them. She became intent on her sewing. Suddenly the door opened, and John English stood before her.

'Why, Mr English, what a stranger you are!' said the landlady, dropping her work, and rising with much cordiality of manner. 'I thought you had entirely forgotten the old roof that first sheltered you when you came to Normanford!' she stopped to smile on him, and then she added: 'Will you not take a chair? Pray, be seated.'

John English was rather taken aback by this reception, so different from what he had expected; and forgot for a moment or two what he had intended to say. Could it be really true that he had been labouring all this time under some terrible misapprehension—that there was nothing but a mare's nest at the bottom of the business, and that the widow was secretly laughing at him? No, the proofs were too overwhelming; and the woman who stood before him had merely put on that smiling mask to help her in her endeavours to hide the truth.

'We will never mind the old roof just now, if you please, Mrs Winch,' said John gravely, as he closed the door, and advanced into the room. 'I have no doubt you are quite as well aware as I am of the nature of the business which has brought me here to-day—better, perhaps.'

'No, really,' answered the widow, with a little dissenting smile and shake of the head: 'you credit me with far more knowledge, Mr English, than I can claim to possess. Positively, since you put the case on a business footing, I have not the remotest idea as to what has induced you to favour me with a visit this afternoon.' She paused for a moment to thread her needle with steady hand and clear eye. 'Stay, though,' she added as John was about to speak; 'now that I come to think of it, I can perhaps guess the cause of your visit. It is about that ridiculous business of the crossed notes? Annoying to you, I have no doubt; especially after reading by accident my opinion of you as expressed in the note intended for Lady Spencelaugh. How you must have looked when you read it! and the only wonder is, you have not been here about it

before. I declare I have had several good laughs to myself when I have thought about it. But I am forgetting that it has not yet been explained to you. No wonder you look mystified. You see, it all arose through a mistake of mine. Your name is not such a very uncommon one; and I mistook you for another Mr English—a Mr Ephraim English, a man whom I have never seen; but who, unfortunately, has it in his power seriously to annoy both Lady Spencelaugh and me. As soon as I discovered the mistake, I sent Jerry to your lodgings with a message, asking you to be good enough to look in here the first time you might be passing; but, I suppose, the poor foolish had omitted to deliver it. Under the circumstances, I hope you will accept my apologies for the annoyance which the mistake has caused you. I can assure you that you do not regret it more heartily than I do myself.'

'But you were quite aware from the first, Mrs Winch,' said the young man, 'that my name was John English, and nothing else. I am really at a loss to understand how such a mistake could arise.'

'So was I, when I came to think coolly of it afterwards,' said the widow. 'So stupid of me, was it not? But besides the singular coincidence of the surname, there were other circumstances on which I need not enter now, which induced me to think that you were the person I had in my mind when that note was written. But now that the matter has been clearly explained, I hope there is nothing to prevent our being good friends for the future.'

John was silent. Was this woman's explanation to be accepted as the truth? To his ear, it had not the fine ring of sterling coin. 'We will put aside for the present your explanation of the note, Mrs Winch, which may or may not be correct,' said John in his simple, straightforward way, which had yet nothing of rudeness in it. 'There are one or two other circumstances which I wish to lay before you, and which you may, perhaps, be able to explain equally well.'

The widow had been steadily sewing all this time; she now paused to bite off the end of her thread, and then looked up at John with a smile. She did not speak, but her eyes said: 'Go on' as plainly as words could have done.

'You had a brother,' began John; and then he stopped, for the widow started at his words, and turned on him a quick, terrified glance, which he did not fail to note. But next moment, she was herself again, as cool and collected as before. 'You had a brother,' resumed John; 'by name, Jeremiah Kreefe; by profession, a surgeon; who, with his wife, emigrated to America twenty-one years ago.'

'Quite true,' said the widow; 'and who, you might have added, unfortunately died there some seven or eight years since. Proceed, sir, pray.'

'Mr Kreefe walked with a limp, and had a peculiar cast in one of his eyes.'

'Admitted,' said the widow. 'His misfortune, and not his fault, in both cases.'

'Mr Kreefe never had a son, I think?'

'Certainly not, as far as I am aware.'

'He was in the habit, I believe, of corresponding with you occasionally after his arrival in America.'

'Yes; Jerry and I were always friendly; and I have had many letters from him at different times. But really, Mr English, these are purely family matters, and I do not see in what way they can possibly concern you.'

'I shall come to that presently,' said John. 'As

you were on such intimate terms with your brother, you can doubtless give me some particulars respecting the name, birthplace, and parentage of the child—a boy—whom he took with him from England, and who lived with him in America for four years. Can you not do this?

The widow felt her heart cease beating for a moment or two; she seemed to grow pale internally; but her voice, when she spoke, expressed nothing but genuine surprise.

'You astonish me, Mr English,' she said, 'more than I can tell. I think you must have been misinformed; but if what you say is true, I assure you that I know nothing whatever of any child taken by my brother and his wife with them to America. Surely you *must* have been misinformed.'

'There is nothing but the simple truth in what I have told you,' said John sadly. 'I whom you see before you am that unfortunate child. I was taken across the Atlantic in the care of your brother; I lived with him for four years in some little country town; and then'—

'Yes, and then?' said the widow eagerly.

'What followed after that does not concern my story at present,' said John.—'Do you mean, Mrs Winch,' he went on, 'to tell me solemnly that you know nothing whatever of such a circumstance?'

'I assert most positively, Mr English,' said the landlady, 'that I am in utter and entire ignorance of the transaction you mention. My brother, in this matter, never favoured me with his confidence; and certainly his letters never hinted, even in the most remote manner, at anything of the kind. You have surprised me more than I could express to you in any words.'

'When I came here this afternoon,' said John, 'it was with the conviction that, if you only chose to do so, you could give me some particulars of my birth and parentage—that you could perhaps even tell me my father's name, and reveal to me who I am. But I suppose I must go back as ignorant as I came.'

The widow had triumphed, and she could afford to sympathise. 'I declare, Mr English, it is quite a little romance,' she said; 'hardly to be credited in these sober nineteenth-century days, is it? Sad for you, of course, and I am sure I feel for you sincerely. But the world holds many a good man who has been obliged to do without a father; and I am sure, Mr English, that you have talent enough to make your own career.'

John sat gazing moodily into the fire, but answered never a word.

'My brother, in his letters from Willsburgh'—

'Willsburgh!' exclaimed John, starting up; 'that is the very name! That is the place where I lived with Jeremiah Kreefe. Do what I would, I never could bring it to mind before.—Thank you, Mrs Winch, for so valuable a piece of information; and he took out his pocket-book, and wrote down the name there and then. The widow, in her elation, had incautiously lost a point, and was proportionally mortified thereby.

'And what do you purpose doing next in this matter, Mr English?' she asked.—'It may be useful to know his next move,' she said to herself.

'As soon as my affairs will admit of it,' said John, 'I shall go to America, and hunt out this Willsburgh; and if I only succeed in finding it (and find it I will), I may be able to pick up some information there which will materially assist me in my search.'

'Your search for what?'

'My search for a Name,' said John.

'You appear to forget, Mr English, that my brother and his wife are both dead.'

'Is Mrs Kreefe dead?' said John in a tone of disappointment. 'My hopes lay in finding her still alive.'

'She died shortly after her husband—seven years ago,' said the widow, telling the lie boldly. Barbara Kreefe had only been dead a few months. 'Besides which, they removed from Willsburgh sixteen or seventeen years since, and have doubtless been forgotten long ago.'

'Then my hopes in that direction are crushed into a very small compass,' said John.—'I need not detain you any longer, Mrs Winch,' he said as he rose. 'I suspected you wrongly, and I am sorry for it.'

'Pray do not speak of it, Mr English,' said the widow graciously. 'If I can assist you in any way in this matter, I'm sure I shall be happy to do so.'

John English took up his hat.

'Is your stay in Normanford likely to be a long one?' said the widow carelessly, as she proceeded to fold up the work on which she had been so busily engaged.

'I can hardly tell,' said John with hesitation; 'I have little to stay for now, and you may expect any day to hear that I am gone.'

'You will not go without saying good-bye, I hope,' said the smiling landlady.

Scarcely had John said good-bye for the time being, and left the room, than the widow rose, and with flashing eyes, and her hands crossed over her bosom, as though to keep her excitement within bounds, began to pace the little apartment with rapid strides. 'The danger is over, thank Heaven!' she exclaimed fervently; 'but on the edge of what a precipice we have been standing—my Lady and I! How strange that he, out of all the millions now living in the world, should turn up at this out-of-the-way spot, without either instinct or memory to guide his footsteps hither! Who can say with surety that the evil they have done, be it ever so long ago, shall never be brought to light? What a straightforward, frank, handsome fellow he is! Ah, if he only knew all! But I dare not imagine such a possibility. No, we are safe now, my Lady and I—safe—safe—safe!'

Hardly had the last word escaped her lips, when the door was re-opened, and John English stood again before her. Some fine instinct warned her of coming danger, even before he had spoken a word, and she was on her guard in a moment. 'I think, Mrs Winch,' said John—and there was a change in his tone which she did not fail to detect—'I think you stated most positively that the fact of my brother having taken a child with him to America was entirely unknown to you?'

'Precisely so. I had no knowledge of the circumstance whatever.'

'What port did your brother sail from?'

'From Liverpool, I believe.'

'Did you not go to Liverpool with your brother to see him off?' demanded John.

'By what right do you catechise me in this way, Mr English?' said the widow haughtily. All her efforts could not keep the tell-tale colour out of her cheeks.

'By the right of a man who has been foully wronged,' replied John. 'Answer me a straightforward question in a straightforward way, Mrs

Winch. Did you, or did you not, accompany your brother to Liverpool, and see him safe on board ship ?

'I did,' said the widow.

'Then most certainly you must be aware that your brother took a child with him in the vessel.'

'I am aware of nothing of the kind. I am positive that there was no child there.'

'Let me refresh your memory ; and remember, I have my information from an eye-witness who is still alive. You and your brother, together with his wife and a boy about five years old, were driven in a cab to the dock in which the vessel they were to sail in was moored. You bade them good-bye there and then. Dr Kreefe, his wife, and the lad then went aboard ; and after a last wave of the hand, you turned away, and were driven back in the same cab by which you had come.—Who was that boy ?

'I will answer no more questions,' said the widow huskily. She was pale enough now.

'Then you refuse to answer the question I have just asked you ?

'I do.'

'Consider well before you finally decide. You have been prevaricating with me from the first, and that you took a prominent part in the black piece of work which tore a helpless child from his home, and deprived him of his name, I can no longer doubt. But much of this evil may still be undone by a free and frank confession. I warn you, however, that should you still refuse to furnish me with the information I want, I will use my utmost efforts—ay, though it should cost me twenty of the best years of my life, and every penny I possess—to bring this crime to light, and punish the perpetrators of it. Once more I ask you, whose child was it that was taken aboard ?

'The child of a friend,' said the landlady slowly and coldly, 'which my brother agreed to take out to some of its relatives in America. It died during the voyage ; and that is all I know of the matter.'

'Woman, you lie !' said John savagely. 'I see plainly that you will not speak the truth. I have given you fair warning ; and when the day of retribution comes, I will not spare you.'

'And I warn you, John English, not to meddle further in a matter that in no wise concerns you,' said the widow. 'You know not whither it may lead you. As for your threats, I laugh at them. A young man's empty bravado !—nothing more.—He is gone, and does not hear me. Oh, my lady, my lady ! what evil day is this coming surely upon us !'

John English, on leaving his lodgings to walk up to the hotel, had had a note from old Mr Edwin put into his hands. It was a simple invitation to John to go and smoke a friendly pipe with the old gentleman that evening, if not otherwise engaged, but concluded with a postscript, couched in the following words : 'I forgot to mention, when I was telling you the other evening about that affair of Kreefe's, in which you seemed so strangely interested, that Mrs Winch of the *Hand and Dagger* was at the docks that day, at the same time that I was, and saw the doctor, his wife, and the strange child on board the ship.' The postscript then went on to give the further details as recounted by John to Mrs Winch.

John, on receiving the note, had opened it ; and having taken in the contents with one careless glance, without noticing the postscript, had then thrust it into his pocket, his mind being

anxiously engaged just then with his approaching visit to Mrs Winch. On leaving the *Hand and Dagger*, he had referred to Mr Edwin's note again, in order to ascertain whether any particular hour had been named by the old gentleman for his visit. What effect the perusal of the postscript had on him, the reader has already seen.

On leaving the *Hand and Dagger* for the second time, John English set off in the direction of Belair. He had made up his mind during the last few minutes to call upon Lady Spencelaugh, and seek from her some explanation as to the contents of Mrs Winch's note, which seemed to connect him in some mysterious way with her Ladyship ; for he no longer gave any credence to the landlady's version of the affair. 'Mrs Winch may perhaps be playing a hidden game on her own account, and without Lady Spencelaugh's knowledge ; my seeing her Ladyship may therefore be of service both to herself and me. If, on the contrary, her Ladyship is leagued with Mrs Winch against me, I shall at least know the forces against which I have to fight.' The reading of the postscript had decided him not to leave Normanford for the present.

When he reached Belair, he sent in his card, with a remark pencilled on it, that his business was urgent and private. 'Her Ladyship is not at home,' said the large footman, returning after an interval of three minutes with John's card still on his salver. And so John was politely bowed out of the great house.—'I will write to Lady Spencelaugh to-night,' said John to himself, as he sauntered back through the park ; 'she shall have my statement of the facts, as well as Mrs Winch's ; and she must then judge for herself between the two.'

He wrote accordingly ; but his letter was returned to him the following morning in a sealed envelope, without a word of any kind. 'We are to be enemies, then, I suppose,' said John sadly, as he flung his missive into the fire, and watched it shrivel into ashes.

IRISH BULLS.

WHY the Irish, of all people, should be distinguished for bull-making, or why there should exist amongst the natives of Ireland such an innate and irresistible propensity to blunder, it is difficult to conjecture or decide. Mr and Miss Edgeworth, in their inquiry into the etymology of Irish Bulls, endeavour to account for it thus : 'That the English, not being the mother-tongue of the natives of Ireland, to them it is a foreign language, and, consequently, it is scarcely within the limits of probability that they should avoid making blunders both in speaking and writing.' However this may be, an Irish bull is a thing more easily conceived than defined. Perhaps, did we search for its precedent among the long list of bold tropes and figures handed down to us from the old Greek writers and orators, the nearest approach we could find to it would be under the title of *Catachresis*—A catachresis being 'the boldest of any trope, necessity makes it borrow and employ an expression or term contrary to the thing it means to express.' This certainly conveys a just idea of what an Irish bull is or should be.

Many of the following examples we give as original ; they occurred within our own personal knowledge, and were never before published. The rest we have selected from a variety of sources, and

have been careful always to distinguish between blunders and bulls—a distinction which is often neglected. Even Mr and Miss Edgeworth themselves have misapprehended the difference in more instances than that of the renowned Paddy Blake, who perpetrated what they call 'a most perfect bull.' On hearing an English gentleman speaking in praise of the fine echo of Killarney, which repeats the sound forty times, Pat promptly replied: 'Faith, sir, that's nothing at all to the fine echo in my father's garden in Galway, for if you say to it: "How do you do, Paddy Blake?" it will immediately make answer: "Pretty well, I thank you, sir."'

Now, this echo of Paddy Blake's, which has 'long been the admiration of Christendom,' does not at all deserve the name or appellation of an Irish bull. It is rather an exquisite specimen of that wit, quickness of repartee and good-humoured drolery, for which the Irish are famous; but it does not present to our mind the double arrangement of thought and expression so absolutely essential to the proper construction of a genuine bull.

One of the richest specimens of a real Irish bull which has ever fallen under our notice, was perpetrated by the clever and witty, but blundering Irish knight, Sir Richard Steele, when inviting a certain English nobleman to visit him. 'If, sir,' said he, 'you ever come within a mile of my house, *I hope you will stop there!*' Another by the same gentleman is well worth recording. Being asked how he accounted for his countrymen making so many bulls, he replied: 'I cannot tell, if it is not the effect of climate. I fancy, if an *Englishman was born in Ireland*, he would just make as many.' The same laughable train of thought seems to have seized upon a countryman of this Irish litterateur, who, exceedingly enjoying an apple-pie which was flavoured with a few green gooseberries, exclaimed: 'Ah, what a darling of an *apple-pie* it would be if it were all made of *green gooseberries!*'

This, again, reminds us of that well-known instance of wounded Irish pride related of the porter of a Dublin grocer, who was brought by his master before a magistrate on a charge of stealing chocolate, to which he could scarcely plead 'not guilty.' On being asked to whom he sold it, the pride of Patrick was exceedingly wounded. 'To whom did I sell it?' cried Pat. 'Now, do you think I was so *mane* as to take it to sell?' 'Pray, then, sir,' said the J. P., 'what did you do with it?' 'Do wud it? Well, then, since you *must* know, I took it home, and me and my ould 'oman made *tay* of it.'

A rich bull is recorded of an Irishman at cards, who, on inspecting the pool, found it deficient: 'Here is a shilling short,' said he: 'who put it in?'

This bull was actually perpetrated; so also was the following: Two eminent members of the Irish bar, Doyle and Yelverton, quarrelled one day, so violently, that from hard words they came to hard blows. Doyle, the more powerful man of the two (at the fists, at least), knocked down his antagonist twice, vehemently exclaiming: 'You scoundrel, I'll make you behave yourself like a gentleman.' To which Yelverton, rising, replied with equal indignation: 'No, sir, never. I defy you, I defy you! *You could not do it!*'

The next declaration of independence we record occurred to our own knowledge. It was uttered by an exasperated rural lover, whose sweetheart had driven him 'beyond the beyonds' with her 'court-

ings' and 'carryings-on' with his rival. 'I will never *spake* to you more!' he exclaimed with exceeding vexation. 'Keep your *spake* to yourself then,' said the provoking girl coolly; 'I am sure I can live without either it or your company.' 'I am sure so can I, then,' was the wrathful rejoinder.

Here are some more originals: 'Will you run away with me to-morrow night, Kate, dear?' said Phil to his charming rustic belle, who had just arrived at the years of *in-discretion*: 'Ah, no, my dear Phil,' replied the young lady, with great sense of prudence and decorum; 'I will do no such an action as that; but I'll tell you what I will do—*I'll run away without you*, and then you can run after me, and so we will meet at my aunt's that same evenin'.'

Perhaps we should explain, that these runaway matches are not by any means very hazardous or romantic affairs; they might more justly be termed *walk-aways*, being as unlike as possible the forcible helter-skelter abduction of the goose by the fox, or the ride of the renowned Lochinvar. The young couple only walk quietly across a few fields (under cover of the night, of course) to the house of some kind-hearted but indiscreet neighbour, who can't think of being so hard-hearted as to prevent them 'gettin' the words said.'

Most of our readers are familiar, no doubt, with the gallant young Irishman, who declared to his sweetheart that he was in such a way about her he couldn't *sleep at night for dreaming of her*. A parallel instance to this occurred in our own hearing, when a poor fellow protested to 'his girl' in the hayfield, that his two eyes *hadn't gone together all night* for thinking about her. 'Very likely they did not,' replied this sweet plague of his life, 'for I see your *nose* is between them!'

The following was perpetrated by a young Irish gentleman, who was exceedingly anxious to meet a certain young Irish lady at the house of a common lady-friend, who had expressed her entire readiness (as most ladies would, under similar temptations) to perform the amiable part of 'daisy-picker' to the young couple.

'But,' said the poor fellow anxiously, 'there is nothing in the world so embarrassing, you know, as to meet a girl by appointment. I am sure, under the circumstances, *I wouldn't be myself—neither would she!* Suppose, my dear madam, you could manage it so as to let us meet at your house some evening *without either of us being aware that the other was present!*'

Still another pair of lovers claim our attention. The young lady less flustered than her admirer, addressed him in these terms: 'I like you exceedingly, but I cannot quit my home. I am a widow's only darling, and no husband could equal my parent in kindness.' 'She may be kind,' replied her wooer enthusiastically, 'but be my wife—we will all live together, and see if I don't *beat your mother!*'

The next Irishman who comes under our notice is married, but not very happily. Having entered into holy bonds at the youthful age of nineteen, he discovers that it is much easier to get the ceremony performed than afterwards to maintain an establishment. Repenting him that he had procured a wife without the means of supporting her, he declares that he never will marry so young again if he lives to be the age of Methuselah.

The next sight we get into the cares and troubles that married life is heir to is through the mild

remonstrance of a Hibernian Paterfamilias, who declares to his wife that he really wishes the children could be kept in the nursery while he is at home, 'although,' he considerably adds, 'I could not object to their noise if they would only keep quiet.'

All this time, however, the ladies have been keeping an *unnatural silence*; and it is time that they should speak out. But let even their Bulls be listened to with gallantry; and especially this one, since it was delivered by a young lady-friend of my own. During a recent visit to London, she was one day defending her country with characteristic warmth against charges made concerning its bull-making propensities by a witty Englishman. 'Well,' he at length exclaimed, 'if you won't allow you commit bulls, you must, at all events, confess you commit an outrageous number of murders!' 'Granted,' cried the Irish girl; 'yet even our murders are not at all so atrocious in their character as your English ones'— 'Oh, now, now!' broke in the gentleman mischievously, 'only listen to this girl defending her murders!' 'No,' she replied; 'not defending, but comparing them. It is seldom you hear of an Irishman staining his own hearthstone with blood, if his wife offend him; a few hard words, or at most a few hard blows, are her punishment; but if the English boor's wife offend him, very likely she will go to bed to-night to rise in the morning and find her throat cut.'

On another occasion, when acknowledging some handsome compliments paid her by a young Englishwoman, this same lady exclaimed: 'Ah! my dear Lizzie, how kind of you to think so highly of me as you do! How different you are from other ill-natured girls I know!'

We shall now introduce you to a respectable old lady, who was walking along a country road one day as quietly as any old lady could walk, when suddenly her indignation was aroused, on beholding the untidy abode of a small Irish farmer, who, in true Mrs McClarty style, chose to have his office-houses, cesspool, and dunghill right in front of his dwelling-house, whereupon the old lady exclaimed: 'Dear me, dear me! how I do hate to see a house with its rear in the front.'

We shall now proceed to Dublin, where doubtless still resides that old beggar-woman, who, whilst soliciting charity, declared she was the mother of *six small children and a sick husband*.

We wonder was this lady any relation to the poor Irishman who offered his only old saucepan for sale; his children gathering round him inquired why he did so. 'Ah, my honeys,' said he, 'sure I wouldn't be after partin' wid it if it wasn't to get some money to buy somethin' to put in it.'

It was in Dublin city that our good-humoured maid-of-all-work, Molly, once related to her young mistress a most marvellous dream she had had the night before.

'Pooh, pooh!' cries the latter at its conclusion; 'you must have been asleep, Molly, when you dreamed such nonsense.'

'Indeed, I was not then,' replies the indignant Molly; 'I was just as wide awake as I am this minute.'

We are now going to introduce to you what in drapers' parlance would be called a 'choice variety;' and which we only wish, in displaying our light fantastic stores, we could recommend with half the address with which a draper of my

acquaintance once recommended a certain rich material for ladies' dresses to a customer. 'Madam,' said he, 'it will wear for ever, and make a petticoat afterwards.'

This draper, however, is almost outdone by an enterprising furrier, who intimates to 'all such ladies as desire genuine furs, that he will make muffs, boas, &c. out of their own skins.'

The next bull that occurs to me was uttered by a poor woman, who, in all the pride and glory of her maternal heart, was declaring to a kind-hearted listener, that since the world was a world there never was such a clever boy as her Bill—he had just made two chairs and a fiddle out of his own head, and had plenty of wood left for another.

A similar mechanical genius had that Irish carpenter in America, who in sending in his little account to a farmer for whom he had been working, informed him that it was 'for hanging two barn-doors and himself, seven hours, one dollar and a half.'

In direct contradistinction to this acknowledged attempt at self-destruction, we have the story of a certain physician, who, conducting a *post-mortem* examination in a case of infanticide, reported that he was unable to discover whether the child was *alive* at the time of its death, or not.

'As I was going over the bridge the other day,' said a native of Erin: 'I met Pat Hewins. "Hewins," says I, "how are you?" "Pretty well, thank you, Donnelly," says he. "Donnelly!" says I; "that's not my name." "Faith, then, no more is mine Hewins." So with that we looked at each other again, an' sure enough it was nayther of us. —And where is the bull in that, now?'

It must have been a twin-sister of this gentleman, who, having been nearly drowned by falling into a well, committed a very rich bull, when she piously and thankfully declared that *only for Providence and another woman* she never would have got out.

Horace Walpole records in his *Walpoliana* an Irish bull, which he pronounces to be the *best* he ever met with. 'I hate that woman,' said a gentleman, looking at a person who had been his nurse— 'I hate her, for when I was a child, she changed me at nurse.' This was indeed a perplexing assertion: but we have a similar instance recorded in the autobiography of an Irishman, who gravely informs us that he 'ran away early in life from his father, on discovering he was only his uncle.'

Again, a poor Irish lad, complaining of the harsh behaviour of his father, declares he just treats him as if he were his son by another father and mother.

The next bull we record is redolent of the soil, and proves that in Ireland at least the determination to overcome impossibilities is not yet extinct. An Irishman, having challenged a gentleman to fight a duel, who somehow forgot to attend the appointment, met accidentally that same day the offending party, and thus addressed him: 'Well, sir, I met you this morning, but you did not come; however, I am determined to meet you to-morrow morning whether you come or not!' We wonder was the gentleman who displayed such a reluctance to be present the same who declared he would not fight a duel, because he was unwilling to leave his old mother an orphan.

The following piece of *navvée* was uttered in a shop in a market-town in County Cavan by a poor Irishwoman: 'What is your tenpenny

ribbon a yard?' she inquired. 'A shilling, ma'am,' was the rather paradoxical reply. 'Very well, then,' said our simple friend; 'nick it at that.' To this we may add the daily demand in such establishments for white ha'penny spools, or black women's stockings, yellow girls' gloves, penny-worths of yard-wide tape, and oh! elastic description! the thing that puckers in and puckers out.

Here comes into our mind a charming little anecdote, so naive and *national* in character, that though, strictly speaking, it is neither a blunder nor bull, we cannot refrain from giving it.

An apprentice sailor-boy fell from the 'round top' to the deck, stunned, but little hurt. The captain exclaimed in surprise: 'Why, where did you come from?' 'From the north of Ireland, yer honour!' was the prompt reply, as the poor fellow gathered himself up.

It is only a few months since the *Times* perpetrated a most perfect bull. In a review of Tennyson's *Enoch Arden*, the following sentence occurs relative to the self-denial of Enoch, who keeps his existence a secret from his wife, whom he finds married again and happy. 'He died, but *not until he died*, did he mention to those around him who he was!' Now, who should ever expect, on looking over John Bull's great representative, to meet with such a genuine Irishism as that? We can only account for it by supposing it was perpetrated by an Irishman. We believe a number of them are employed upon the staff of that august publication.

Not to be outdone, however, by its monster contemporary, an Irish paper announces, not many weeks since, the death of a poor deaf man called Gaff. He had been run over by a locomotive, and, adding the paper, 'he received a *similar injury* this time last year.'

Another excellent bull of the same kind was perpetrated by a coroner in the County Limerick this spring. Being asked how he could account for the fearful mortality last winter, he replied: 'I do not know: there are a great many people dying this year who never died before.'

To this we may add the story of an Irishman that *nearly* died, according to his own account, through the treatment of his physician, who, he declares, drenched him so with drugs during his illness, that he was *sick for a long time after he got well*.

In *practical bulls*, the Irish are even more famous than in those merely logical: the richest one we ever heard was about a poor Irish peasant who was floundering through a bog on a small ragged pony. In its efforts to push on, the animal got one of its feet entangled in the stirrup; 'Arrah, my boy!' exclaimed the rider, 'if you are going to get up, it's time for me to get down.'

A good one is related also of a poor Irish servant-maid who was left-handed. Placing the knives and forks upon the dinner-table in the same awkward fashion, her master observed that she had placed them all left-handed. 'Ah, true indeed, sir,' said she, 'and so I have. Would you be pleased to help me to turn the table?'

A very good one occurred in our hearing one evening last winter. An old Irish gentleman, fifty years in 'bonds' of holy wedlock, was telling over to his girls the old, old story, of his former loves and gay flirtations. 'Ah!' exclaimed his daughter Mary, 'it is well for you mamma is asleep on the sofa and does not hear you!' 'Yes,'

said the old lady (wide awake, as it proved, and speaking up in the style of "Tragedy rebuking Comedy"), 'I am glad I *am asleep*!'

Amongst mere blunders, we believe we have met with no richer specimen than this one, perpetrated by a bell-ringer in Cork. 'O yis! O yis! Lost somewhere between twelve o'clock and M'Kinney's store in Market Street, a large brass key. I'll not be after tellin' yeas what it is, but it's the key of the bank, sure.'

There is a charming naïveté also in that young Irish lady, who, like many others of the lovely maids of Erin, was more richly endowed with personal attractions than with personal property, and who, being compelled to write to her affianced for money to pay for part of her *trousseau*, appended the following postscript to her letter: 'I was so much ashamed of the request I made you, that I sent after my messenger to get back my letter; but he had already reached the post-office and put it in ere he could be overtaken.'

An English merchant gives us the following: On examining a hoghead of hardware, and comparing it with the invoice, he found it all right with the exception of one hammer, which had been omitted. 'Oh, don't be unaisy, my dear sir,' cried his Irish porter; 'sure the man took it out to open the hoghead.'

We shall give just one more rich specimen of Irish obliquity and blundering phraseology, and then shall have done. It is contained in an electioneering bill, literally and truly furnished by an innkeeper, for the regaling of certain free and independent (?) voters during the time of a contested election in Meath. Some forty years ago, Sir Mark Somerville sent orders to the proprietor of the hotel in Trim to board and lodge all that should vote for him. For this he afterwards received the following, which he got framed, and it still hangs in Somerville House, County Meath. The copy to which we are indebted for this was found among the papers of the late Very Rev. Archdeacon O'Connell, vicar-general of the diocese of Meath: it ran as follows:

16th April, 1826.

My Bill

To eating 16 freeholders above stairs for Sir Marks at 3s 3d a-head is to me L2 12.

To eating 16 more below stairs and 2 priests after supper is to me L2 15s 9d.

To 6 beds in one room and 4 in a nother at 2 guineas every bed, and not more than four in any bed at any time cheap enough God knows is to me L22 15s.

To 18 horses and 5 mules about my yard all night at 13s every one of them and for a man which was lost on the head of watching them all night is to me L5s 6s 0d.

For breakfast on tay in the morning for every one of them and as many more as they brought as near as can I guess is to me L4 12s 0d.

To raw whiskey and punch without talking of pipes tobacco as well as for porter and as well as for breaking a pot above stairs and other glasses and delf for the first day and night I am not sure but for the three days and a half of the election as little as I can call it and to be very exact it is in all or theriabouts as near as I can guess and not to be too particular is to me at least L79 15s 9d.

For shaving and crapping off the heads of the 49 freeholders for Sir Marks at 13d for every head of them by my brother had a Wote is to me

L2 13s 1d. For a womit and nurse for poor Tom Kernan in the middle of the night when he was not expected is to me ten hogs.

I don't talk of the piper or for keeping him sober as long as he was sober is to me L0.

The Total

2 12 0 0

2 15 0 0

22 15 0 0

5 5 0 0

4 12 0 0

79 15 0 9

2 13 0 1

10 10

0 0

Signed

in the place Jemmy Cars wife

his

Bryan X Garraty

Mark

L110 18 7 you may say L111 0 0 so your Honour Sir Marks send me this eleven hundred by Bryan himself who and I prays for your success always in Trim and no more at present.

THE MONTH:

SCIENCE AND ARTS.

THE importance of Mr Wilde's magneto-electric apparatus, of which we gave a brief account two months since, may be judged of by what a French savant, who travelled from Paris to Manchester to see it in operation, and who describes the experiments as magnificent, says concerning it: 'The machine,' he writes, 'gives out real torrents of electric light. Though accustomed for many years to make use of this light, we have been almost frightened by the splendour which dazzled our eyes. Twice did we see a long stout piece of wire completely melted. The induced current was so intense that the wire became white-hot, and broke up into large drops in less than two minutes. The most marvellous part of the matter is, that this electricity, this heat, this light, are the result of a real transformation of mechanical force; for apart from the steam-engine which sets the apparatus in motion, the whole static force of the machine consists in six small artificial magnets, capable of carrying a weight of about forty pounds.'

We understand that the Alliance Electric Light Company of Paris have bought the right to use Mr Wilde's machine in France. With scientific men and skilful mechanics working therewith on both sides of the Channel, we may safely predict that ere long some very surprising achievements will be effected. Some foresee that it will bring about little less than a revolution in certain departments of science.

Chevreul, the eminent chemist, has shewn that the old and dim stained glass of windows can be restored to its original brilliancy by a simple process. The glass having been taken from the windows, is plunged for several days in a weak solution of carbonate of soda; it is next washed in clean water, and dipped for some hours in a solution of muriatic acid, of which the specific gravity is 1.080. In this way, the dull and dirty appearance occasioned by years of exposure to dust, smoke, and weather, is completely removed, and the glass becomes as brilliant and beautiful as when it first left the hands of the manufacturer.

The Master of the Mint (Mr Graham) in carrying on the researches on absorption and dialysis, to which on former occasions we have called attention, has made a discovery which promises to be of great importance in the manufacture of iron and steel. While examining the effect of septa of different

metals at a red heat in the absorption and separation of gases, he found that palladium, under certain conditions, will absorb several hundred times its bulk of hydrogen, and that iron will take up a considerable quantity of carbonic oxide gas. This gas permeates the iron through its whole substance, and is therein retained for any length of time, and plays a most important part whenever afterwards the iron may be converted into steel. The carbonic oxide then facilitates the carbonisation of the metal, and as steel may be called iron with carbon in it, anything which facilitates the taking up of carbon must be of advantage alike to those who make and those who use steel. We think it likely that in due time something will be heard of an application of Mr Graham's discovery on a great scale at Sheffield, and with important results. On the subject of wrought iron, Mr Graham remarks that it takes up carbonic oxide during the process of manufacture, and that years afterwards, the gas may be released by exposing the metal to a high temperature, although it has, so to speak, formed a constituent part of the iron. This fact, he suggests, is well worthy the consideration of metallurgists.

The question as to the exhaustion of our coal (on which, by the way, the government have appointed a scientific commission of inquiry) imparts an interest to propositions about fuel and heating beyond what might be otherwise claimed for them. But in noticing the gas-furnace constructed by Mr Siemens, F.R.S., we point out an invention especially meritorious in itself, seeing that it economises all the fuel, all the heat, and gives off no smoke. It is not easy to describe without diagrams: it has a gas-producer standing apart, in which the coal approaches the fireplace by an inclined plane, where it is heated gradually, and parts with all its volatile products, which pass through the fire. The fuel itself is slowly consumed; the carbonic acid, an incombustible gas, is converted into a combustible gas, carbonic oxide, by passing through the thick layer of red-hot coal. Then, below the grate, a cistern of water gives off steam, and each cubic foot of this steam, as it rises and passes through the fire, is decomposed into double that quantity of hydrogen and carbonic oxide, which being inflammable, increase the temperature. The whole of the heating products travel through the furnace, and enter one of four chambers, or regenerators, as Mr Siemens calls them, which are built in the lower part of the structure. These regenerators are used alternately; while one heats, another cools, and the reverse. They intercept the heat, which otherwise would fly from the chimney in waste; and after passing through them, the gas and air reach the heating chamber at nearly the heat of that chamber itself; a heat so intense, that, unless modified, it would fuse the furnace, and everything exposed to its action. No smoke escapes; the heat in the chimney is seldom sufficient to singe wood; and the saving of fuel, compared with an ordinary furnace, is from forty to fifty per cent. For glass houses, for steel-smelters, manufacturers of iron, and any trade or process in which an intense heat is required, the Siemens furnace is eminently suitable. It has already been adopted in some busy manufacturing localities where the atmosphere was once blackened by smoke, and where the inhabitants, no longer annoyed by that nuisance, rejoice at the change.

A few items from the numerous discoveries and

researches made by chemists and technologists are interesting, and admit of useful application. Plaster of Paris, if mixed with a certain quantity of water, and soaked in a bath of hot pitch, parts with the water, takes up a corresponding quantity of pitch, and then forms a substance so very hard and susceptible of polish that it could be used in the manufacture of many useful and ornamental articles.—An elastic material very serviceable for capping or sealing bottles may be made by mixing an ounce and a half of glycerine with a pound of softened gelatine.—Chloride of magnesia derived from sea-water is convertible into what is called anhydrous magnesia: this latter formed into lumps and soaked with water for several months, becomes hard and transparent as alabaster. This anhydrous magnesia, if powdered and mixed with an equal part of powdered marble, pressed into a mould, and exposed for some time to the action of water, forms a substance like marble, suitable for busts.—Soap-bubbles of extraordinary size and strength may be blown from a mixture of oleate of soda and glycerine. They may be set on wine-glasses, or placed under bell-jars, and will remain unbroken for twenty-four hours. If let fall on the carpet, they will rebound; and if carefully cut open with a pair of scissors, wet with the solution, smaller bubbles may be blown inside. A small bubble examined under the microscope presents in its movements and iridescence a most beautiful object.

At the Franklin Institute, Philadelphia, some new mechanical contrivances, or new applications, have been exhibited, which are worth notice. A National Lifter, as it is called, or Portable Crane, is so constructed as to be easily movable from place to place, and set up by one man, and yet is capable of raising at least ten tons.—A pulley with cam-wheel which, if the rope should break during hoisting, immediately clamps the rope, and so prevents the fall of the weight or load that was being raised.—A gas regulator, in which the flow of gas to a series of burners is regulated under changing conditions of pressure and consumption, by means of a valve controlled by a gasometer floating on mercury.—An altiscope, or telescope, which, by a combination of mirrors and lenses, enables an observer to look over or around an opaque object.—A manufacturer in Massachusetts having observed that his workmen lost twelve per cent. of their time in screwing up and unscrewing the vice at which they worked, has invented a vice in which that defect is obviated, and the jaws can be opened or closed with a single pull or push, and the article operated on is held as tightly as in an ordinary vice. The mechanism of the new vice comprises a rack with ratchet teeth, and a nut with teeth on its under side to fit into those of the rack. This nut rises when the vice is to be opened or closed, but drops into its place when the piece of work is inserted, and then one turn of a screw suffices to tighten up. This is an invention which locksmiths and instrument-makers will doubtless take advantage of.—Cork-springs for luggage-vans and goods-trucks have been tried with success on some of the railways in America. The quality of the cork appears to be unimportant, for the hardest and hardest sorts have been used. The cork is cut into discs about eight inches diameter, with a hole in the centre, which are soaked in a mixture of molasses and water. A number of these discs are then placed in a cylindrical cast-iron box, and compressed by hydraulic pressure to one-half their

thickness. A bolt is run through them, and secured by a nut; the pressure is then relieved, and the cork-spring is complete and ready for use. The pressure which these cork-springs will bear is almost incredible; they remain unimpaired after a course of treatment which completely destroys india-rubber. It is stated that a cork-spring in a forging-machine, though subjected to violent and continual shocks during five years, shewed no signs of deterioration when examined at the end of that period.

We have seen in a coppersmith's workshop thin cushions of india-rubber cuttings placed under the legs of the benches, with a remarkable effect. The workmen in the shop below had long been annoyed and deafened by the noise of the hammering; but when the cushions were placed, as above described, the noise was so much deadened that scarcely a sound passed through the floor. At the same time, there was no loss of solidity in the benches.

For those whose admiration is excited by vast mechanical enterprises, there is abundant matter for excitement in the last Report on East Indian Railways. The line from Calcutta to Delhi, 1105 miles, is now open, excepting a short link, and passenger-trains travel the distance in forty-eight hours, the fares being, first-class, 95 rupees; second-class, 48 rupees; and third-class, 16 rupees—2½d., 1½d., and ½d. of a penny a mile respectively. This line is carried across the Jumna, at a point about three miles above its confluence with the Ganges, by a bridge 3000 feet in length. In the dry months, the river is comparatively shallow; but during the monsoon, it covers the whole breadth, and rushes along, from fifty to sixty feet deep, at a rate of ten miles an hour. The size of the Jumna may be inferred from the fact, that it is crossed again by the railway, 400 miles higher up, by a bridge 2500 feet in length. The unfinished portion of the line is between this bridge and Delhi; it will be completed before the close of the present year. There will also soon be a continuous line from Calcutta to Bombay, 1395 miles, through Allahabad and Jubbulpore. No wonder that the number of passengers and the goods-traffic increase year by year! In 1864, the passengers numbered 4,150,000; and there is a cry everywhere for double lines and wider bridges, to accommodate the continually growing trade. Fifteen years ago, travellers had to spend three months on the journey from Calcutta to Delhi.

LAND AT LAST.

DAY after day, upon my couch I lie
Lonely and sad, by phantoms vague oppressed;
Ghosts of the Past, whom truant Memory
Recalls to life to rack my tortured breast
With vivid retrospect of fancies bright,
High hopes, and strong affections, in whose ray
Life, love, ambition, glowed with roscate light,
Seeming to herald forth a 'perfect day.'
Light faded—hopes extinguished—fancies fled—
Feelings repressed till hardened into stone—
The one beloved estranged, and worse than dead—
Helpless, forsaken, humbled, and alone—
One beam still lingers in the western sky;
Love only dies with life: Life—is Eternity.

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ETON SIXTY YEARS SINCE.

IN TWO PARTS.—PART I.

I was strangely and unfortunately brought up ; by a man of high talent and clear judgment on most points, but whose honest purpose to do his duty as a parent was marred by a disposition to run counter to the ways of the world, a violent temper, and a despotic nature.

I left the domestic fireside—a roaring one, in every sense of the word—for the smallest of country schools, which slumbered in the arms of the simplest of Dominie Sampsons. But he had been an old Eton acquaintance of my father.

‘Can your puppy swim?’

‘We’ll see. Just chuck him into the water.’

Even so was I, before my eyes were open, thrown headlong into the torrent of life and sent to Eton, though not from any unworthy motive, as a good many were. I have known a low man who starved himself and his family for seven years, in hopes that the eldest son might pick up useful acquaintances among the great, at the great school, where the poor lad only did pick up luxurious habits and fashionable airs ; crippled with which, he had to come and help his father in his little business, to earn the family’s bread. No ; the reason why I had to go was, that my father and his brothers had gone before me. One of them had been renowned there as a boyish Hercules—a sort of Admirable Crichton, with the learning left out. He went to Eton an orphan, only six years old. His wardrobe, I have heard, did not then contain a pocket-handkerchief, and when he had a hat, it was generally without a crown. I only remember him an elaborately made-up gentleman, and of some mark in his county, but old before his time ; for Sampsons beat themselves ; and ‘with gray, gray hair did Sir Randal come hame.’

‘Why, Jack, you’re as gray as a badger!’ was the flattering and sentimental greeting with which I heard my father welcome his return.

A very different sort of Etonian was I—a long, helpless boy, who, at thirteen years of age, had quite outgrown his strength. At my good little

school, boxing was not allowed ; and I found myself among a mob of six hundred young devils, of whom I was expected to fight any one of my inches. How much in fighting depends on a favourable entry, Dandie Dinmont has told the world ; and they must acknowledge my chance was not a good one.

My father is just handing me over to my Eton tutor, whose physiognomy I, a youthful Lavater, am anxiously studying, and forming unfavourable conclusions from it. I see a small man, with a snappish, sneering manner, a limping gait, and a very pale complexion. Scandal said he drank. He was far from popular ; but his failings were, on the whole, forgiven for the sake of that limp, which he owed to a blow from a cricket-bat, the usual weapon of the boys in their fights with the bargemen. He, as a master, was exerting himself to keep the peace on one of those occasions, and was felled in the *mêlée*. Feeling like an old boy, he would never tell who had crippled him. Honest fellow ! he was not a pleasant man. After a little *viv-voce* work, he sent me up to a spare garret to complete my trial. I well remember a dreary winter hour or two, passed within four white-washed walls—my only companions a wooden chair, a deal table, a tallow-candle, no fire, and a theme. I did it—and too well ; for I was placed so high in the school as to be an object of some envy and boyish malice, with which my lists were as yet ill able to contend.

I had gone over to my dame’s to supper. Still a strikingly handsome woman. When she had filled her purse, she married a tutor who had done the like, and retired to a good living. She must have ruled the parish, and might have come to be a Mrs Proudie—but for the cholera. Thoroughly well qualified for her position was she. Born and bred at Oxford among what are there called ‘men,’ she was too much for us boys. Keen in money-matters, she kept about the worst table in Eton, but contrived to make her house put up with it. The customary remedy for such an evil was called a *brocier* (*Spum*, I will eat up). By concerted arrangement, on a given day, everything on table was devoured or pocketed, and

more called for, till larder and store-room were emptied. This was understood as a vote of censure. Such a thing had just happened next door. The dame, a delicate, broken-down lady, went in tears to the head-master. All he could do, probably, was not to laugh till her back was turned. We tried it once, but found a *mattresse femme* to deal with. Apparently, we were winning our battle—though nearly choked in the moment of victory—when she just whispered two words to her maid, who disappeared to return with an enormous cheese, as strong as it was big. She cut away liberally, telling us, with a smile, not to spare it, for there was another bigger than that. We never tried a brosier again. She had a happy knack of managing her boys—would get you flogged, relentlessly, on slight provocation, and then, in spite of yourself, laugh you out of all ill-humour with her.

No footman in a decent family would now submit to such bedroom accommodation as was ours, for which the first men in England were then content to pay so highly. We slept in those unwholesome things called press-bedsteads, which turned on hinges into presses closed during the day, for our bedroom was our living-room also. It was a common trick, when a boy was asleep, to turn him up, and fasten the doors. There he was, standing on his head, and struggling with suffocation. Fortunately, boys are seldom apoplectic, and I never knew any harm done this way. A single room was charged extra; there were not many, and they were considered luxuries. So was a 'study'—a closet just big enough to hold the smallest of all possible tables—or even a flap doing duty for one—a few book-shelves, and a stool. Such was mine. Some had room for that treasure of an Eton boy, a bureau. The pigeon-holes held 'old copies'; and I have known one of the many drawers tenanted by a colony of tame mice. The charm of your study was, besides the dignity of the thing, that you could lock yourself in, and do your verses in peace. The first time I did so, the silence of the night and my poetical musings were rudely interrupted by the ticking of a death-watch. Now, my nursery education had included the whole mystery of ghosts, and their kindred superstitions. I was learned even in points of etiquette proper to be observed in cases of intercourse with these 'transparencies.' The maids had nearly addled my brains with this as a child, and it was still a very weak point with me. Thus suddenly assailed, and at such close quarters, I turned round hastily to flee, jammed the key in the lock, and was at the mercy of the death-watch. Having kicked myself free at last, and luckily undiscovered, I sneaked up to bed, and for some time only visited my study by daylight. I have known a panic in an army from as slight a cause.

We were three in my room. One of them—own son of his father, and he was a bishop, well known in his day as 'Bishop Bluster'—became notorious as the worst bully in all Eton. Unusual muscular power and toughness, a quick eye, and a hard head, had made him formidable with his fists, and given scope to a cruel and tyrannous disposition. The fall of that young tyrant was sudden and edifying. Immediately on leaving Eton, the cock of the school fell into the hands of a low woman, very much older than himself, married her, entered the church, subsided into a remote curacy, and I never heard more of him.

My new life is beginning to dawn upon me with a certain promise of grandeur. I get an 'order' for cups and saucers, knives and forks, &c., of my own, and go proudly 'up town' to choose the patterns. I draw rations of tea and sugar. So much rolls and butter are mine daily; and I am initiated, with a pleasurable awe, into the mysteries of 'tick'; for the dinner and supper only are public, and provided by my dame; and it is vulgar to attend the latter. Breakfast and tea we have in our own rooms, at our own epicurean discretion.

Custom allows me one fortnight as a free boy, and then I become a slave—a little white slave. Fagging is a system, as regularly organised as the feudal system. The sixth and fifth forms are the masters; the 'remove' is neutral; all the rest are 'lower boys'—*fags*, the 'Servants-of-all-work Company,' with unlimited liability as to thrashing. Say there are seven fifth-form and eleven lower boys in a house—the first seven of them will be distributed by the captain according to seniority, and then the other four to the four senior fifth form, who will each have two servants out of livery. I remember a house where there was only one fifth-form and seventeen lower boys. He arranged his household as a Lord Chamberlain might his department. He had his cook, and his poet (who did his verses for him); he had also a regular staff to write out his 'punishments.' As, in common parlance, 'virtue' is used to signify one only out of the many perfections of womankind, so, in Eton slang, a 'punishment' meant one particular sort of infliction. 'What tricks are you playing, Duncombe minor? Write out and translate two hundred lines of Homer, sir!' That was a punishment; and the system was carried to excess. Piles upon piles of punishments might be seen on any tutor's table. If the offender was so ill provided with drudges as to depend on his own exertions, he used to write a few lines at the beginning and end, and fill in with any rubbish, trusting, as he well might, that the master would never wade through his dreary task. Magnates coolly handed them over to their fags to do. The masters must have known this; but habit prevailed, and the sins of the fifth-form continued to be visited on lower boys. I wonder whether the punishment-writing could be utilised in any way as a training for what in the Foreign Office is called 'précis-writing'?

At all hours of the day or night, any work your master required, you were bound to do; and this was not all—this was only the home department. Once out of your own house, any fifth-form boy might pounce on you in like manner. Going into school, going to my 'tutor,' or fagging for somebody else—these were the only received excuses. There was one universal penalty for all faults—a licking, at the discretion of your master, and one alternative—You fag for me, or you fight me. This led to some of the most interesting fights; but they were few. Yet there was a delicate distinction. 'Would you fag for So-and-so?'—'No! But I'd shin him.' I might not feel equal to a regular combat, yet I would resist—in this wise: I would close with him, throw my head into his chest, and try to get hold of his arms, whilst I kicked his shins to the uttermost. Considerable execution might be done this way; and it was looked on as fair when the parties were unequally matched; indeed, sympathy was apt to be with the little one.

No lower boy could reckon surely on one

moment of his time, even to do his exercises (which he might be flogged for not having done); no, not to get his own breakfast: and yet it was, in reality, by no means such an infliction as it reads; custom deprived it of all disgrace, and had brought it to work smoothly enough.

I do not defend it; I am not going to argue about it. The fact is undeniable, that many of the greatest legislators of the most truly free country the world has seen (and in her greatest day), were brought up, first as slaves, and then as slave-owners. Albeit, Wisdom hath uttered her voice in the streets, and cried aloud: 'Train up a child in the way he should go,' &c.

Shall we go to 'be construed' at my tutor's? We assemble, to the number of twenty or thirty (he takes only one form at a time), to hear him expound the lessons of the day, and answer his questions about them. You paid attention or not, as you pleased. He also corrected our verses and themes, left with him for the purpose. There was a custom, just then in its infancy, of taking 'private pupils,' who attended the tutor at extra hours, out of school, to do what was called 'private business' (and paid extra). Fortunately for me, my father, a rigid follower of the old school, would not hear of this, and I escaped.

Yet, one piece of 'private business' I did, for which I, and not he, paid. Our school Homer was in two large octavo volumes, the second of which was never used. I fitted up mine as a battery; got a solid block of wood, and nailed it into him; mounted firmly on that a row of brass cannon, the whole length of Homer; loaded them to the muzzle; laid a train of powder all along the touch-holes; put the poker into the fire; called out 'Stand clear!' and applied it to the train. Homer sailed bodily up to the ceiling, and, like the king of France and his twenty thousand men, down again. I felt as if I had won a victory, and was duly applauded. But my dame, who, on hearing the explosion, had made a forced march, and came up in time to smell powder, took upon her to write an extraordinary gazette for me, to which Dr Keate paid marked attention. Only the head-master flogged, in the upper school. (There was a lower school, but *de minimis non curat lex*.) When an assistant-master wanted a boy flogged, he told the first who came to hand to 'complain of him' to Dr Keate, specifying the offence. This was done. The boy was 'put in the bill' (or list), and warned by the preceptor to attend at the proper time. There was a number of boys employed, in rotation, to perform various petty duties of clerks and messengers, and called preceptors. I have sometimes thought the word 'preposterous' must have been derived from them. The system of monitors, now so common, is a similar abuse; it is merely a saving of the expense of more masters. The school authorities are the gainers, the scholars the losers.

Will you look at another specimen of the way in which the classic tongues were taught in the first classical school in England? 'Saying'—repeating by heart—is going to begin. You see two or three assistant-masters in their desks, and little clusters of boys round them with books. The lesson consists of some thirty or forty lines of Virgil or Horace. The senior boy steps up, and, following Hamlet's advice to the players, 'leaves his damnable faces, and begins.' After three or four, or at most half-a-dozen lines, the master says: 'Go!' and the next in seniority takes his place.

So on, till the appointed lesson has been gabbled over. Then, like Cock Robin and Jenny Wren, 'when they came unto the end, they thus began again.' Nobody thinks of learning the lesson. The senior is upon velvet; the second and third nearly so; the rest, as their turn approaches, calculate, in a rough way, which practice makes perfect enough, whereabouts their parts are likely to be, and set to work accordingly to cram on the spot some six or eight lines. If your turn is past before you come into school, you go to the bottom of the class; also, if you are not ready when it comes, you may do the same; but that is considered shabby, because you thereby upset your neighbour's calculations, and may get him flogged. So you are bound in honour to take your own risk. If the master is very irregular in his quantities, that may throw out the readiest reckoner. But this seldom happens; he has been an Eton boy himself, and respects time-honoured custom. When 'time' is called—half an hour or three-quarters, I am not sure which—the farce concludes. No lessons were longer than this, except for one unfortunate class of small boys, who had, once a week, I think, a spell of an hour and three-quarters, known as 'long morning.' They used to be more despised than pitied for their sufferings. I have helped to hoot them coming out.

Now for Dr Keate in person! We are, in theory, ready to construe and parse a given portion of some Latin or Greek author, and, having had it already explained at our tutors', should be so in practice. The majority, however, know no more about the matter than their sisters at home. (Let not modern young ladies take offence; I speak only of their charming grandmothers.) The doctor calls up any one at random. The operation lasts about five minutes, and other patients are successively put to the torture, until the college clock releases them. But more real torture is coming. All this time, preceptors have been flitting about, whispering in afflicted ears the magic word: 'Stay!' which means, 'Dilly, dilly, come and be birched.'

The school has broken up. The doctor descends from his throne, and stalks into the next room, followed by a party of the doomed, looking more or less uneasy, and by some indifferent, or even merry spectators, going to realise Rochefoucauld's ill-natured truth about the misfortunes of our dearest friends. So have I seen, on my way to the 'Grotta del Cane,' the dogs off duty capering nimbly by the side of the victims, and, if ever dogs laughed, laughing at them. So did I see the Guards marching out of London on their way to America, and doleful they looked. At last I said: 'Come! there's a hearty veteran, at anyrate, going to the wars smiling!' Just then, he turned his horse's head under the gateway of Kensington Palace, and I recognised the old Duke of Cambridge, who had, as a piece of courtesy, been just leading his regiment out of town, and was going home to breakfast.

But we are in 'library,' used as a school-room. So insufficient was the space for the numbers then at Eton, and so unwilling were the authorities to make any, even needful outlay, that I have sat here among whole rows, on the floor; the preceptors who had to pass through literally walking over us. Great fun it was to them, treading on our toes; no less to us, tripping them up. There are cases around the walls of 'library,' once, I am willing to believe, bookcases. In these degenerate days, I

never heard of their containing anything but rods. And yonder is the block—not the headman's—quite the reverse. If it were not so old and shabby, and if it had a bit of carpet, it would look like a pair of bed-steps. In front of it stand two collegers, to 'hold down'—not always a sinecure. If the doctor, as he is rather apt to do, gets at all over-excited, and delivers cuts analogous to wide-balls at cricket, their fingers sometimes suffer, and then he grins at them, as if it were a good joke. Another colleger unlocks a press, and takes out a few rods. Each consists of three long birchen twigs (no branches), bound with string for about a quarter of their length. You would never guess, from the look of a wolf, how he can bite; neither would you from the look of an Eton rod. They ought to be good for something. A charge of half-a-guinea for birch was made in every boy's bill, flogged or not. Say six hundred boys at ten shillings and sixpence—a pleasant little sum in 'Practice' for the doctor. But nothing, after all, in comparison of what John Bull pays in his year's bill for the punishment of his naughty boys.

Stop! Keate gives a vigorous hem! and proceeds to business. Holding up the bill, he calls out a name. A meek and frightened little individual answers to it.

'Complained of by your dame! Now, sir!'

'O please, sir, my first fault!'

(This was a privilege of impunity for the first slight—not great—offence.)

'Are you sure you haven't had your first fault?'

'O yes. Quite, sir!'

'Well, remember I keep a strict account. I shall know you again. You'd better not attempt any tricks with me; sure to suffer for it. Hem!'

(Here a very fierce and omniscient look.)

'O no, sir!' and away he slinks. When he's safe and well out of the doctor's hearing, you and I may hear a chuckling whisper: 'Third time of asking, by Jove!'

Another name, and another apparition.

'Not saying?'

'Yes, sir!'

'Kneel down.'

He kneels on the block. How may I, in sufficiently dainty terms, express what follows? He—he—lowers his sails. The two collegers shake hands with him. You hear four little swishes—just from the wrist only; just enough to raise a blush, and all is over. No one takes much interest in the matter; neither public nor performer, hardly even the patient, who gets under sail again, and moves off.

But see; Keate is knitting his shaggy brows, and calls the next name in an angry voice. A wiry-looking, big fellow appears, resolute, made up for something serious.

'Out with a gun and dogs, sir?'

No answer.

A vicious nod—understood and obeyed at once. The collegers take a wary hold. The doctor tucks up his gown, receives a rod, and lays on in real earnest. Five savage cuts—on a statue—and the executioner flings away the stump of a rod; gives a grunt—in compliance with which a fresh weapon is handed to him. Four more cuts use it up, and he leaves off. 'There, sir! remember that!'

The boy has stood it out gallantly (about as much as he could do, though), and gets away as quick as he can, probably to give vent to his feelings in private.

It was not always so borne. There lies before me a little paper, yellow with age, containing a sketch of life at Eton in Latin heroic verse. I copy two lines from a picture of flogging, drawn from real life:

*Nec fert tranquille penam—sed vociferatur,
Oh! Domine! Oh! Domine! Oh! Domine! Oh!
Domine! Oh! Domine! Eheu!!*

Was ever sound suited to sense more touchingly than in that final 'Eheu!' Ludicrous interludes would occur. One winter-tide I had gone in to attend the evening sacrifice; just as the first stroke was about to be struck, pop went a candle-cracker, and out went a candle (glass beads, with spirit in them, which, if stuck in a candle, presently burst with the heat). Doctor stops, and stares, raises his hand to go on, when pop! went another—pop! pop! followed rapidly, until we were left in utter darkness. There was a reprieve; but the bill of that evening had to be paid with compound interest.

Disgrace might attach to a flogging received for any offence against the Eton boy's code of propriety—to flogging for itself, never. So far from it, there was a sort of disgrace in never having tasted birch; you had not paid your footing; you were not free of the society—you were a 'spooney.' To avoid this reproach, I have known a boy get flogged on purpose; and I have known general approbation accompany a flogging, when judiciously administered, which I still think it was. A little boy had attempted suicide, for no known cause. It was supposed he thought there was something fine in it—possibly, he had swallowed some classical food the wrong way. However, he got a slight flogging for it. The boys took up the tone, and laughed at him for a little fool. All the false dignity which might have magnified absurdity into mischief was annihilated, and he became like other boys.

Good reader, a faithful sketch of our Sunday life will, I fear, shock you. It would never do to put on one's best clothes—that was ignominious: you were 'a Sunday buck.' Surely we could not complain of that weariness of the flesh, over-much study, but as surely did we suffer from over-much church. Two long collegiate services on Sundays and whole holidays, and one on every half-holiday, made us sick of the whole subject. I did take a Prayer-book in with me the first Sunday, but never ventured to defy public opinion to that extent a second time. There were boys nearly nineteen years old, but such a thing as taking the sacrament was unheard of. In chapel, the reader (or Conduct) misconducted himself by gabbling and skipping. The masters, perched in desks aloft, just kept themselves awake by watching boys whom they 'spited.' The boys themselves had not many resources wherewith to palliate dullness, and give time a shove.' Kneeling with your head down, as if in deep devotion, you could indeed, unobserved, carve your initials on the seat. Let any serious gentleman or pious lady go into Eton chapel, and see the results. Sundry little scraps of paper would pass secretly from hand to hand—notes (and the sacredness of that post was never violated) chiefly relating to the details of forthcoming fights. This was the mischief which Satan most delighted to put into our hands in chapel. One more recreation there was, but only a favoured few could partake of it—those whose

places in chapel were just below the choristers. By pinching a little singing-boy at the proper moment, you might bring out a squeak instead of the true note. In the evening, there was 'Terrace,' Windsor Terrace was open as a public promenade, and fifth form were allowed to go, only full-dress was required. Even we boys had to put on the handsome old costume of 'shorts and silks.' One Sunday I looked into St George's Chapel, where service was just over. I heard tap, tap, tap, and saw a man walking backwards, and striking the pavement with a rod. Following him close, planting his steps where the rod had struck, came blind old George III.—the last time I ever saw him.

BROUGHT TO LIGHT.

CHAPTER XVII.—MR BRACKENRIDGE'S NOCTURNAL ADVENTURE.

CLIFF COTTAGE, as the reader is already aware, formed one of two small semi-detached houses standing on the outskirts of Normanford. The remaining house was dignified with the title of Beech Lodge, and was the residence of Mr Brackenridge the chemist. Mr Brackenridge's little establishment was supervised by his sister Hannah, a light-complexioned, demure-faced young woman, with quiet, sly manners, thoroughly devoted to her brother. Hannah's little scraps of local gossip, which she used to retail to Brackenridge over his meals, were generally regarded by that worthy as so much empty jabber, and treated with a contempt which he was at no pains to conceal; but of late, Hannah had found a subject for gossip in the sayings and doings of their new neighbour, Mr John English, as retailed her daily, with sundry amplifications and exaggerations, by Mrs Jakeway, and as noted by her own sharp eyes and ears, which never seemed to fail in interesting her brother. It was a subject, too, on which Hannah herself was never weary of dilating; for, to reveal a little secret, she had fallen in love, in her quiet, self-possessed way, with the handsome young photographer, and every little circumstance connected with him had a special interest in her eyes.

Gurney Brackenridge was sitting over his tea one evening, a few days after John English's interview with Mrs Winch, as related in the last chapter; and Hannah was sitting opposite to him, replenishing his cup as often as it was empty, and keeping him supplied with fresh slices of toast. The chemist detested both his shop and his profession, as, indeed, he did anything that necessitated labour, either of head or hands; and he generally contrived to reach home between seven and eight o'clock, leaving later customers to the tender mercies of his assistant. He had lately been prescribing for Mrs Jakeway, whose health was somewhat out of repair.

'Let her go on with the mixture as before,' said Mr Brackenridge, in reply to a remark by his sister, that the old lady was worse rather than better to-day.

'I was in to see her about an hour ago,' said Hannah, 'and found her quite nervous at the idea of having to pass the night all alone in the house.'

'All alone! How's that?' said the chemist, looking up with sudden interest.

'Oh, she contrived to quarrel with her servant this morning, and sent her about her business at a moment's notice.'

'That's Mother Jake all over,' remarked the chemist; 'always quarrelling with her servants, and always getting fresh ones.—But where's Mr E.?'

'Oh, he went out on business this morning by the train, and left word that he should not be home till some time to-morrow.'

'Not home till to-morrow?' said the chemist quickly. Then, after a thoughtful pause, during which he sat gazing intently into the fire, he said: 'You will be going in to see Mother Jake again, I suppose, before the evening is over?'

'Yes,' said Hannah; 'I promised to go in at half-past nine, and give the old lady her medicine, and see the premises all safe for the night.'

'And quite right, too,' said her brother. 'But, before you go in, Hannah, I will give you a pill, which you must strictly enjoin her to take the last thing before getting into bed: and, Hannah, while you are there, just contrive to leave unfastened the shutters and window of the back sitting-room. Do you understand?'

The eyes of brother and sister met in a long, steady gaze. 'I understand,' said Hannah slowly. 'It shall be done.'

It never entered into the mind of Hannah Brackenridge to question any order of her brother. Implicit obedience to his slightest wish was the rule of her life. Had Gurney said to her: 'Hannah, oblige me by giving Mother Jake a quarter of an ounce of prussic acid,' I think it probable that she would have complied with his request without demur.

Gurney, meanwhile, sat brooding at home in company with his pipe. Mrs Winch's refusal to reveal to him the nature of the hidden bond that united her and Lady Spencelaugh in a common grudge against the young photographer, still preyed on an undigested wrong, upon his mind. 'Curse you both!' he muttered, shaking his fist at a china shepherd and shepherdess fixed in permanent loving embrace on the chimney-piece. 'I'll find out the secret for myself, without any help from you, Martha, my dear; and then won't I make her Ladyship pay through the nose to keep me quiet! Mother Jake says her lodger is always writing—that he keeps a journal—more fool he!—so there ought to be something among his papers, if I could only get at 'em, which would give me the clue to what I want to know. At all events, I'll try. Nothing risk, nothing have. I shall be a gentleman yet—I know I shall.'

Presently, he heard his sister letting herself in at the front-door. 'Well, have you made all square?' he said as she entered the room.

'I have done as you wished me to do,' replied Hannah.

'Has the old woman taken her pill?'

'Yes; I stayed with her while she took it.'

'Get me out the brandy bottle, and then you can go to bed as soon as you like.'

'Yes, Gurney,' said the obedient Hannah; and having set out the favourite black bottle, together with hot water and sugar, she kissed her brother on the forehead; and next minute he heard her going softly up stairs to bed.

The chemist sat smoking and drinking till the clock struck eleven. 'Old Mother Jake ought to be as sound as a top by this time, or else there's no virtue in my pill,' he muttered to himself; and putting down his pipe, he rose, and went quietly into the next room, taking the candle with

him. Having unlocked a drawer, he took out of it a pair of list slippers, a dark-lantern, a bunch of skeleton keys, a small life-preserver, a black overcoat, and a sort of skull-cap, made of the skin of some animal, with the hair outside, and having long flaps to come low down over the ears, and tie under the chin. After inducting himself into the overcoat, slippers, and cap—and so disguised, Hannah herself would hardly have known him at the first glance—he put the lantern, the keys, and the life-preserver into his pocket, blew out the candle, and let himself noiselessly out by a door which opened into the garden at the back of the house. The gardens of Beech Lodge and Cliff Cottage ran parallel one to the other, with only a low wall between them, than which the outer walls, shutting them in at sides and back, were considerably higher. The houses stood by themselves, with fields on three sides of them, which sloped gently up from the backs of the two gardens to where a thick plantation of young trees crowned the prospect.

The night was cold, calm, and overcast; and Hannah, sitting at her bedroom window shrouded in a thick shawl, could barely distinguish the black ominous shadow gliding stealthily over the sward below. At length it stopped for a moment, as if to reconnoitre, she still watching it with straining eyes; then, satisfied apparently that it was unseen, it leaped quickly over the dividing-wall, and half crouching, half running, passed swiftly out of sight, doubling back towards the rear of Cliff Cottage. Hannah had taken the precaution to open her window an inch or two at the bottom; and after listening intently for a short time, she heard a slight creaking noise, which she knew to be produced by the opening of Mrs Jakeway's window; followed by another and a fainter creak, as the intruder closed it behind him; and then Hannah knew that so far her brother had safely accomplished his purpose, whatever that purpose might be.

The heart of Gurney Brackenridge failed him a little when he found himself standing alone in the dark in the little room which he had entered in so felonious a manner; but a hearty pull at a spirit-flask, which he had not failed to bring with him, revived in some measure his fainting courage; and after the further stimulus of a double-distilled oath, muttered discreetly in his throat, he set about his perquisition with something of his old confidence. As a friend of Mrs Jakeway, he was well acquainted with the interior of Cliff Cottage, and knew the position of the furniture; so that a very slender ray of light from his lantern sufficed to guide him safely to the door of the room in which he then was. This room was on the ground-floor, and at the back of the house; but the object of which he was in search would be found, if anywhere, in the first-floor front, that being Mr John English's sitting-room. So up the stairs in his list slippers, Mr Brackenridge stole lightly, scarcely venturing to breathe till he found himself safe on the landing at the top. Three doors opened on to this landing—namely, that of Mrs Jakeway's bedroom, that of John English's bedroom, and that of the latter's sitting-room. Mr Brackenridge, applying his ear to the keyhole of Mrs Jakeway's door, could hear the old lady breathing stertorously as she lay asleep; and a grim smile stole over his face as he listened. Softly he turned the handle, and softly he opened the door—a little way, just far enough to

enable him to insert his arm, and draw the key from the inside. In another minute, Mrs Jakeway was safely locked up in her own room.

Mr Brackenridge's next proceeding was to enter John English's bedroom; but a brief glance round it, with the full light of his lantern turned on, was sufficient to satisfy his curiosity. Next into the sitting-room, where his first act was to draw the thick moreen curtains carefully across the windows, so that no ray of light could penetrate to the outside. Having closed the door, and feeling perfectly secure from intrusion, he lighted one of the two mould-candles on the table, and then refreshed himself with another drain from his flask. His scheme, so far, had succeeded admirably; but the most difficult part of it was yet to come. John English's brass-bound mahogany writing-desk lay on the table before him, but fast locked; and if none of the skeleton keys he had brought with him were capable of opening it, he would still be as far as ever from the object of his search. One after the other he tried them carefully and knowingly, in a style which seemed to indicate that it was not the first time he had fingered them; and one after the other they failed to touch the tongue of the lock, and were put aside as useless. The chemist's brow grew damp; his hands began to tremble; there was only one key left untried. He paused with it in his fingers for a moment, and glanced nervously around. The candle had guttered down for want of snuffing, and burned with a dull, unsteady flame; his own shadow, sprawling up the wall and half across the ceiling, struck him as hideous and unfamiliar. 'Serve me right for coming on such a fool's errand!' he muttered to himself. 'I wish I was well out of it!'

He inserted the last key in the lock as he spoke; it gave a little click, and his heart echoed the sound. He forgot his nervousness in a moment; and after opening the room-door, and listening intently for a couple of minutes, he went back lightly to the table, drew the candle nearer, and opened the desk. The first articles that engaged Brackenridge's attention were a number of letters, some of recent, and some of old date. A cursory glance satisfied him that the majority of them were merely business letters; but there were a few from John's sick friend at Nice, which gave promise of more interest, and the chemist deliberately set to work to read them through. He found several passages in them in which the names of Mrs Winch and those of the different members of the family at Belair, were mentioned; but for want of a clue to what John himself had written, most of the allusions were past his comprehension. There was only one passage that he thought it worth his while to copy, and even that referred to things which as yet were so many mysteries to him, but which he hoped would not be so for long. The passage in question ran as follows: 'What you tell me with regard to your recognition of the portrait of Mrs Winch's brother, and the note intended for Lady Spencelaugh which came so singularly under your notice, certainly seems to point to some hidden link of connection between yourself and these two women. The matter is undoubtedly worth further investigation, but I would not advise you to build too lofty a superstructure of hopes on so weak a foundation. From your description of Mrs Winch, I should imagine her to be a very dangerous sort of woman. Make yourself acquainted, if possible, with her antecedents and past history. If it is to

her interest to hide certain facts from you, it is equally to your interest to have those facts brought to light. I agree with you that, as it stands at present, the case is not one to call for legal assistance, but there is no knowing how soon it may be.

Brackenridge turned to the desk with heightened curiosity, and there, at the very bottom, under a further litter of business documents, he found a thin morocco-bound volume, labelled 'Diary,' on which he pounced with avidity. A very brief inspection of it was sufficient to enable him to find the date of John English's arrival at Normanford; and commencing at that point, he read forward carefully and steadily to the end. It was disappointing to find that end only brought him to a period some three weeks anterior to the date of his reading, after which time not a line had been written. Then, again, the Diary was by no means so fully written as he had expected to find it; to the chemist's thinking, it did not enter sufficiently into detail; its narration of interesting facts was by far too bald and commonplace. The only philosophy, however, was to make the best of it as it was; and with several growls of dissatisfaction, Brackenridge turned over one page after another, till he had gone completely through it. He read the account of John's recognition of the portrait; he read a copy of the note intended for Lady Spencelaugh, as closely as John could recollect the words (and that puzzled him more than anything); he read the account of John's reception at Belair; and, finally, he read how a certain local rhyme, relating to the bells of St Seven, had floated strangely into John's memory in the middle of the night. The interviews with Mr Edwin and Mrs Winch were after-events not set down in the Diary.

Brackenridge had gained something by his nefarious scheme, but certainly not so much as he had hoped for. He had gathered the vague outline of some dark conspiracy, in the meshes of which John English was blindly struggling; but beyond that, he had learned nothing. Baffled and enraged, he sat for some minutes brooding silently with the Diary before him. Suddenly, he heard the faint click of the garden wicket, and the crunching of gravel, as some one came up the little pathway towards the front-door. He started at the sound like the guilty scoundrel he was. In another moment he had put back the Diary and letters, and had closed the desk; but he had no recollection of the process afterwards. Then he blew out the candles, and stepping lightly, made for the door, hoping to get back undetected by the way he had come. But he was too late already; the intruder, who, indeed, could be none other than John English come back by the last train, had admitted himself by means of a latch-key, and was now rubbing his feet on the mat. Big, brawny fellow though Gurney Brackenridge was, he shunned the risk of an encounter in the dark with the sinewy young photographer, and shewed his wisdom thereby. With the instinct of despair, he turned back into the room, and winding his way noiselessly between the chairs and tables, made for one of the windows, and drawing the thick curtains on one side, slipped behind them, and breathed once more.

Scarcely was this accomplished, when John English entered the room. Mrs Jakeway, not expecting him home till morning, had omitted to

hall, and he was consequently still in the dark; but, after a few failures, he contrived to get a light from his fuses.

'Phew! how close and fusty the room smells!' he exclaimed aloud. 'A little fresh air would be an improvement;' and stalking to the window where Brackenridge was not, he drew aside the curtain, and flung up the sash, and let the cool night-air into the little room. 'One last pipe, and then to bed,' said John still aloud; and presently a waft of Cavendish penetrated to where the chemist lay perdue, revolving black schemes of revenge against the man who had been the unconscious means of placing him in so dangerous a predicament. How slowly the lagging minutes seemed to wear themselves away till John English, having finished his pipe, shut down the window, and after a last glance round, took the light with him, and went to bed! Brackenridge now breathed more freely, and allowed his cramped limbs a slight change of posture; but he knew that there was still a long dreary watch to be undergone before he might venture to leave his hiding-place, and try to steal away on the chance of John being soundly asleep. He heard one quarter after another chimed by the clock of the little church on the hill; but not till five of them had come and gone did he venture to emerge from his hiding-place. His lantern had burned itself out by this time, and he durst not venture to strike a match. He made his way across the room in the direction of the door, as a child goes up stairs, a step at a time, slowly. He had passed the table, and had coasted safely round the easy-chair, which, with its great sprawling legs, formed a dangerous obstacle in the dark, and was groping with outstretched hands for the expected door, when he suddenly stumbled over John's travelling-case, which lay directly in his path, and in trying to save himself, he unconsciously clutched a frail mahogany whatnot, on which reposed several of Mrs Jakeway's most cherished ornaments, and so came headlong to the floor with a terrible crash. With an instinct that would have done credit to a practised burglar, he lay perfectly still. Through the thin dividing-wall, he heard the creak of the bedstead, as John sprang suddenly up; and then a doubting 'Who's there?' as though no answer were expected. None was given; and after a moment or two of intense silence, he heard John growl out something about 'those confounded cats,' and then turn over, to catch up the broken end of his sleep.

Brackenridge lay for fully half an hour among the fragments of Mrs Jakeway's china, without stirring a limb. At the end of that time, he gathered himself up slowly and cautiously, without making as much noise as would have frightened a mouse. Then the door was noiselessly opened, and he found himself on the mat outside, and everything quiet so far. There was the landing to cross next, and then the stairs to descend, after which he would feel himself in comparative safety. But there was a loose plank in the flooring near the top of the stairs, and of course (as he afterwards said) it was like his 'cursed luck' that he should happen to put his foot on it, which he did. John English slept as lightly as a Red Indian, and the familiar sound of the loose plank awoke him in an instant—awoke him to the consciousness that there must be some one in the house who had no

followed instantly on thought. Brackenridge heard John's leap out of bed, and turning on the instant, he sprang at the bedroom door, and turned the key in the lock, having noticed previously that it was on the outside; then down the stairs, and through the lower room, and out of the French window into the garden at a headlong pace.

Strong man though John English was, the stout old door resisted all his efforts to open it, a fact which he was not long in discovering; so he turned at once to the window, which looked out at the back of the house, and flung up the lower sash—turned in time to see a dark figure speeding along the garden, evidently making for the wall, and so over that into the fields beyond. John was never without firearms—he had a hunter's love for them—and in a case on his dressing-table was a brace of pistols, from one of which the charge had not been drawn, and the little drawer in his looking-glass was full of caps. It was the work of a moment to find his pistol in the dark, and put a fresh cap on the nipple. The clouds had cleared away, and the stars were shining brightly; and just as the man had succeeded in mounting the wall, John took steady aim, and fired. The man gave a loud cry, and flinging up his arms, dropped to the ground like a piece of lead on the outer side of the wall.

'My God! perhaps I have killed him,' exclaimed John to himself with a shudder, for he had fired in the heat of his passion, without a thought for after-consequences; and he began to hurry on a few articles of dress, preparatory to going down to look after the burglar. But scarcely had two minutes elapsed, when his quick eyes caught sight of a figure hurrying up the sloping ground behind the garden, and evidently making for the shelter of the plantation at the top of the hill. John paused in his dressing, and watched the figure till it was lost to view among the young trees.

'I'm glad I didn't kill him,' murmured John to himself. 'Let the beggar go. He's not worth troubling about further; but I think he has got something that will make him remember his visit to Cliff Cottage.'

An hour later, the watchful Hannah, who had never been to bed, admitted her brother quietly at the front-door; and, like a sensible young woman, dressed his wound, and sympathised with him, without asking him any impertinent questions as to how he had come by his mishap.

CHAPTER XVIII.—KATAFANGO THE MAGICIAN.

Mr Brackenridge's wound, without being a dangerous one, was sufficiently severe to confine him to the house for several days. It was given out in Normanford that he had fallen and sprained his left shoulder, and as he had sufficient knowledge of surgery to enable him to dispense with the services of a doctor in the case, the secret of his night's adventure was confined to himself and his sister. Hannah tended him faithfully, and asked no questions; being, indeed, well aware, from previous experience, that her brother always 'cut up rough,' as he himself termed it, when cross-examined against his will. Mr Brackenridge's temper, which was not angelic at the best of times, was by no means improved by confinement to his own room; but his fits of capricious irritability were interspersed with long hours of silent, gloomy

brooding, during which—so Hannah's feminine instinct told her—he was busy hatching some black scheme of revenge against his neighbour next door, a scheme which that taciturn and quietly-watchful young person determined to do her utmost to frustrate. She loved the handsome young photographer, this thin pale-faced girl, who was so shy and retiring, and yet who never blushed; loved him with a love which could not exactly be called hopeless, because no element of hope had ever entered into the composition of it. Hannah Brackenridge had too much cold good sense to dream, even in her wildest moments, that John English would ever seek to woo and win such a one as herself. She loved him prepositionally—with an *if*. If she had been very handsome, and very rich, and very accomplished, she would have striven to lure this wild hawk to her side, and put her jesses round him, and hold him as her own for ever. But being none of these things, being only a poor pale-faced girl, with scarcely a word to say for herself in the presence of strangers, she was fain to cherish her little dream of love as a flower on which no sun would ever shine. Mrs Jakeway and she were very friendly, and a day seldom passed without the chemist's sister paying one or more visits to Cliff Cottage; and thus it was that she made the acquaintance of John, who had always a smile and a pleasant word for the shy, quiet girl, who was so different in every way from her blustering, loud-voiced brother.

Mr Brackenridge was quite as glad to get about again, and look after the interests of his business, as his sister was to be relieved from further attendance on him as an invalid. There was no inhabitant of Normanford who talked, and surmised, and wondered more about the attempted burglary at Cliff Cottage, than the gossip-loving chemist, who had a long talk respecting it with the head-constable of the little town on the very day of his recovery; and who examined with much interest the bunch of skeleton keys which had been picked up in Mr English's room, and which, it was hoped, would ultimately lead to the discovery of the offender. The affair had been a source of considerable excitement in so small a place, and when Mr Brackenridge declared in open conclave in the smoke-room of the *Hand and Dagger*, that he had heard a pistol-shot on the night in question, but had been too lazy to get out of bed and inquire into the cause of it, he became quite an authority in the matter, and was taken by the button on the following morning, and treated to two 'sherries' and three 'bitters' by certain friends who had not been so fortunate as to hear his narrative of the previous evening. It was a fortunate thing, everybody declared, that Mr English was not in the habit of keeping money or other valuables in his writing-desk; and that beyond having his desk broken open, and his letters and papers tossed about, no harm had been done. The head-constable gave it as his opinion, to a small circle of private friends, that the whole affair bore the mark of a practised London hand, and that before the winter was over they would probably hear of other attempts, no great distance away. A shudder ran through Normanford at these tidings, the inhabitants of which became all at once very particular in looking after the fastenings of their doors and windows, those people being, as a rule, the most careful in that respect who had the least to lose. Mrs Jakeway had a famous time of it, you may be

sure. She had no less than eighteen invitations to tea at different houses in the course of the four weeks following the attack; and a little china shepherdess, which had been broken by the fall of the whatnot, was looked upon with much interest wherever she went. But days and weeks passed away without affording any clue to the perpetrator of the offence, and the topic was gradually worn threadbare by much discussion, and fell silently into the background, yielding place to the more immediate interests of the day.

As before stated, Normanford was six miles from any railway; but a rude two-horse omnibus, built for travelling over heavy country roads, ran twice a day to Duke's Hill Station, eight miles away, to meet the morning and evening mail trains. John English having certain business to transact at the other end of the county, started one bright frosty morning by the nine o'clock bus from Normanford. About a mile out of the town, they stopped to take up a passenger, who mounted to the roof, and took the vacant seat next John, and proved to be none other than Mr Brackenridge the chemist, also on his way to the station at Duke's Hill. The two men greeted each other with a hearty good-morning: to any one not absolutely his enemy, John English would have done no less. He disliked Brackenridge, and would have gone half a mile out of his way any day to avoid his company, and yet he had not been able altogether to shirk the intimacy which the other was so evidently desirous of forcing upon him; for it not infrequently happened that in going to or returning from the town to his lodgings, he would be overtaken by Brackenridge, who always accommodated his pace to that of John for the remainder of the way; and unless a man is an absolute bear, he must in such a case speak when he is spoken to, even though his replies be confined to monosyllables. Then, again, John had been indebted to the chemist for finding him a trustworthy man to carry his apparatus when photographing about the country. There was a further bond of union between them—the bond which unites two men who are smokers, and capable of appreciating a good cigar. On two occasions, the chemist had sent Hannah into Cliff Cottage, with his compliments, and would Mr English oblige him by accepting a dozen weeds of a choice brand? and when your next-door neighbour does that, what can you do but accept the favour with thanks? So, on the present occasion, John and Brackenridge, sitting side by side on the top of the bus, entered into conversation readily and at once.

Normanford lies in a valley, as does also, despite its name, the station at Duke's Hill. The hill itself is about a mile away to the north, and must be crossed by a road, which winds right over its summit, before the railway can be reached. From the highest point of this road, there is one of the finest views in all Monksore; and here the bus always halts for three minutes, for the double purpose of breathing the horses, and giving the passengers time to admire the extensive prospect. From one particular spot, a glimpse of the sea can be obtained over a break in the ridge of intervening downs, and this view was pointed out by Brackenridge to John. The sky was so unclouded this morning, and the atmosphere so clear and free from haze, that the distant line where sky and sea met was barely distinguishable.

'What is the name of that little island out there to the east?' said John. 'I have seen it several times in my rambles along the shore, but have never learned its name.'

'That is the isle of Inchmallow,' said the chemist. 'It lies three miles from the mainland. You have never visited it, I suppose?'

'Certainly not,' said John. 'Why should I?'

'For no reason that I know of, except that it can boast some interesting ruins, and you have a taste, that way, I understand.'

'What are the ruins you speak of?'

'Those of the Hermitage of St Bertram.'

'And, pray, who was St Bertram?'

'Oh, one of those old Romish fellows who lived a tremendous while ago. He pretended that he saw visions; and he went and lived out on the island all by himself, a sort of half-and-half Crusoe, but without a Man Friday to bear him company.'

'But how did he obtain his food so far from the mainland?'

'Oh, by cultivating a patch of ground, I suppose; and by the offerings of pious folk who went out to him in boats. He lived in a hole hollowed out of the rock; and when he died, they made a saint of him, and built what they called a Hermitage over his cave, where a certain number of monks from the old abbey just beyond Eastingham used to go and reside turn and turn about. But the Hermitage is in ruins, and has been for centuries; only people say that the arch of the great window, and one or two other bits that are left, are as fine specimens of that sort of thing as you will find in a day's ramble; but, for my own part, I know nothing of architecture.'

'I must visit the little island,' said John, 'and see whether the ruins are worth sketching. What means of access are there to it?'

'Only name the day you would like to go,' said the chemist warmly, 'and there shall be as neat a little boat at your service as you will find within a dozen miles, together with a man to pull you there and back again.'

John, who had no desire to lay himself under further obligations to the chemist, would fain have declined the offer thus pressed upon him; but Brackenridge seemed so earnest in the matter, that after doing his best to back out of it, he was obliged to yield a reluctant consent.

'If convenient, you had better name an early day for your visit,' said Brackenridge. 'This fine weather may not last much longer.'

'To-day is Tuesday,' said John. 'I shall be disengaged on Friday, if that day will suit you, and the weather prove favourable.'

'Friday let it be,' said the chemist, as he made a note in his pocket-book. 'A man and boat shall be waiting for you at 10.30 A.M. at Finger Bay—rather an out-of-the-way place, by the by.—Oh, you know it, do you? Then that's all right.—And now, here we are at the station.'

When Mr Brackenridge reached home that evening, his first words to his sister were: 'Send down to the *Hawl and Dagger*, and tell Jerry Winch I want to see him.'

'Jerry is here, waiting for you,' said Hannah.

'What brings him here, I wonder? But send him in, and leave us together.'

Brackenridge and Jerry were very good friends; indeed, it was through a well-simulated liking for the son that the chemist had won his first step in

the affections of the mother. Jerry looked up to Brackenridge as to a man of unlimited knowledge, who wielded the power of life and death in the shape of terrible drugs; and who could, if he were so minded, cause any one who offended him to wither away and die in some mysterious manner.

He came slouching in, in his usual shamefaced way, twirling his hat between his fingers, and seated himself on the extreme edge of a chair, in obedience to the chemist's bidding. Brackenridge had studied Jerry's peculiarities, and waited till the lad had swallowed a cup of tea, and devoured a couple of muffins, before asking him a single question.

'Well, Jerry, my man, and what has brought you up here?' he said at last, as the lad proceeded to rub his sleeve across his mouth.

'Pipanta is ill, and Jerry wants a charm to make her better.'

'What is the matter with her ladyship?' asked the chemist.

'She refuses to eat; she refuses to dance when her lord plays sweet music; she is no longer glad, but very, very melancholy.'

The chemist turned from the table, and sat staring into the fire for a full quarter of an hour, without speaking, Jerry meanwhile sitting patiently twirling his hat, but with a furtive eye on the plate of muffins, momentarily growing colder on the table.

'Jerry,' said the chemist, turning round at last, and speaking in a solemn voice, 'Pipanta is not ill—she is enchanted!'

A low cry escaped from Jerry; he half started up in his chair, and then sat down again, trembling violently.

'Yes, enchanted, cursed by a magic spell,' repeated Brackenridge. 'Katafango, the great magician, has cast an evil eye upon her. Pipanta will never recover, unless'—The chemist paused, and looked earnestly at his half-witted companion; but Jerry had not sufficient sense to fill up the hiatus with the question which would have come naturally to the lips of any one else, and Brackenridge waited in vain. 'Unless,' he resumed slowly and impressively—'unless Katafango, the great magician, were to die. In that case, Pipanta would certainly recover.'

'Oh, tell me,' cried Jerry, starting up, 'where does this great magician live? Jerry will go to him, and will pray him on his knees to spare the life of his lovely Pipanta.'

The chemist laughed a loud, scornful laugh. 'You don't know what you would ask, my poor lad,' he said. 'Katafango is king of the Toads; and when Pipanta dies, he will take her soul, and put it into the body of a poisonous toad, and it will remain a toad for ever. And then Mogaddo will follow the same fate: the spell is on them both.'

The lad started up, his mobile lips quivering with white passion, and his blue eyes all aflame. He sidled up behind Brackenridge's chair, and laying a long thin finger on the chemist's arm, said in a sort of shrill whisper: 'Jerry will kill him!'

'Hush! my poor boy; you must not talk in that wild way,' said Brackenridge soothingly. 'Do you know who he is—this terrible magician? You see him nearly every day.'

'No! Who?' said Jerry in an eager whisper.

'He who lives next door, who makes the sun

take pictures for him—the tall man with the long black beard.' Jerry fell back a foot or two in dismay. 'What stranger but he,' continued Brackenridge, 'ever played with Pipanta as he played with her the first time he saw her? It was then he cast his spell over her. Lovely Pipanta must die.'

'Pipanta shall not die!' exclaimed Jerry, all aglow with nervous excitement. 'Give Jerry some of that nice white powder out of the jar on the top shelf in the shop, and Jerry will mix it with what the magician eats, and he shall die. Hoo, hoo, hoo!'

'Nay, nay, Jerry, my man; that would never do,' said the chemist. 'We cannot prevent Pipanta dying, unless'—And again he paused, and looked earnestly at Jerry. 'Listen to me,' he resumed. 'He of whom we have been speaking is going on Friday to the island of Inchmallow, and I want you, Jerry, to row him across.'

'Want Jerry to do it? No, no, no; Jerry dare not!'

'Tush, man! he has no power to harm you, or I would not ask you to go with him. But to make everything quite sure, I will give you a charm which I have up stairs, locked up in an iron chest, with which you may set at defiance all the enchanters and witches in the world.—And now, come nearer; I want to talk to you seriously. You must be at Finger Bay at half-past ten on Friday morning. He will come there, and you will row him across to the island.—And now attend carefully to what I am about to say; and with that, the chemist's voice sank to a whisper. Jerry, sitting motionless by his side, drank in his words eagerly.

Half an hour later, Brackenridge himself let Jerry out by the front-door, and then stood listening to the lad's retreating footsteps, as he went swiftly down the hill. 'A devilish thing to do,' muttered the chemist to himself; 'but I'm not going to funk it now.' And as he turned to go indoors, he heard with a shudder the faint sound of Jerry's weird laughter far down the road.

THE SOURCE OF LABOUR.

SCIENCE has taught us that the processes going on around us are but changes, not annihilations and creations. With the eye of knowledge, we see the candle slowly turning into invisible gases, nor doubt for an instant that the matter of which the candle was composed is still existing, ready to reappear in other forms. But this fact is true not only of matter itself, but also of all the influences that work on matter. We wind up the spring of a clock, and, for a whole week, the labour thus stored up is slowly expended in keeping the clock going. Or, again, we spend five minutes of hard labour in raising the hammer of a pile-driver, which, in its fall, exerts all that accumulated labour in a single instant. In these instances, we easily see that we store up labour. Now, if we put a dozen sovereigns in a purse, and none of them be lost, we can take a dozen sovereigns out again. So in labour, if no labour be lost, as science asserts—for the inertia of matter, its very deadness, so to speak, which renders it incapable of spontaneously

producing work, also prevents its destroying work when involved in it—we should be able to obtain back without deduction all our invested labour when we please.

Imagine a mountain stream turning an over-shot wheel. It thus falls from a higher to a lower level. A certain amount of labour would be required to raise the water from the lower level to the higher; just this amount of labour the water gives out in its fall, and invests, as it were, in the wheel. If, however, when arrived at the lower level, the water were to demand of the wheel to be pumped up again, the slightest trial would shew that it would ask more than it could obtain, though not more than it had given. The wheel, if questioned as to the cause of its inability, must reply as others have done, that it has shut up part of the labour in investments which it cannot realise. The reason, as commonly stated, is, that friction has destroyed part of the labour. The labour is not, however, destroyed. Science has shewn that heat and labour are connected; labour may be turned into heat, and heat into labour. The labour absorbed by friction, is but turned into heat. If, however, we try to extract labour from the heat thus diffused through the different parts of the water-wheel, and make it available, we find ourselves quite at a loss. The heat gradually diffuses itself through surrounding bodies, and, so far as we are concerned, the labour is wasted, though it still exist, like Cleopatra's pearl dissolved in the cup of vinegar.

If no labour is lost, so neither is any created. The labour we exert is but the expenditure of labour stored up in our frames, just as the labour invested in the wound-up spring keeps the clock going. Whence, then, does all this labour originally come? We see the waste—how is compensation made? The answer is simple and easy to give. All the labour done under the sun is really done by it. The light and heat which the sun supplies are turned into labour by the organisations which exist upon the earth. These organisations may be roughly divided into two classes—the collectors and the expenders of the sun's labour. The first merely collect the sun's labour, so as to make it available for the other class; while, just as the steam-engine is the medium by which the steam gives motion, so this second class is the medium by which the sun's heat is turned into actual labour.

Still, the sun does not work only through organised labour: his mere mechanical influence is very great. With the moon—the only second post he deigns to fill—he produces the tides by his attraction on the sea. But for the friction of the earth and sea, the tides, once set in motion, would rise and fall without any further effort; but the work done in overcoming the friction is, though due to the sun and moon, not extracted from them, but by them from the earth. For it would take a vast effort to cause the earth to cease rotating. All this effort is, as it were, stored up in the revolving earth. As the tidal waters, then, rub along the bed

of the sea, or the waters on which they rest and the adjacent coasts, this friction tends to make the earth move faster or slower, according to the direction in which the tidal flow is. The general effect is, however, that the friction of the tides makes the earth revolve more slowly; in other words, that part of the energy of rotation of the earth, so to speak, is consumed in rubbing against the tidal waters. All the work, therefore, that the tides do in undermining our cliffs and washing away our beaches, is extracted by the sun and moon from the work stored up in the rotation of the earth. The diminution of rotation, indeed, is so small as scarcely to be perceived by the most refined observation, but the reality of it is now generally recognised; and this process, too, will apparently go on till the earth ceases to rotate on its axis, and presents one face constantly to the sun.

Thus we see that the destruction of the land by the sea, so interesting in a geological point of view, is partly due to the sun's action. Not only is he the source of the light and heat we enjoy, but he aids in forming the vast sedimentary beds that form so large a part of the crust of the earth, mixing the ingredients of our fields, and moulding our globe.

By heating the air, the sun produces winds, and some of the labour thus expended is made use of by man in turning his wind-mills, and carrying his wares across the sea. But there is another expenditure of the sun's heat more immediately useful to man. By evaporating the sea and other bodies of water, he leads the air with moisture, which, when in contact with cold mountain-peaks or cold masses of air, loses its heat, and, being condensed, falls as rain or snow. Thus the rivers are replenished, which for a long time supplied the greater part of the labour employed in manufactures, though the invention of the steam-engine is fast reducing relatively the value of this supply of labour.

But vast as the sun's power thus exerted is, and useful as it is to man, it is surpassed in importance by his labour exerted through organised beings. The above-named agents have one defect: on the whole, they are incapable of being stored up to any great degree; we must employ them as nature gives them to us. Organised existence, however, possesses the power of storing up labour to a very high degree. The means it adopts are not mechanical, but chemical. The formation of chemical compounds is attended with the giving out of heat, which, as we have said before, is equivalent to labour, and if of sufficient intensity, can by us be made available as labour, as in the steam-engine. Now we take iron ore, consisting of iron in combination with other substances. By means of great heat, the iron is set free in the smelting-furnace. The iron, then, in its change of form has, as it were, taken in all this heat. If, now, we take this iron, and keeping it from the influence of the air, reduce it to a very fine powder, and then suddenly expose it to the air, by the force of natural affinity it will absorb the oxygen of the air, and in so doing give out the heat before required to set it free from the oxygen; and if the iron be in small enough portions, so that the process is sufficiently rapid, we may see the iron grow red hot with the heat thus disengaged.

Now plants and trees, by the aid of the solar light and heat, remove various substances, carbon especially, from what seem to be their more

natural combinations, and in other combinations store them up in their structures. Take a young oak-tree with its first tender leaves; if deprived of the sun's light and heat, its growth would be stayed, and its life die out. But with the aid of the sun's rays, it absorbs carbon from the gases in the air, each particle of carbon absorbed being absorbed by the power of the sun, through the agency of the plant; and with each particle of carbon stored up, is also, as it were, stored up the labour of the sun by which that particle was set free from its former fetters. The sap of the plant thus enriched, returns in its course, and by some mysterious process is curdled into cells and hardened into wood. But the work by which all this was accomplished lies hid in the wood, and not only is it there, but it is there in a greatly condensed state. To form a little ring of wood round the tree, not an eighth of an inch across it, took the sunshine of a long summer, falling on the myriad leaves of the oak.

Lemuel Gulliver, at Laputa, was astonished by seeing a philosopher aiming at extracting sunbeams from cucumbers. Had he but rightly considered the thing, he would have wondered at any one's troubling to make a science of it. The thing has always been done. From Adam and Eve in the garden of Eden eating sweet fruits, through the onion-eating builders of the pyramids, down to the flesh-eating myriads of our land, this process has always been going on. The active life of reasoning man, and his limitless powers of invention, need for their full development a vast supply of labour. By means of the vegetable kingdom, the sun's work is stored up in a number of organic substances. Man takes these into his system, and in the vessels and fibres of his body, they resume their original combinations, and the labour of the sun is given out as muscular action and animal heat. To allow a larger supply of labour for man's intellect to work with, Providence created the herbivorous races. Some of these further condense the work of the sun involved in plants, by taking these plants into their systems, and storing up the work in them in their flesh and fat, which, after some preparation, are fit to be received into the frame of man, there, as the simpler vegetable substances, to supply heat and labour. Others, extracting work from the vegetable kingdom, just as man does, and mostly from parts of the vegetable kingdom that are not suited to the organs of man, are valuable to man as sources of labour, since they have no power to invent modes of employing this labour to their own advantage. Man might have been gifted with a vaster frame, and so with greater power of labour in himself, but such a plan had been destitute of elasticity, and while the savage would have basked in the sun in a more extended idleness, the civilised man had still lacked means to execute his plans. So that Good Providence which formed man, devised a further means for supplying his wants. Instead of placing him at once on a new-formed planet, it first let the sun spend its labour for countless ages upon our world. Age by age, much of this labour was stored up in vast vegetable growths. Accumulated in the abysses of the sea, or sunk to a great depth by the collapse of supporting strata, the formations of a later age pressed and compacted this mass of organic matter. The beds thus formed were purified by water, and even by heat, and at last raised to within the reach of man by subterranean

movements. From this reservoir of labour, man now draws rapidly, driving away the frost of to-day with the sunshine of a million years ago, and thrashing this year's harvest with the power that came to our earth before corn grew upon it.

Such are the processes by which the sun's power is collected and stored up by the vegetable kingdom in a form sufficiently condensed to be available for working the machinery of the bodies of men and beasts, and also to assist man in vaster expenditures of labour. It is most interesting to trace such processes, and not only interesting, but also instructive, for it shews us in what direction we are to look for our sources of labour, and will at once expose many common delusions. One hears, perhaps, that something will be found to supplant steam. Galvanism may be named; yet galvanism is generated by certain decompositions—of metal, for instance—and this metal had first to be prepared by the agency of coal, and in its decomposition can give out no more labour than the coal before invested in it. It is as if one should buy a steam-engine to pump up water to keep his mill-wheel going. The source of all labour is the sun. We cannot immediately make much use of his rays for the purposes of work; they are not intense enough; they must be condensed. The vegetable world alone at present seems capable of doing this; and its past results of coal, peat, petroleum, &c. and present results of wood and food, are ultimately all we have to look to.

To say that man will ever be dependent upon the vegetable world for all his work, may be considered bold, but there is certainly great reason to believe it. The sun's labour being supplied in such a diluted form, each small quantity continually supplied must be packed in a very small space. Now, man can only subject matter to influences in the mass. The little particle of carbon that the plant frees each instant is beyond his ken. The machinery he could make would not be fine enough: it would be like trying to tie an artery with the biggest cable on board the *Great Eastern*. Organised existence possesses machinery fine enough to effect these small results, and to avail itself of these little instalments of labour. At present, this machinery is beyond our comprehension, and possibly will ever remain so. Nature prefers that her children should keep out of the kitchen, and not pry into her pots and pans, but eat in thankfulness the meal she provides.

Some interesting results follow from what has been stated above. One is, that we are consuming not only our present allowance of the sun's labour, but also a great deal more, unless the formation of coal in our age equals its consumption, which is not probable. Mother Earth will certainly, so far as we can see, some day be bankrupt. Such a consummation is pointed to, however, in other quarters. The sun's heat, unless miraculously replenished, must gradually be dissipated through space. There are reasons for thinking that the planets must ultimately fall into the sun. These things, however, possess to us no practical physical interest. Such countless ages must elapse ere they affect man's material condition upon earth, that we hardly can gravely consider them as impending. The chief interest they excite is moral. Like the man's hand that appeared to the revelling king, they write 'Mene, Mene, Tekel, Upharsin' (Weighed, measured, limited, doomed) on our material world, and dimly point to some power

that stands, as it were, hidden from our view behind the screen of matter, 'that shall make all things new.'

A POPULAR DEMONSTRATION.

BY OUR HOME CORRESPONDENT.

MONDAY, July 23d, was an eventful day; if not, as some contend, for the cause of liberty throughout the civilised world, at all events for Bayswater, W. Contrary to all custom, the omnibuses starting thence for the south-east in the evening were fully loaded—not crowded, for there were few inside; but their roofs were lined with our bravest and our best (or at least our best-dressed), bound for the Marble Arch, Hyde Park, reputed to be the seat of Civil War. We have no amusements in Bayswater, beside Scientific Lectures, Poetic 'Readings'—everybody seems to try his virgin voice (if I may use the expression) at our local institution, before advertising himself as a public reader to the metropolis at large—and more rarely a genteel Giant or musical Dwarf; while the theatres, except the Marylebone, which is not to be thought of by our gilt youth, are at an enormous distance. Anything, therefore, in the way of a spectacle, such as a fire or a fight, in our immediate vicinity, is looked upon as a godsend, and patronised accordingly by those gentlemen who have nothing to do with themselves in the evening, and whose digestions permit of their going out after dinner. It is unnecessary to state that your Home Correspondent, for his part, was actuated by no such idle impulse, when he mounted the knifeboard of the *Citizen*, bent upon a duty which by this time may surely almost be entitled National. However, in the very natural and appropriate phrase, used by novelists of the last generation but one, 'A truce to egotism.' (How I like all the charming expressions of those ancient fictionists: 'But we anticipate,' 'Pardon the digression,' and 'Now let us return for awhile to Sebastian and Leonora, whom we left in the subterranean chamber.') My fellow-passengers, as I have hinted, were a very different appearance from those prim, neatly-attired gentlemen who ride into the City every morning to read their newspapers in the privacy of their own office, undisturbed by domestic interruption. They were indeed the same individuals, but how changed! Attired in evening-dress, their shirt-studs flamed upon their embroidered fronts, their waistcoats bore in their embroidery 'the evidence of a female hand' (if it was not done by the machine), and their polished leather boots, shone upon by the setting sun, fringed the omnibus with flame. Instead of sucking the knobs of their umbrellas, they had cigars in their mouths; and instead of being contemptuously silent, they were all speaking at once. Your Correspondent looked and listened.

1st *Citizen*. Mark my words [I did]; there'll be a dooce of a row!

2d *Citizen*. Glad of it. Capital fun.

3d *Citizen*. By Jove! Think of the Horse Guards being called out; that's what I call a Run Start.

4th *Citizen* (not at all connected with the preceding speakers, serious, of riper years, and with an alpaca umbrella). Well, it's what I call an Infernal Shame, sir. Why don't they let 'em meet in 'Idle Park? That's what I want to know. Why, it's because the Tory ministry is afraid of the people; that's why.

2d *Citizen* (hilariously). Then you *don't* want to know.

Immense applause from the majority of Citizens, and great stamping of feet.

Conductor of '*Citizen*' (with preternatural gravity and winking). I say, gents, here's a widdler lady inside, who is very high frightened to fits. She says the roof is a-givin' way.

Redoubled enthusiasm, in which the polished leather boots take a still more prominent part. Amid the tumult, the 4th *Citizen* is heard to murmur: 'Counter-jumpers—set of scoundrels.'

5th *Citizen* (sympathiser with No. 4). They would be very well in the tread-mill; that is the proper place for fellows who can only use their legs.

1st *Citizen* (defiantly). I daresay *your friends* will find the use of their legs as soon as they see the Police.

4th *Citizen*. Oh, you're one of the Hairystocracy, are you? Well, I will say *this* for you: you don't look like it.

2d *Citizen* (convulsed with merriment). That was a good one.

Nobody speaks; such a silence ensues—broken only by the '*Bank! Bank!*' of the cad—as is only too likely to precede a storm. The Home Correspondent assumes an attitude of the strictest neutrality, and congratulates himself that he is next the steps. His grave demeanour misleads his neighbour, *Citizen* No. 1, to imagine him to be a person of information.

'Do you think it is likely,' he inquires, 'that the troops will fire with ball?'

'Very likely,' interposes *Citizen* No. 4. 'They have their orders to butcher the people. It'll be another Peterloo: there isn't a doubt of it.'

1st *Citizen* (with renewed anxiety for my opinion). What do you say, sir?

'Yes,' exclaims 4th *Citizen*, suddenly resolved to make a friend of me, if possible; 'what do you say? You look as if you weren't all glitter and gewgaws, you do. [I study in my attire a severe simplicity.] Is it not ten to one that the troops will fire with ball?'

The position was embarrassing: I could sympathise with the members of the German Bund, compelled upon the instant to throw in their lot with either Austria or Prussia; but my natural intelligence did not desert me.

'Well,' said I, 'a conflict between the populace and the soldiery is always to be deplored.'

'Pooh! pooh! shoot them down,' exclaimed No. 7 *Citizen*, with irritation: he wore a moustache, and was altogether a most distinguished-looking person. 'Against a mob, there's nothing like a twenty-four pounder.'

'Except a thirty-six pounder and all the other pounders,' muttered No. 2, purple with mirth, but a little awed by the superior appearance of the last speaker.

'It is my opinion that a man who can talk of bringing twenty-four pounders to bear upon his fellow-countrymen ought to be hung,' observed *Citizen* No. 4, staring straight before him.

'I would pull his legs with pleasure,' added *Citizen* No. 5, buttoning his coat across his chest.

There was another dreadful pause, the sort of calm that precedes a thunder-storm, as it seemed to me, and then *Citizen* No. 1 recommenced his persecutions.

'You have not yet given your opinion, sir, as to whether the troops will fire ball.'

'Well,' said I, with a smile that might have conciliated a regiment of Uhlans, 'the Horse Guards, you know, as a general rule, do not fire ball, because they are armed with *swords*.'

'Ah! that's true,' observed No. 1, sagaciously.

'Very true indeed,' remarked No. 4, with equal seriousness.

By one judicious reply, I had established my reputation; I had become the arbiter between the contending factions—the Napoleon of the knife-board. Some of my fellow-travellers would, I am confident, not have been surprised if I had turned out to be 'connected with government.' I saw, however, that the man with the moustache detested me, for he felt himself placed in the position of second-fiddle. However, he was at the other end of the 'bus.

'Talking of firing ball,' observed the conductor of the *Citizen*, 'I can tell you a good story—a story as will make you all split with laughing.'

The reward thus promised for listening was not attractive, and, besides, one is likely to be compromised by entering into conversation with this class of person; their anecdotes are often broad, and the tone in which they are delivered is the same by which they are accustomed to attract the attention of possible passengers on both sides of the way. I therefore refused him my countenance: an omnibus cad, however, has face enough (of his own) for anything, and he favoured us with his narrative notwithstanding. We had already reached the Edgeware Road, and my hope (on account of the widow lady inside) was that he would not approach his climax before we reached the Marble Arch.

'Well, you must know, my *father*,' he began, 'was a tremendous feller for standing upon his rights. He thought himself quite as good as a lord or a bishop, or, for that matter, as the king upon his blessed throne; and the consequence was, he was agin the milingitary, he was, at the Bristol riots; we used to live down that way in those days; I'm a Somersetshire man myself, though you mightn't think it.—White Chapel, London Bridge.—Well, my *father* and a friend of his, they was among the Mob, when the milingitary was a-shooting over their heads with—*Bank, Bank*—blank cartridge; but presently the other man, he claps his hand behind 'im, and he cries out: "Bill, they're a-firing ball!"'

"How do you know *that*?" asks my father.

"Because," says he, very serious, "I've just got one in"—

'The Marble Arch!' cried I, interrupting the narrative. 'Stop, I am going to get down.' And, indeed, it was just as well, for there was here a crowd so dense, that the omnibus was brought to a complete stand-still. The whole breadth of the Bayswater Road, and as far down Oxford Street as the eye could reach, was paved with heads. I could see the police in a double line, standing with their backs to the closed gates: three rows of vehicles, intermingled with persons on foot, formed an inextricable mass between them and the opposite mansions, the lower windows of which were closed and shuttered, but the upper crowded with faces; nay, the roofs, and even the bases of the chimneys had their occupants. Every lamp-post bore its twin-fruit of street urchins. The wheeled conveyances, too, had no intention of moving, even if movement

had been practicable; they had come as to the inner ropes of the course at Epsom, for the purpose of affording their tenants a good view. There were empty coal-carts, for a position in which a shilling a head was eagerly given; there were cabs whose roof was hired by the square inch; there were omnibuses that had never gained half the sum by a city trip which they now realised by standing still; and there were even private carriages with ladies in them, apparently devoid of fear, and contemplating, with the greatest interest, the little they could see of the Civil War raging within the Park. It was to the Park, from which confused shouts and outcries were borne to us upon the darkening air, that every eye was turned.

My fellow-passengers, like myself, had all descended from their perches, the party of Order and the Malcontents alike pushing through the crowd for a spot where the iron railings had been thrown down for a length of about thirty yards; their stone foundations still held them in a slanting position, so that it was difficult to cross them; but in one place, one or two of the iron spears had been broken at the bottom, and through their yielding shafts, as I understood, a number of persons had already forced themselves into the forbidden ground. It was at this spot that the great conflict, of which we have since heard so much, had taken place an hour or two before.

'A curious sight, sir,' observed an individual, gazing with awe upon the work of devastation, and whose appearance and apparel suggested one of those members of the Dissenting body who assimilate very nearly to the High-Church party of the Church of England. He had the high rolling collar, and the high buttoned waistcoat, and the starched cravat of the divine, and yet with something wanting in the clerical *tout ensemble* which made me set him down as I have described. He had also called me 'Sir'; and clergymen rarely use that word, even when addressing a stranger. Yes, he was clearly a Dissenter; probably a Radical; possibly a sympathiser with these excesses. I make it a rule to ingratiate myself with every class, where I can do so without shocking my moral sense, and I thought I would sympathise with them a little too.

'Curious indeed,' said I. 'There is no knowing where these things will end. I am afraid a mistake has been committed by somebody.'

'Ah, you may say that,' answered he solemnly. 'A grave responsibility has been incurred.'

Yes; I was right: his speech smacked of the Nonconformist pulpit.

'You are come here,' said I, 'like myself, I do not doubt, to enter your protest against these proceedings; to bear witness, if necessary'—

Here I hesitated, for him to declare his views; but he only shook his head in a deprecatory manner, and observed: 'Just so.'

'To uphold the sacred right of Public Meeting,' remarked I boldly: it was worth while to be misinterpreted in order to elicit the opinions of a man of this sort.

'The sacred right of Public Meeting,' assented he, in the tone of one who is committing something to memory. 'Just so.'

This man was not an enthusiast: his opinions were evidently the result of calm conviction. I wanted a companion, during the spectacle, who would unfold the motives of action of the Party of Disorder, and here he was.

'We can see nothing from here,' said I; 'if this hole in the railings was but a little bigger, one might creep through.'

'Just so,' replied he, with a manner so imperturbable that it quite irritated me.

While we talked, there were occasional 'Alarms and Excursions'—numbers of people within-side, fleeing before the advance of the police or military, would return to their hole in the railing, the spikes of which being towards them, rendered exit exceedingly difficult. Only one at a time could pass through; there were dozens desirous of doing so at the same moment; and close behind them were supposed to be horse-soldiers at full speed. You may imagine the scene.

'If somebody was to pull out those two spikes,' remarked I reflectively after a retreat of this description more disastrous than usual, 'they would not run in people's eye when they tried to get out.'

One of those good-for-nothing man-boys who form such a large portion of a London crowd, happened to overhear this observation, and full of the spirit of mischief, at once proceeded to put my playful suggestion into effect. He pulled out the two iron javelins in less time than it takes me to write it. Scandalised by his conduct, and even alarmed lest it should be attributed to my directions, I cried out to him in a terrible voice to throw them among the trees, and fortunately he did so. Think of the remorse (independently of any term of imprisonment) which would have seized upon your Home Correspondent had the mob proceeded to arm themselves with iron javelins.

'An apt pupil,' observed my unknown friend, gravely; 'but a young gentleman likely to find himself in trouble.'

This I felt to be rather a personal observation, and one that needed a reply.

'Nay,' said I, 'he has really done no harm. Consider the danger of those spikes; and particularly in the case of these adventurous ladies.'

If it were possible that a gentleman of the ecclesiastical profession could so far forget himself as to wink with meaning, I should say that my companion here forgot himself to that extent: and yet there was a gravity about the action of the eyelid that rescued the movement from the imputation of mere lightness.

The crowd about us was almost wholly composed of respectable persons, attracted to the scene by curiosity; there were very few 'roughs' remaining on our side of the railings; and throughout that night I did not see half-a-dozen genuine 'working-men,' the real political reformers having probably adjourned to Trafalgar Square, to hear the speeches. The women, too, of whom there was a considerable number, were by no means of the lowest class; I should say the majority were domestic servants, who had asked leave to 'step out for an hour to see their cousin,' and had come to see the *éméute* instead. There were, however, one or two old hags, who, thinking they scented blood in the air, expressed the most sanguinary wishes with respect to both the present and future of the police force, and reminded one very much of those terrible old women who used to sit and knit stockings in front of the guillotine, while aristocrats' heads were being chopped off.

'What are the men afeard on, od rot 'em!' observed one of these ladies. 'Why don't they cut all the Bobbies' throats; there's enough of ye, ain't

there?' added she, turning furiously upon your Home Correspondent.

A bow and a smile were all the adhesion I could find it in my conscience to give her.

'Come, the milingitary won't hurt you, Susan,' cried a cheery voice, as a stout middle-aged female pushed past me, accompanied by a florid, honest-looking girl, with cherry-coloured ribbons in her bonnet; 'you'll go right to their hearts for all their curious ears' (she meant their breastplates); 'so who's afraid?'

'And I'm sure you needn't be afraid of the perlice, Jemima,' retorted the girl, laughing, 'for I never saw a Bobby yet as you couldn't soften.'

If that fair pair were not respectively cook and housemaid, I am prepared to forfeit my situation upon this *Journal*. To see them squeeze themselves through the gap in the rails, was a spectacle not only diverting, but, especially in the case of the cook, prolonged; and if one of those panics to which I have alluded had taken place while that lady was in entire possession of the exit, the scene would have combined every element of interest—heroism and beauty, terror and a *cul de sac*.

'Really,' said I to my new acquaintance, 'I think we might venture where even the ladies go. There, now we have done it.' (We were both standing in the forbidden ground.) 'The Rubicon of the Law is passed. We have thrown in our lot with the people: eh? Hurrah!'

'Just so,' replied my imperturbable acquaintance.

Throughout the shrubbery, there were knots of people—specks of light, for they were all smoking pipes—talking over what they had seen during the evening's proceedings, and exchanging the most exaggerated lists of killed and wounded; a few, as you could tell by the noise of breaking branches, were far more mischievously employed; these last, however, were, without exception, members of that dreadful race, the Man-boys. We pushed across the shrubberies to the carriage-drive, and lo, a really pretty sight! the Horse Guards marching to and fro at a foot's-pace in double line, with the moon-beams glinting on their naked swords and polished helmets; and the dark masses of people on both sides the way cheering them loudly. Then would follow a line of horse-police, whereupon the most hideous screeching and vituperation rent the air. 'Butchers! ah-h-h-h!' (a very expressive ejaculation of hatred.) 'Go home. Ah-h-h-h-h!' These were the noises, the conflicting nature of which we could not understand, and had therefore so excited us when on the other side of the barrier. It was a very trying position for the gentlemen in blue, and I am afraid that the military—some of whom, perhaps, had their private reasons for not entirely sympathising with their allies—rather enjoyed it: at all events, many of the soldiers were grinning.

'I dare say these red-coated gentry,' observed I, in allusion to this circumstance, 'are not sorry to see their rivals in the affections of Susan and Jemima so unpopular!'

My companion was silent; surprised that he did not give utterance to his 'Just so, I looked at him, and perceived his face to be convulsed with angry passion. He muttered something between his clenched teeth, and quickened his pace so as to get a few paces in front of me. It was evident that his feelings were stirred to their lowest depths; he was doubtless a physical-force Chartist; a Red Republican of the deepest dye. I was trying to recall some of the wilder doctrines of Ledra Rollin,

in order to keep him in good-humour, at all events, with *me*, when a hand lightly touched my sleeve, and a voice whispered a few rapid words into my ear. I knew the speaker: it was a policeman in whose Bayswater beat my house was situated, and my wife had done some kindness to *his* wife, when she happened to stand in need of help.

I rejoined my companion with a heart that had almost stopped beating. His glance struck me, for the first time, as being singularly malevolent; his voice seemed to me to have grown gruff, and even discourteous, as he inquired 'What I thought of the sacred right of Public Meeting in Hyde Park *now*?'

'A chimæra,' replied I eagerly. 'It's all nonsense. Why should Hyde Park be given up to such a rabble? Nay, why, indeed, should people wish to meet at all?'

My companion shot at me a terrible glance of suspicion, as he remarked: 'And yet you sympathised with them, sir, an hour ago?'

'I did,' said I frankly. 'But I honestly tell you I have been convinced of my error. People that hiss the police must be an abominable and wicked crew. I wonder for my part the civil force are so patient. [They really were wonderfully patient, so far as I saw.] Fortunately, however, these wretches are not armed.'

'No; no one thought of pulling up the iron spikes in the railings *except you*,' answered the other in a tone which, combined with the pressure of the crowd, had all the effect upon me of a warm bath.

'Yes,' said I, 'that idea of mine was an indiscretion, I own. In case of necessity, however, I should always range myself—I am sorry to differ from you, if your feelings are with the other side, but I must express my sentiments—along with the *Party of Order*. If the odds were forty to one, I should side with the civil force; that, as it seems to me, is the duty of every citizen.'

'I am glad to hear you say so, *for your sake*,' answered my mysterious acquaintance.—'There, don't ask any questions; but take my advice, young man, and go home to your family. There are some here who will pass the night much less comfortably, and you don't know how near you have been to being one of them.'

'Ha, ha!' said I, with forced hilarity; 'very good. But, indeed, I think you advise wisely. The tea, too, will be getting cold at home.'

With a short stern nod of farewell, my companion turned away, and as he did so, took out a leaf from a leather note-book, and tore it into fragments.

I hastened to the place of exit between the rails, scarcely less precipitately than the victims of pusillanimous Panic, pushed my way through the foolish crowd that were still gazing longingly into the forbidden Eden, and leaped into a four-wheeled cab.

The words which the friendly Peeler had whispered into my ear, were these: 'Take care what you may be saying, sir; the man as has got hold of you [faucy!] is a detective in disguise; and if you're not careful, he'll have a case against you as sure as you're alive.'

Had I been careful, and had he not got a case against me already? That was the question. If ever a man felt himself a Conservative from top to toe, it was your Home Correspondent for that last quarter of an hour. My conversion had been as

genuine as it was rapid. No wonder that that Mysterious Myrmidon of the law had credited my assertions, and been mollified by those expressions of good-will: they had truly come from the heart—if, at least, the heart is the seat of prudential alarm. That judicious reference to the domestic 'tea waiting for me at home' was really, I think, very commendable, considering the tremendous nature of my situation, and a proof of great presence of mind. Your Home Correspondent, however, was never more convinced of the truth of that famous conundrum—*Q*. What is better than presence of mind in circumstances of personal peril? *A*. Absence of body—than when he found himself safe at his own house after attending that Popular Demonstration.

THE DART.

Flow onward, onward, onward flow

In stream and winding lake,

And change the shadows glassed below,

Of hill, and wood and brake.

Flow onward, onward, onward flow;

The deer is nought to thee:

Their rest, thine anchored lilies know,

But thou must always flee.

Flow on, thou downward gliding water,

Through all the silent dark;

While sleep the fields, the reaper's daughter,

The partridge, and the lark.

Flow onward, onward, onward flow;

Dark battlemented towers

With crimson-curtained lights may glow;

Thou sharest not their hours.

Flow onward, onward, onward flow,

The swift sea-billows call,

The snarling beach is creamed with snow,

The hissing thunders fall;

The sea, the sea! the air of dawn!

The yellow morning-light!

Flow onward, onward, onward borne,

Broad river, to the fight.

Well done in all thou hadst to do!

Rest, rest within the sea;

How glorious spreads the sparkling blue,

A kingly pall for thee!

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A STORY WITH A VENGEANCE.

IN THREE SCENES.

SCENE I.—THE PARIS MAIL.

'CREIL! Creil! Trois minutes d'arrêt!' intoned the swarthy guard of the Paris night-mail, putting his head in at the window. A man, the sole occupant of the carriage, in a fur-lined travelling-coat, with a heap of rugs and wraps beside him on the cushions, roused himself from a half-dozé, and got out of the warm *coupé* on to the gusty platform, running rather sharply as he did so against a woman shrouded in a long cloak, the *capuchon* of which, with her double veil, completely hid her face.

'Ah! pardon, Madame,' he said, in the unmistakable British accent, half raising his cap; and then elbowed his way towards the *buffet*. It was a wild night in March—a night when the fierce north-easter penetrates to your very marrow through the warmest garments. Morton Devereux shivered, half with cold, half with impatience, as the *garçon* filled a double-sized silver flask, emblazoned with his crest and initials, from one of the long-necked bottles on the *comptoir*. The waiter at the *Grand Hôtel* had forgotten the brandy at the last moment, and the Guardsman cursed him freely in his heart for the trouble his negligence was causing him. No very great trouble, certainly; but it was Devereux's nature to curse everything and everybody that interfered, in however remote a degree, with his own personal interest or comfort; and it was more comfortable inside his *coupé*, covered up with his rugs and his plaids, than standing there at that draughty buffet, while 'that clumsy beggar' was filling his flask with the brandy he found absolutely necessary on such a night. The flask was filled at last. He snatched it out of the waiter's hands, flung down the cost of the brandy, and hurried on to the platform. There was the usual stir there: people going hurriedly to and fro in search of their particular compartment, rushing frantically at the last moment to swallow a *petit-verre*, shouting, swearing, laughing—here and

there among them a sulky Briton or Franco-Teuton fending his way through the mass, on the great 'Ring' principle, 'that weight must tell.'

The guard opened the door of Devereux's *coupé* with an impatient 'Allons! Monsieur, en voiture!' for the cold had affected him too, and the mail-train had some ten minutes' detention to make up. The Guardsman had flung himself into his seat, arranged his rugs once more, and twice filled and emptied the silver cup of his flask; the train had started again, and was getting fairly into its swing, before he perceived that he was not alone. Right in the shadow of the furthest corner, wrapped in her cloak, with its deep *capuchon* hiding her face still, sat the woman he had jostled as he got out at Creil. Her veil was up now, and out of the shadow her eyes were gleaming, in their fixed watchfulness of her companion's every motion, like a panther's. Devereux almost started as he met suddenly that steady gaze. But he half rose from his seat with a muttered oath, as a voice he knew well enough, or thought he knew, addressed him. First a low soft laugh, and then: 'Ce cher Morton!' it said: 'Quel heureux rencontre!' and again that low soft laugh. There was no doubt of it now: he knew who his companion was perfectly well. To judge by the expression of his face, he didn't seem so absolutely enchanted at the 'heureux rencontre' as he might have been. There was certainly more of repugnance than delight in his startled: 'What! you here, Valérie!' She laughed again, as she flung back the *capuchon* from her head, and revealed the face he had indeed hoped never to look upon again. A strangely handsome face, with a certain fascination in its dark beauty, a subtle, mocking light in the flashing eyes, and a scornful curve in the scarlet of the lips, one might look to see in a fallen angel's.

'Myself,' she answered in perfectly accented English. 'You thought I was dead, I suppose? Not yet, you see. We have both lived to meet once more. Haven't you a word to greet me with, after so long a separation?'

Devereux, sitting there, his face turned towards hers (which, as she spoke, was full in the light of

the lamp) in eager scrutiny, was silent; but his white lips were working in a way more like unto cursing than blessing, assuredly.

'It is odd, though,' she went on, 'that we should meet in this way, isn't it? I recognised you at once, when you ran against me, just now, on the platform, and begged my pardon. You little thought *whose* pardon you were asking!'

Devereux answered her low mocking laugh with an evil look on his handsome face, as he said: 'You're right there! If I had known!'

'You would have been ungallant enough, I fear, to try and avoid the little *tête-à-tête* I have long been wishing to secure? Yes; so I fancied, and that would not have suited me at all; so I left Florine in the other carriage, and waited for you here in this corner. You were so long in getting that brandy, that I began to think the train would start without you, and that I should be disappointed after all. Imagine, then, my satisfaction, when I saw you appear at last and take your seat without even noticing me!'

'What do you want?' he broke in here. 'Money? I have none.'

'Ce cher Morton! Est-il drôle, mon Dieu! Il me parle comme à un voleur de grand chemin!'

'What is it, then? You haven't dogged me in this way, I presume, merely to give me the pleasure of seeing your face once more?'

'You are charming! That brutal straightforwardness of yours has even improved since the old time. But you are wrong. I have dogged you—as you gracefully observe—merely to have the pleasure of your society for an hour or two en *tête-à-tête*. I want absolutely nothing else of you!'

'It's as well you *don't*, ma belle! And as for the *tête-à-tête*!'

'Stop! there's no occasion for you to be rude. Surely the knowledge that I have no designs on your purse might make you decently civil! Give me just a mouthful of that brandy—I'm horribly cold. And—you were smoking before I disturbed you—light another cigar, and give me a cigarette: you have some in that case.'

She stretched out her hand—a daintily-gloved, taper hand enough, one of Valérie Duhamel's best 'points'—towards the seal-skin cigar-case which lay on the seat between them. He pushed it towards her, and while she selected and kindled her cigarette, filled the silver cup again, and handed it to her, with a sneer. 'The old tastes still, Valérie!' he said.

'Eh, parbleu!' she laughed, 'seeing you reminds me of the old times!—Ah! that warns one.—And now, mon cher, for a little conversation.' She settled her wrappers about her, puffed three or four tiny puffs of smoke with all the deliberation of a connoisseur in Russian tobacco, and then, leaning idly back upon the cushions, asked: 'First, tell me—when are you to be married?'

Devereux's nerves had recovered their wonted tone again by this; so, instead of being startled, as she had perhaps intended he should be, by this sudden question, he merely answered, as he lit his *Cabanis*, with his wonted *sang-froid*: 'Oh, you know that, do you? May I ask, how?'

'Yes, I know it,' she replied; 'how—doesn't matter. I know most things about you which it concerns me to know: for instance, I knew you were to marry your cousin, Lady Flora, six weeks ago; I knew why you were to marry her—because

it's your last chance; that is, if *Barabbas* don't win the Derby. Am I not right?'

'Something like it, anyhow,' he answered carelessly, without taking the regalia from his mouth. 'Go on.'

'Ah, you mean, I have forgotten your uncle, Sir Walter—that, if he dies childless, the Braithwaite estates come to you?'

'Yes, I *did* mean that. You seem perfectly acquainted with the state of my affairs, Valérie.'

'Quand je vous le disais!'

'And yet, I don't see, quite, how my marriage or my inheritance concerns you. We've dissolved partnership long ago, you know.'

'Surely, I may have a natural interest in the well-being of an old friend? And your marriage, at all events, *does* concern me.'

'Bah! how?'

'Why, has it never struck you, Morton, that I might, if I chose, prevent this match?'

'Can't say it has. The supposition wouldn't have been flattering to my common-sense!'

'Yet it ought to have struck you. You smile. You mean, I have no claim on you—no proofs? Qui sait? Suits have been won on lighter evidence in our courts, mon ami! And, supposing I saw and spoke with Lady Flora?'

'First suppose my cousin would see and listen to you!'

'She would do both—when she heard my name; the name I once bore, be sure. And even if I could not prove my case to her, I could at least ruin yours.'

'You *might*—but you *won't*!'

'Cela dépend. Why do you say so?'

'Because, if I thought you meant playing that game, I'd'—

She laughed lightly, though the murderous glare in his eyes told her his meaning only too plainly.

'No, you wouldn't, *très-cher*! First, because Florine is in the next carriage, and would miss me at Amiens; secondly, because I am quite well able to protect myself. Voyez!' and as she spoke, Devereux saw the glint of a tiny damascened steel barrel, that lurked in the ambush of Valérie's sable muff. She went on, quite quietly: 'Enough of this folly; let us converse like reasonable beings. It is granted, then, that failing one of two events—a horse you have betted large sums on winning the Derby; or your marriage with your cousin—you are a ruined man. What "ruin" means for a man like yourself, you know perfectly well—it means disgrace, dishonour, exile. But the horse may win—and you are saved; the marriage may take place—and you would have nothing to fear. With the first contingency, I have nothing to do; with the second, much. I am willing to let matters take their own course, without any interference on my part—on one condition.'

'You want your share of the plunder, I suppose?' he sneered.

'Wrong again! I want nothing of the sort. My condition is simply this: That you give me your word—and remember, if you break it, I hold the means of punishing you—never, under whatever circumstances we may meet again, by a word, or sign, or look, to show that we are, or ever have been, anything but total strangers; that, from tonight, you blot our past from your recollection as utterly as though it had never existed. Do you agree?'

'Is that all? Gad! it was hardly worth while to get up this scene, if you wanted nothing more! I'd have promised you what you ask, without any melodramatic threats, you know! Let you alone? You let me alone, Valérie, and you won't have anything to complain of in my interference in your little game, whatever it is, I promise you!'

'Then, you pledge me your word to what I ask?'

'As often as you like.'

'Good!—And now, just one bit of advice, Morton Devereux, before we part to-night. Keep your faith with me, and it shall be your own fault if you ever hear of, or see me, for the future. Break it, in ever so slight degree, and gare à toi! It will be the worse for you. C'est moi qui te le dis!'

When the Paris mail started again, after its ten minutes' halt at Amiens, Morton Devereux had his coupé to himself once more.

SECOND SCENE.—AT 'HER MAJESTY'S.'

In time—from March to May: in place—from the coupé on the North of France Railway, to the Omnibus Box at Her Majesty's Theatre. The curtain has just fallen on the first act of a new opera, and the hum of voices in the box is growing louder and louder. Apparently, the conversation is interesting—let us listen to it awhile.

'I suppose it's true, then?' Lord Greystoke is saying, rather doubtfully.

'True, my Lord?' cries little Tom O'Dowd, who has arrived in a swift Hansom from White's with the intelligence in question: 'True? Not a doubt of it, my Lord! They came to Bruton Street, yesterday evening, from Paris. And they tell me at Sams', she has got the box opposite—Lady Gryffyn's that was—for the remainder of the season. I shouldn't wonder if she shewed up to-night!'

'All square, I suppose?' asked a Guardsman languidly.

'Oh, quite! Done at the Embassy, you know.'

'Bore for Morton, if it's a fact!' continued the Guardsman. 'He'll be cut out to a moral!'

'Qui sait?' said another. 'The estates are entailed, and he mayn't leave an heir after all—Sir Walter mayn't.'

'Fellow generally does have an heir, when he wants to cut out his nephew—at least, it was so in my case!' murmured Maidlow plaintively. 'Take the long odds it's all up with Devereux, if you like!'

'Fancy the old fool marrying!' said that relic of the Regency, Lord Crèveœur: 'pon my soul, Braithwaite ought to have known better!—Who is the woman?'

'That's just what nobody knows, my Lord!' struck in little Tom O'Dowd eagerly—Tom loved to have a Lord to listen to him—'That's just what nobody knows! She's a foreigner, I hear—a Frenchwoman—but she speaks English like a native, they told me at Sams', just now. And she's something quite uncommon, as to beauty and so forth—something wonderful!'

'I hope she'll turn up here to-night!' the Guardsman amiably observed. 'Morton will be here presently—it'll be devilish good fun to see him meet his new aunt! Gad! you know, if Barabbas don't win—and I heard he was uncommon shaky at the Corner just now—Morton'll be in a deuce of a hole, and no mistake! He's

standing awful heavy on the favourite. And now to find his chance of fifteen thousand pounds a year pretty nearly as bad as none at all! It is riling!'

'They've tied up Lady Flora's money fast enough, too, I fancy, haven't they?' asked Maidlow. 'He can't get at that, if he should happen to want it on settling-day?'

'Not a half-penny!' returned the other. 'Everything's settled on her—they took care of that. The settlements deuced nearly broke off the whole business; but Morton thought better of it, and went on. They paid his ticks for him, and started him clear again. If he hadn't married her, he'd have had to cut and run before now. And he chose her. Nice little child she is, too—spoons him no end.'

'More fool she,' muttered old Crèveœur under his beard.

'I believe you're right,' said Maidlow, rather eagerly (Maidlow was supposed to have been ambitious of winning Lady Flora's good graces himself); 'I believe you're right. And I don't fancy they'd have let her have him at all, if it hadn't been that when they married he was old Braithwaite's heir—with apparently no chance of being cut out! How savage they must be now!'

'Nothing like so savage as he'll be, though,' said the amiable Guardsman, harping still on his one idea. 'By Jove! it will be gay and festive to see them meet. Morton will be ready to strangle her off-hand. I wish the deuce he'd come.'

Just about this time, a Hansom cab drove furiously up to the door of a house in Bruton Street. The occupant leaped hastily forth, and knocked loudly and imperiously. At the summons, a resplendent footman opened the outer portals.

'Sir Walter is in town, I know,' said Devereux's voice, strangely excited. 'Ask him if I can speak to him at once!—Confound it! man, don't you know who I am? Tell him Captain Devereux is here!'

He had spoken so hurriedly, that the man had had no time to answer him. But there came a grave, quiet personage in the sable uniform of a groom of the chambers, who took what words the gorgeous flunky would have spoken out of his mouth in this wise: 'Captain Devereux? Ah, Sir Walter's nephew. Sir Walter and my Lady have just left for the Opera: they have Lady Gryffyn's box for the remainder of the season—in case, that is, Sir Walter's health should allow him to remain so long in town. Perhaps you would kindly leave word what time you will call to-morrow, sir? Sir Walter is rarely visible now before one or two; but I will mention'—

Devereux waited to hear no more. 'If I don't see Sir Walter to-night, I will call to-morrow afternoon—tell him.' Then he jumped into his Hansom.—'Back to Lowndes Street,' he ordered; 'and look sharp.'

The groom of the chambers bowed imperturbably—he was chosen by my Lady herself, this perfect creature—and motioned to his subordinate to close the doors. The Hansom went back as hard as the plucky screw in the shafts could gallop, to Lowndes Street.

'Wait!' cried Morton to the driver. He opened the street-door with a pass-key, and went in. Lady Flora was alone in the drawing-room upstairs; she heard her husband's step, as he passed

the door on his way to his dressing-room, and came out.

'Good Heavens! Morton!' she said, as she saw how pale his face was. 'Is there anything the matter?'

'Nothing,' he answered abruptly, almost harshly. 'I'm in a hurry, that's all.'

He went into his dressing-room, and dressed hastily. When he came out, he found Lady Flora waiting rather anxiously on the landing.

'I may as well tell her now,' he thought. 'Come in here a moment, Flo.' When they were in the drawing-room, he said: 'I've just heard some bad news. My uncle, Braithwaite, has married some woman or other, whom nobody knows, in Paris. They've just come to England, and are to be at the Opera to-night: I'm going there to meet them. Good-bye.'

'Stay!' said Lady Flora: 'you quite frighten me, Morton, you seem so excited.'

'What man wouldn't be excited when he's cut out of his own, as I am? It's all up with my chance for the Braithwaite property, don't you see? Fifteen thousand pounds a year lost by this piece of old-man's folly! He may live to leave half-a-dozen children, you know.'

'Never mind, dear,' said well-meaning Lady Flora; 'we shall do quite well without, I daresay.' 'Yes, if *Barabbas* runs straight, we shall. If he don't—and there are queer stories about him afloat now—I tell you what it is, Flora, the old man has been swindled or tricked somehow into this affair. He never dreamed of such a thing six months ago—nor three.'

'But are you quite sure it's true?'

'True! Why, don't I tell you I've just come from Bruton Street, where they talked to me about "My Lady"? There's no doubt about it, worse luck! However, I'll go and see what she's like.—And if'—he muttered to himself when he was driving in the Hansom to the theatre—'and if this vague suspicion that haunts me proves correct, by Heaven! she'd better look to herself.'

Meantime, there had appeared in Lady Gryffyn's box two personages, whose arrival was the signal for a general levelling of every glass in the Omnibus Box, opposite, at them.

'By George! there she is, at last,' said Lord Crèveccur.

A tall, dark-haired woman, superbly dressed, whose large eyes flashed as brightly as her parure of diamonds, and whose scarlet lips were curled in a haughty smile, came forward with an assured air, as to the manner born, to the front of the box, and seated herself side by side with a spare, erect, old gentleman—her husband, Sir Walter Braithwaite. Both seemed utterly indifferent to the marked 'sensation' which their presence produced in the crowded house. My Lady kept her attention fixed upon the stage till the act-drop fell again, and then suffered her great eyes to wander carelessly round the tiers of boxes, and now and then stray downwards to the rows of stalls. But she bent her stately head fondly and gracefully towards her husband, whenever he addressed her; and ever and anon the scarlet lips parted in a superb smile at some remark or other he would make.

'Gad!' said old Grey Stoke, in the Omnibus Box, 'Braithwaite isn't such a fool, after all, Crèveccur. She's a magnificent woman!'

'Bah!' said the Nestor of White's. 'He must

have been mad to marry such a woman as that, at his time of life. Look at those big eyes of hers! There'll be the devil to pay there one of these days!'

'Queer style of *ménage*, I should fancy,' said Maidlow.

'Devilish queer,' assented the Guardsman.—'But what a nuisance it is Morton don't turn up, ain't it?'

There was a box on the pit tier of which Devereux had the *entrée*—it was just under the Omnibus Box, and of course commanded a full view of Lady Gryffyn's. He was sitting there alone, fortunately, for his face was by no means pleasant to look upon just at this moment. He too, hidden in its depths, had, unseen himself, witnessed the entry of his uncle and the woman who had robbed him of his inheritance; and at the very first glance he had recognised her. The vague suspicion which had so unaccountably haunted him since he had heard the rumour of his uncle's marriage, was confirmed beyond all doubt. It was *she*, then, whom he had to thank for this! He saw now what had induced her to make that compact with him to bury the past—their past, and its history—in oblivion. Her game was quite clear to him. Had he guessed it when he saw her last, he would have risked the harm she could have done him then, and spoiled it; but at that time he knew he was in her power—that she could have broken off that marriage with his cousin, and he had been glad to purchase her silence on the easy terms she asked. 'But,' he thought in his rage and mortification, 'it's different *now*: she can't hurt me with Flora now. If she fancies I'm going to hold my tongue, and let her rob me like this, she's infernally mistaken, that's all—I'll let that old fool know *whom* he's married, at anyrate, before he's twenty-four hours older.'

He waited in the crush-room, presently, with Maidlow and one or two other men—who chaffed him rather unmercifully on the way he had been swindled—to see her pass.

'I haven't seen her yet,' he said, lying, he hardly knew why: 'I should like to know what sort of a woman she's like.'

'Here she comes,' said his brother Guardsman, 'on the old boy's arm.—Now, then, Morton, let's see you wither my Lady with a look as she goes by.'

She did very nearly go by without seeing Morton in the crowd; but there came a stoppage in the front, and she halted with the rest. In the glance she flung around her, she caught sight of him at last. There was something in the cool, mocking, triumphant expression of her face, as she met his look of bitter wrath and malice, that fairly maddened him. 'Is that she?' he asked, loud enough for her to hear.

Her face changed as he spoke: there came an expression of such deadly vindictiveness into it as might have warned and restrained him at any other moment. He only laughed a low harsh laugh now.

'What! do you know her, then?' whispered some one at his elbow, who had interpreted my Lady's evil look, and was curious to know its meaning.

'Know her?' replied Devereux in the same tone, distinctly enough to catch the ears of one or two bystanders. 'Yes, I know her, and so do the

Paris police. 'They'd tell you she was a Russian spy, and that her name was Valérie Duhamel.'

SCENE THE LAST.—BY THE DARK WATER.

Forty-eight hours later. The scene changes to Braithwaite Manor, on the outskirts of the New Forest, in Hampshire. The gray old Elizabethan house stands on a gentle eminence, bounded on one side by its long winding avenue, and on the other by the waters of the Wayverne, which runs through the grounds—solitary and secluded enough. There is no other house within six or eight miles of the Park gates. The keepers' lodges even lie at nearly half a mile from the manor-house itself.

It is a still sultry night. Low down yonder, a heavy bank of clouds is moving up slowly against the little air there is abroad—it is the storm-cloud that has been brooding over the place all day, and that will burst upon it presently. Now and then, you catch the ominous muttering of the distant thunder; but all else is deadly still. The window of a room in the western wing, which overlooks the Wayverne, is open. Through it there comes a little ray of light from the taper which a woman, dressed in a long black cloak, with its hood drawn over her head, is holding in her hand. She has been standing there for nearly five minutes, watching, listening. All without is so quiet that she knows she shall catch the sound of the footsteps of the man she awaits, as he comes along the river-walk which runs under the window, at least a minute before she will see him. She has heard no footstep yet, and the hands of her watch are drawing closer and closer together upon midnight. She leans her hand—a white shapely hand, on the fingers whereof flash and gleam the opals and diamonds of costly rings—upon the window-sill, and looks down, steadily, at the dark waters below. It flows strong and deep just there, and (so narrow is the river-walk at this point) apparently close beneath her. She feels, probably, that she has no need to fear intrusion where she is—the room is the last of a suite she calls her own, and the servants are all sleeping on the other side of the house in the east wing—or the mistress of Braithwaite Manor would hardly be so regardless of *les convenances* as, with that disguising cloak flung over her bare shoulders, and by the dim light of that single wax taper, to be going to see and speak with a man whom (so she avers, at least) she has known but eight-and-forty hours. As that is her intention, however, we must suppose she does feel perfectly secure against any watching eye or listening ear. And so she may. No eye is watching, no ear listening, in all that silent, darkened house, but hers. A step, far off as yet, treading the gravel of the walk, breaks the stillness at last. 'Enfin!' mutters the watcher—'enfin, tu es à moi!' The taper is extinguished, and with her right hand in her bosom underneath her cloak, the woman stands waiting in utter darkness.

The morning after that little scene in the crush-room at the Opera, Morton Devereux had received two pieces of intelligence. The first was, that *Barabbas* had broken down badly, and, in all probability, would never come to the post. The writer concluded by saying there might be yet time to 'lay off' a good deal of the money, as the fact of the mishap was known at present to only one or

regretted having been absent from home when Captain Devereux called yesterday; and the more so because the state of Sir Walter's health rendered it imperative that they should leave town at once for Braithwaite Manor. This note concluded by saying they would start next morning, and expressed a hope that Captain Devereux would visit them in Hampshire ere long. Devereux's frantic rage at this specimen of 'my Lady's' powers drove the state of *Barabbas* out of his head for a time. He rushed off to Bruton Street, only to be told, when the door was opened to his imperious summons, that 'Sir Walter and my Lady had left town by the first train.' 'The she-devil!' he soliloquised, as he walked into Berkeley Square on his way home—the she-devil! Does she mean to pretend to carry on this farce, and ignore any previous knowledge of me when we meet—after what happened last night? She's either stronger than I fancy, or she's meditating some infernal mischief, and don't care how far she provokes me. She looked like a fiend when I told that little anecdote about her last night. She's just the woman to—Bah, what am I thinking about? That game don't do in these times. No; she's afraid of me, and has hurried that old fool out of town, to stop my peaching upon her to him. Means to take him abroad, perhaps—who knows? I'll beat her for all that. What have I to fear from her now? And now *Barabbas* has gone wrong, if I haven't the estate to fall back upon, or a sufficient chance of it to satisfy the Jews, it's all over with me. I'll go down to Hampshire to-night.' But he went to 'the Corner' first, and there tried to put in practice the advice he had received about laying off the money he had put upon the favourite. He was too late. The story had got wind, and backers were very shy indeed. He went about, trying hopelessly to hedge, till the last train had gone from Waterloo; and it was not till late the next evening that, with rage and despair in his heart, he drove through the lodge gates of Braithwaite Manor.

If he failed either in opening his uncle's eyes, and so getting rid of 'my Lady' for ever, or (he had thought, in his desperate strait, of this too) in making her pay heavily for his silence, he was a ruined man on the next settling-day. He was prepared to play either game; but whichever he did play, by fair means or foul, he *must* win. 'My Lady' came into the drawing-room where they had shewn him, presently, to receive her nephew—Sir Walter being unable to bear any excitement at present, the groom of the chambers said. The interview was long—lasting, indeed, till the Louis-Quatorze clock on the chimney-piece had struck eleven. Then 'my Lady' wished Captain Devereux a cordial good-night, and retired to her own apartments. Refreshments had been prepared for the unexpected guest in the dining-room, and dismissing the servant who had waited on him, Devereux finished his supper alone. He had eaten of the dishes set before him, with an appetite which shewed he had more than recovered his equanimity; and now, flinging himself into a fauteuil by the open window, he deliberately lit a cigar, and fell to smoking tranquilly. 'So far, so good!' he thought. 'I was right after all, and she is afraid of me. For the time, then, I am her master. She must get me out of this hole that cursed horse has let me into, and then—we shall

I choose to play it! She's a clever woman, Valérie—gave in, when she saw I meant mischief, and found she couldn't help herself. I wish she'd given me the notes before I left her—I'd get away to-night. Something might be done about the race yet. She'd be at her window, by the river-walk, in half an hour—she said. It's more than that now. No matter! Curse her!—let her wait. If it weren't for the notes she promised to have ready, she might wait all night for me! Good Burgundy this. It ought to be mine, every bottle of it! By Heaven! it *shall* be, too, before long. Let me once get out of this mess, and then let "my Lady" look to herself!" And so on, till the flask of that precious Chambertin was empty. Then he rose, and without troubling himself to get his hat, walked on to the terrace, and towards the river-walk, his hands in his pockets, and the big Cabaña glowing angry-red between his lips.

The footsteps came nearer—slowly, as though he were in no hurry, albeit late at his tryst by well-nigh half an hour. The woman, waiting for him in that darkened chamber, her right hand still hidden in her breast, could see, now, the red glow of the cigar he had not yet flung away, in the black gloom without. Presently, the steps halted below the window, and Morton Devereux, his arms resting on the low sill, peered into the room. 'Are you there, Valérie?' he whispered, unable to distinguish her at first.

'I am here!' she answered.

There was a strange tone in her voice, which struck him forcibly as with a sudden chill. He flung away the stump of his cigar, and said impatiently: 'Why the deuce have you come without a light? It's as dark as Hades here!'

As he spoke, a vivid flash of lightning shot across the murky sky and lit up her face for one brief moment. Was it fancy, or did that face really wear that look of devilish vindictiveness it had worn that night at the Opera?

'Don't you hear me?' he asked, half uneasy in spite of his self-confidence, and the Burgundy he had drunk.

'I hear,' she said. 'But there will be light enough for what we have to do!'

'Get it over then, in the devil's name! There'll be a storm directly, and I shall get drenched! Have you brought the notes? Of course you have, though—or what am I doing here?'

'Ay!' she said, she fancied almost solemnly, 'what are you doing here, Morton Devereux? Yes, I have brought you—what I promised should be yours.'

'Hand it over, then!'

'There is time enough. I have something to say to you ere you and I can cry quits. Do you remember the night we met at Creil?'

'Of course!' he said impatiently. 'What about that?'

'Do you remember what I told you when we parted then? That if you broke faith with me, you should rue it?'

'Yes, you talked some bosh of that sort, I know. You always had a turn for melodrama, Valérie—you were in great force that night, I'll admit! But the time's gone by for playing the trump-card you held then. You can't—at least, for your own sake, you *won't*—do me any harm with Flora. Whereas, you see, I have no end of a pull on you, and like a clever woman, you've admitted

it, and come to terms. Now, where are the notes?'

'I told you,' she went on, as though he had not spoken—'I told you you should rue it; and you have broken faith with me, like a liar and a coward! You think you have won the game already—that you have a bond-slave in me for all time to come—that, with a word, you can hold me up to ridicule and scorn, and that, perforce, I must obey you? You imagine that I shall consent to lose so easily all I have won so hardly—and, when it shall please you, my master, forsooth, go back to the old life—the old chain! Ah, Morton Devereux, ce ne sera pas ainsi! What I promised, I will perform. You pledged me your word, and that pledge you have broken. I pledged you mine, and will keep it. Liar—coward—traitor, take your doom!'

Her right hand, as she spoke, leaped swiftly from her bosom—the bare white arm gleamed for a moment in the darkness—the cold rim of a steel pistol-barrel touched Devereux's forehead lightly; then there was a sharp flash, a sharper report; and then a dull, heavy splash into the dark water below. The storm burst forth in long-restrained fury, but the lightning-glare lit up no death-struggle in the bosom of the turgid river—it held its secret close.

'By George! Carrington,' said a man, coming into the smoking-room at the Guards' Club next day, 'what do you think? Morton Devereux's been and shot himself!'

'Devil he has!' returned the other. 'Where?'

'Down in Hampshire, somewhere. They found his betting-book on him, it seems; and, as he stood to lose a regular pot on *Barabbas*, they suppose that was the reason.'

'*Barabbas*?' said Carrington. 'Why, what a fool the man was not to wait! It's all a lie about his breaking down. He's as right as a trivet—I've just had a telegram. Quite ready to give you the odds!'

THE DOVER AND CALAIS RAILWAY.

ONCE again the *Times* has set the public wondering, by a letter relating to a Channel Railway, a continuous line of communication across the Straits of Dover from England to France. The public may well wonder; for whether such a railway is to be *above* the water, in the water, or *under* the water, it would be by far the greatest work of the kind ever attempted. It will not do to *pooh, pooh* such a scheme before studying it; we all find it easy to condemn and laugh at what we do not understand; though incredulity as to the practical realisation of an engineering work so stupendously difficult is, it must be confessed, natural enough. Let us see what forms the project has assumed at different periods.

More than half a century ago, when the brief Peace of Amiens gave a temporary respite to the din of arms between England and France, and when the natives of the two countries found pleasure in interchanging visits, M. Mathieu brought forward a scheme for a tunnel under the Straits of Dover. Those were not the days of railways; but it would certainly have been a grand thing to drive a diligence from France to England, in utter contempt alike of sea and sea-sickness. The details of Mathieu's project do not

seem to be now known; but there was to be an arched passage descending from both shores to a sufficient depth below the bed of the sea, and meeting to form a horizontal tunnel of capacity enough to receive vehicles as well as foot-passengers. It was to be paved, lighted with oil-lamps, and ventilated by iron shafts running up through the sea. Mathieu introduced the scheme to Consul Bonaparte, and the latter conversed about it with Mr Fox, during the flattering visit of the liberal statesman to Paris in 1802. Bonaparte suggested that the work ought to be constructed by the two governments in common. But war soon broke out again, and nothing more was heard of M. Mathieu's tunnel.

The French have been far more active than ourselves in devising schemes for solving this Channel problem. MM. Franchot and Tessié de Mottray worked out upon paper the details of a plan for placing a monstrous cast-iron tubular tunnel on the natural bed of the sea, at whatever depth it happened to be: trusting to the excellence of the ironwork for the means of preventing inundation. M. Payerne, not placing so much reliance on this natural sea-bed, proposed, by the aid of the diving-bell, to lay down a smooth and regular causeway of concrete on the sea-bottom, and building a brick or masonry tunnel upon it.

As to the schemes put forward by persons who are not engineers, they are both numerous and valueless. A man can as easily talk about a viaduct railway two hundred feet above the sea-level, as a tunnel railway two hundred feet below the sea-bottom, when he is not responsible for the success of either, and is never likely to be called upon to try his hand at either. During the heyday of the railway era, few practical engineers seriously proposed anything bearing on this subject; but of those schemes put forth during the last dozen years or so, the conception is certainly ingenious, whether practicable or not.

M. Favre, a French engineer, caused soundings to be made in various parts of Dover Strait, in four lines of route—Cape Grisnez to Dover, Cape Grisnez to South Foreland, Cape Blancnez to Dover, and Cape Blancnez to South Foreland. He met with soundings varying from 9 to 55 metres (30 to 180 feet). The average distance across is about 30 kilometres—a trifle under twenty English miles. A railway tunnel in the south of France, three miles long, near Nerthe, had helped to convince M. Favre that a tunnel could be made under the Straits of Dover, by means which he pointed out. The tunnel would be at all places at least 35 metres, or 116 feet, below the bed of the sea, secure from irruption of water. Indeed, he asserted that 'a submarine railway would be safer than an ordinary open-air railway, in being free from atmospheric variations, snow, ice, and destructive agencies of various kinds.' There would be shafts sunk through the sea and its bed, at the bottoms of which the tunnel might be worked in sections of three-quarters of a mile or so each; and the *débris* or spoil brought up these shafts would, when thrown into the sea, form useful little islets around the shafts. When rails were laid down in the tunnel, M. Favre would work the traffic by the atmospheric system, not by the locomotive. He thought he saw his way to construct the whole work for 80,000,000 francs (L.3,200,000: less than the triangle of railway which connects the three stations at Charing Cross, Cannon Street, and

London Bridge!). He reckoned upon 4,000,000 francs a year for carrying passengers and luggage, 6,000,000 for general merchandise, and 10,000,000 for coals; he deducted 40 per cent. for working expenses; and then he pointed triumphantly to a dividend of 15 per cent. on the capital expended in the work. The way in which dividends are made up (on paper) certainly displays a remarkable degree of ingenuity.

One of the Englishmen who have attacked this problem, Mr Nicol, planned a tunnel far beneath the bed of the sea; a little higher in the middle than at the two ends, in order to allow any drain-water to flow to the land termini, where it would be pumped up. His first idea was to make the tunnel of masonry, but he afterwards proposed to line it with an iron tube instead.

Mr Austin's plan comprised three distinct tunnels, side by side, with three culverts under them to carry off water to the land termini, where it would be pumped up. There would be six suites of rail in all, two in each tunnel; three up lines for express, ordinary, and merchandise traffic; and three down. The tunnels would be sixty feet below the bed of the sea, having this thickness of chalk to defend them from the irruption. The public, scientific and financial, were not told much of the proposed plan of construction; but there was to be an economical using up of the excavated chalk, by mixing it up with shingle and sea-sand, so as to form small blocks of artificial stone equal to forty or fifty bricks each, for lining the tunnels. The cost was estimated at L.6,000,000; and the time necessary for the construction of the works about seven years.

If an elaborate mode of presenting a scheme before the world is any test of the merits of the scheme itself, then the plan of M. Thomé de Gamond ought indeed to be a good one; for his description, dated 1857, occupies a quarto volume of two hundred pages, illustrated by large coloured plans and sections. He begins by pointing out that three grand obstacles exist to the establishment of rapid communication between England, France, and the East; namely, the English Channel, the Alps, and the Isthmus of Suez. The Lesseps Canal is, he believes, destined to achieve great things at Suez; the Mont Cenis Tunnel will do the same in the region of the Alps; and he trusts that he himself may have the honour of uniting England to France by a submarine railway. This once done (the width of gauge permitting) nothing need prevent the same railway train going from the north of Scotland to the south of Italy. The idea is a tempting one (wars apart), and we need not be surprised at civil engineers pondering and speculating about it. M. Thomé de Gamond first thought of an iron tunnel, or railway tube, supported at a sufficient height above the water by four hundred stone piers; but the vast cost checked him. Then he turned his attention to a continuous causeway from England to France, broken only by a few drawbridge-openings for the passage of ships. This also he withdrew (and we don't wonder at it). Then he took up the project of a tunnel, regularly excavated beneath the bed of the sea, and at a sufficient depth to avoid danger from irruption of water. M. Thomé brought his idea under the notice of the Emperor Napoleon III.; and a committee of scientific and practical men made many geological investigations into the nature of the strata beneath the English Channel. English and

French geologists were consulted; and Paris took great interest in what the *Siccle* called 'ce beau rêve!—this beautiful dream!'

The enthusiastic engineer first examined the routes from Boulogne to Dungeness, Cape Griznez to Dungeness, Calais to the South Foreland, Blanchez to the South Foreland, Cape Griznez to Dover, and Cape Griznez to a point about midway between Dover and Folkestone. He came to the conclusion that the last would be the most suitable. He calls the point Eastware, but he evidently means East Wear Bay. Let us suppose all difficulties removed, and let us, for brevity, say 'will be' instead of 'proposed,' or 'intended to be.' There will be, then, on a mid-channel shoal called the *Varne*, a vast construction erected, called the *Varne Star* (*L'Etoile de Varne*). The depth of water at low tide on the *Varne* is somewhat over twenty feet. There will be a vast shaft, 300 feet deep, descending through the water, through the sand of the *Varne*, through the chalk strata underneath it, until it comes to the level of the submarine tunnel railway. There will be a spiral staircase from the top to the bottom of this shaft; and if the shaft itself (elliptical in horizontal section) were made 1200 feet across in one direction, and 600 in another, M. Thomé tells us that even railway wagons might wind their way up and down. At the top of the shaft, and around the top, will be a tower, a light-house, a small basin for the reception of vessels, and four granite quays pointing outwards like the rays of a star—all built upon the submerged sandy spot called the *Varne*! At the bottom of the shaft (what a 'getting up stairs!') will be a regular railway station, with up and down platforms. This, be it remembered, will be about midway between the English and French coasts. To facilitate the construction of the twenty miles or so of railway tunnel, there will be thirteen minor shafts. As these will pass through sea in some places 180 feet deep, they cannot be mere shafts, in the ordinary sense; they will, in fact, be vast cones of masonry, very broad at the bottom, where they will rest upon the bed of the sea. From the bottoms of these cones, vertical shafts will descend through the submarine strata to the level of the tunnel. There will thus, with the cones, the *Varne Star*, and the two termini, be sixteen spots where the tunnellers can work, all digging away at the same time far beneath the bed of the ocean. The bricklayers or masons, or both, will, of course, follow the excavators; and the sea will, of course, be civil enough not to burst in upon them. The summit of each cone will be thirty feet above the level of the water, and will thus be permanently available to ventilate the tunnel. The greatest of these cones (*idols*, M. Thomé calls them) will be no less than 180 feet deep, 700 feet in diameter at the bottom, and 140 feet at the top! Neptune will find a good many workmen engaged in his domain during the construction of such a work. There will be a dry-land shaft, with a station at the bottom of it, at East Wear; and the passengers will ascend 100 feet by a spiral stair to get out of this station to the open air. A similar dry-land shaft at Cape Griznez will be 180 feet deep—all the worse for the French passengers at Cape Griznez station. On the English side, an ascending inclined tunnel of three miles and a half in length will bring the railway up to the open air; but on the French side, the analogous tunnel will be five miles and a half

long. The East Wear and Griznez shafts—elliptical in horizontal section, 350 feet across in one direction, and 160 in another—will serve for working-shafts at first, and afterwards as station-shafts.

This, in brief, is the plan of M. Thomé de Gamond, described in the 'will be' tense simply to save circumlocution. Whether such work is possible, readers must be left to judge for themselves; whether, if possible, £6,500,000 would pay for it, we, in like manner, take not upon ourselves to say. The *Varne Star* is evidently a grand feature in the whole affair. Ships will come laden with human beings and dead commodities, enter the basin, discharge passengers and cargo at the quays; and the passengers and cargo will somehow find their way down to the bottom of a shaft half as deep again as the Monument is high. The passengers and cargo may come from anywhere—say Jericho; and may travel from the *Varne* northward to England, or southward to France, by the submarine railway. There is to be something grand in the form of a tower at the *Varne*, to represent 'le mariage symbolique des nations.' Some of the English newspapers have been a little puzzled about this *Varne*; one describes it as 'an island at the bottom of the sea, called the *Varne Star*!' A friend put the question to M. Thomé de Gamond, what would result if England and France were at war; would the international tunnel railway be used by the troops of each country to invade the other? No, is the reply; the whole tunnel could speedily be flooded from the *Varne*, and the water pumped out again when the war is over—an ingenious idea, to say the least of it.

Mr J. F. Smith's project, in 1861, was totally unlike the submarine tunnel schemes. He would place a gigantic wrought-iron tube, large enough to contain railway-trains, at a level of about twelve yards below the surface of the water. It would float, because it would have air within, and water without. It would be kept from rising by mooring-chains and diagonal rods in various directions. It would be kept from swaying to and fro laterally by masonry piers, built up at a mile or so apart, embracing the sides of the tube, and steadied by cross-rods over and under it. The tube would be made in lengths of a hundred feet each, and would be floated out to their place. The iron of the tube would be two inches in thickness. Spiral staircases at each shore would lead down to the level of the tube, which, for some distance from the shore, would be embedded in a solid embankment. The cost of this work was set down at £10,000,000.

Another project, brought forward about the same time by Mr Chinie, was for a kind of floating railway. Two great towers are to be built, one at a certain distance out from each shore; and an embankment or viaduct, on a level with the South Eastern Railway, is to be built from each tower to the adjacent shore. Railway trains, running from the shore upon the embankment, would reach the tower; a hydraulic-worked platform would lower the train to a depth depending on the state of the tide at the time; a long, specially prepared ship, with rails on the deck, would receive the train; the ship would steam on to the other great tower; a movable platform would raise it to a certain height; and then a second embankment would carry it forward on a level with the system of French railways.

In comparing all the schemes put forth down to

the present time, we find that the submarine plan is that which has engaged the largest amount of attention. A high-level bridge, with arches, or rather square-topped openings, so lofty as to permit the passage of ships beneath them, would require piers or supporting columns of such enormous dimensions, that no obtainable amount of capital would defray the cost, even if engineering skill could master the difficulties. A bridge on a lower level, with openings to allow of the passage of ships, and draw-bridges, pivot-bridges, or telescope-bridges, to close the openings, would require just as ponderous piers below water, with the addition of vast constructions to support and work the movable bridges. A bridge actually floating on the surface of the water, and moved along by steam, is the main feature in the scheme described in the last paragraph, and in another by Mr Fowler, which we shall notice presently. A bridge suspended in the water, at some intermediate level between the surface and the sea-bottom, is illustrated by Mr Smith's project of 1861; but engineers in general seem to have viewed with much distrust the probable fate of a gigantic tube placed in such an extraordinary position; it must not sink nor rise, nor sway to and fro, nor admit of being burst in by the waves; and it must be sufficiently far down to be below the keels of the deepest ships—conditions difficult enough, we should think, to dismay any one. A causeway laid down upon the bottom of the sea, with a tunnel upon it; or an iron tube laid upon the actual sea-bottom without a causeway—these are examples of a fifth kind of construction, which the scheme of Messrs Franchot and Tessié de Mottray, as well as that of M. Payerne, serves to illustrate. Lastly, there is the *bond fide* tunnel, the submarine tunnel, properly so called, excavated by miners far below the bed of the sea; this, the reader will have perceived, is the form which most of the schemes assume. Thus there are six gradations of level conveniently dividing all possible schemes (except those of an aeronautic kind) into six groups: a high-level bridge; a low-level bridge, with passages alternately opened and closed; a bridge floating on the surface of the water; a tubular bridge suspended in the water, at a certain depth below the surface; a tunnel built, or a tube laid, upon the sea-bottom; and a tunnel excavated below the sea-bottom.

The recent correspondence in the *Times* shews that two of our well-known civil engineers are engaged in schemes belonging respectively to the third and the sixth of the above-named groups, the floating-bridge and the tunnel. Mr Hawkshaw, engineer of the Charing Cross and Cannon Street stations and railway bridges, is understood to be making an examination, by means of borings, of the strata beneath the English Channel. The scheme is for a tunnel, the same in principle as so many that have preceded it, but differing in details not yet settled. Some say that ten years' time and ten millions sterling will do the work; others insist upon twenty years and twenty millions. The other scheme, by Mr Fowler, the successful engineer of the Metropolitan Underground Railway, is strictly for a floating-bridge, like those which cross the harbour at Portsmouth, the Hamoaze at Plymouth, and some of the broad rivers in Scotland. It will, in fact, be an ocean-ferry. Flat long steamers of peculiar build would be provided, with rails laid down on deck. Docks

would be built at or near Dover and Calais, to receive these steamers. Inclined platforms, with rails on them, would connect the land railways with the steamers, the platforms being hinged so as to take a gradient varying with the state of the tide. A train, starting from London, would, upon reaching Dover, descend the inclined platform leading to the steamer or floating-bridge, would steam across the Channel, would ascend a platform at Calais, and would attain the level of the French railways. According to this scheme, there would be no transhipment, no 'break of gauge,' no disruption of continuity, no paddling on sloppy piers, or wrangling with railway porters; you would sit quietly in your railway carriage, whether in England, on the sea, or in France. Or perhaps you might be allowed to get out of the carriage, and roam about the big ship, smoking or what not until you reach the Calais shore, when you would take your place in the carriage again. Mr Fowler talks about two years' time, and a million and a half sterling being sufficient for this work, and says that the great size and flat construction of the floating ship would reduce to a minimum those miseries of sea-sickness which over-Channel passengers know only too well.

Let the tunnel-makers and the bridge-makers advise what they may in future years; we talk not about 'impossibilities' in engineering skill or in financial organisation; but we cannot help thinking that this steam-ferry scheme, this floating railway, has a feasibility about it worthy of notice. It seems less wild, at all events, than the other schemes; and the railway companies on both sides of the Channel could easily raise the capital that would suffice to put it to the test.

ETON SIXTY YEARS SINCE.

IN TWO PARTS.—PART II.

ANOTHER Sunday institution was 'prose.' We went into the great school-room. The doctor pulled out an English book (this was the only dip we got from week's end to week's end into 'the well of English undefiled'—the only taste, the least taste in life, of our native language), and read a few pithy moral sentences—pearls thrown before swine, and the swine-herd seemed to feel disgusted as he threw them. He then gave out the subjects of exercises for the ensuing week, and informed us what would be the amount of holidays in it. Every saint's day in the calendar was a half-holiday. As for the whole holidays, their name was legion; and these were all superadded to the ordinary allowance of one whole and two half-holidays, which was called a regular week, and looked on as an extreme hardship. The Christmas, Easter, and Election (summer) holidays were even then the longest in the scholastic world; and great folks, from our old personal friend George III. downwards, were always asking for extra holidays, and always getting them; for were they not as great a boon to masters as to boys?

I have mentioned the weekly exercises. The prose-themes were dreary drudgery. You might see unhappy beings wandering about, and begging piteously: 'Give me a little sense; there's a good fellow!' In the verses, some took a pride, for

Eton was unrivalled in them; they were hardly even attempted anywhere else, except in one or two of the great schools. Their use remains to be discovered.

A copy of extraordinary merit your tutor would, once in a way, tell you to take up to Dr Keate, and it was forthwith whispered abroad: 'So-and-so has been sent up for good.' You were called out before the assembled school, and the doctor read your verses. He did not read well, and had only one form of commendation—a snappish and somewhat reluctant 'Very good! very good!' There was occasional favouritism in the bestowal of this honour; I have known a tutor almost re-write a copy of verses, to make them good enough for the purpose. In conclusion, you received half-a-guinea (charged in your bill, along with birch and broken windows). Half-a-guinea was not then altogether beneath the notice of an average Eton boy. But great poets were always rare; and verses were ordinarily manufactured (as well as themes) out of 'old copies'—the rough copies corrected by your tutor, and which you kept for future use. Oh, lazy folks do take such pains! The tiresome hours I have seen wasted in reading over this unutterable trash!—classing, ticketing, endorsing it, and filling the pigeon-holes of your bureau with it! When you left, it was the most precious legacy you could bequeath to your best friend, for there were a few stock subjects on which all the changes were rung—war, peace, spring, hunting, &c. Hunting, is it, this week? You turn to the letter H in your register, and you find nine old copies on hunting. Now, shew discretion; an entire one would most likely be found out. (Gift copies are better than your own old ones, because they have been corrected by some other tutor, and yours will not recognise in them his own handiwork.) Pick a bit here, a bit there; make 'em fit. How many have you got now? Twelve. Do they make sense? Pretty fair. Just put in a false quantity or two, to make it look more natural. Sixteen, eighteen; that's enough. Put back the old copies. But mind you mark the date when each was used, and the scrap taken. Next 'hunting-day,' you must draw other covers.

That we might not have too many consecutive hours in which to contrive mischief, our holidays were broken up by 'absences,' so named, I suppose, because you were bound to be 'present' at the roll-call. They were held, in winter, in the cloisters; in summer, like the 'Justice' of the 'Saint Homme Roi' (St Louis), under a grand old elm in the Playing Fields. There stands the doctor with his list; I am by his side, as preceptor, to 'mark in.' After absence, I go round the boarding-houses, walk into the kitchen, and send up inquiries to the tutor or dame after the missing. The penalty is a flogging.

Keate's predecessor had held the reins very slack. He pulled them up sharp. The boys kicked, and there was a trial of strength. Various rough practical jokes were played on the new master. He was very short, very square, and encumbered with an immense doctoral gown. One day they screwed up the door of his desk. He comes into school swaggering, finds it fast—a vigorous shake in vain. In an instant, he appreciates the situation, lays his hand on the top of the door, and in despite of the gown, vaults into his place like a boy. (Cheers from the public—a growl from the monarch in his den.) Another

time, a mastiff was shut up in his desk. In he bustled, and the dog instantly flew at him; but the roar of the reverend gentleman was fiercer than the brute's; one kick sent him flying among the ranks of his friends, and the lesson went on.

He multiplied absences, and resistance increased. I was standing by him while he was calling the roll, when a stone as big as his fist hit the peak of his cocked-hat. His sharp eye scanned the crowd intently for five seconds, failed to detect the offender, and without a word, he went on with the names. He was not one to bark without biting. But things soon came to a crisis. He had imposed an additional absence on one division as a punishment. A consultation was held, and a resolution formed that no one should attend. He came, and found himself alone. He had just got up from a dinner-party at his own house. He collected his assistants, and staid until the whole division were brought into his presence. Then and there he flogged the whole of them, and severely—above four-score—and returned to his guests in his wife's drawing-room as placid and agreeable as usual. There was no further opposition to his authority.

In all athletic games, Eton was as pre-eminent as in versification. The recesses between the buttresses of the chapel were our five-courts, and in play-hours were always in full activity. Hockey was forbidden as dangerous, but the prohibition was a dead-letter; custom had settled that, as if in defiance, it should go on, not in the Playing Fields, but in the large meadow just in front of Keate's own house; and here the game was never interfered with.

But the Playing Fields were the true Elysium of the Etonian, and Thames the river of his delights. In the Playing Fields, he had his football in winter, his cricket in summer, and his fighting all the year round. It was perfectly wonderful how so many games of cricket could go on at once in so small a space. The grass was worn perfectly bare. The balls flew, as in a field of battle, in all directions, while among them anxious fags were running the gantlet, carrying tea to their masters in the 'Shooting Fields'—the adjoining meadow, sacred to the sixth form and the Eleven, where there was plenty of elbow-room, and all was serene dignity. (No doubt this was the ancient archery-ground of Eton.) I have been knocked down ('cut over' was the phrase) twice in an hour, in the Playing Fields, by balls from other wickets. Once I woke up, and found myself sitting on the ground, the centre of a circle of boys looking frightened. What did it all mean? I had been fielding at my own game, when a strange ball struck me on the nape of the neck. The fellows thought I was killed; but I never felt it; and when I came to my senses, the interval was a perfect blank.

Enough, and more than enough, has been said about modern boxing; but a Playing Fields' battle was a different thing. As surely as steam arises from hot water, so surely will quarrels arise among boys; and the best of all practical safety-valves were fists, as then used at Eton. There was no blackguardism; no professional dirt stuck to the combatants. Nobody, I think, even took boxing-lessons; at least, no parade was made of it. A new boy would be expected to shew his mettle; that done, if he were not of a quarrelsome temper, he might go in peace. He might also, at

any moment, get into an accidental row. Your friends arranged the meeting: you just walked into the Playing Fields with your second, stripped off your jacket, and went to work. The boys made a ring, and your second gave you a knee. No other formalities; hardly even a sponge, or a watch. When a minute was supposed to have elapsed, one got up from his second's knee, and said: 'Come on.' A little hot blood was let out; and as soon as either felt he had enough, he had only to say so. Drawn battles ('making it up') were not so common, nor so well liked; the boys preferred to have matters brought to an issue. There was the most perfect fair-play; and if things were carried at all too far, interference was pretty sure to be at hand, though not otherwise. Once only, during a fight, I saw Keate just shew himself at the corner of the Playing Fields, and the hint was taken immediately.

Battles were the foundation of the firmest friendships: you had learned to respect each other. Twice in after-life, I have identified Etonians by reference to the Playing Fields. I had met an old clergyman at dinner, a stranger. Getting friendly over the wine, and gradually awakening to the memory of former days, I said: 'I think, sir, you have a broken knuckle on your right hand, and you broke it in a fight with —' (that bully I spoke of). Hail, fellow! well met! directly. I was introduced to a man abroad, and wishing to improve the acquaintance: 'Have we not met before?' I asked. 'I think the last time I saw you, you were winning a Playing Fields' battle with —.' We were friends from that moment. Thus, I have heard an engineer officer asked: 'Do you know Captain —?' 'Very well indeed. I never saw him but once: we were blown up together at Fort —.'

Sooner or later, all swam. Men were stationed at particular bathing-places, to prevent accidents (to bathe elsewhere, was a flogging), and they taught swimming at a guinea a head. I wrote to my father for the guinea, and received an angry answer, to the effect that in his time boys taught themselves to swim, and I might do the same. This was hard upon me, for the teacher, for the sake of his own trade, would of course set all the boys to bait me. But I was in some sort Spartan-bred. We read that they dreaded the enemy less than their own officers, and my chief dread was my father. So I went to 'Upper Hope,' strong in despair. Terrible work it was; but in three days I swam. Then followed great fun by land and water. There was water-cricket. The wicket pitched in the Brocas meadow; the ball hit into the Thames, where the fags were swimming, to throw it up. Then there were little fellows drying themselves by a process new to me—catching a cow by the tail, using the towel for a whip, and making the animal gallop them about the meadow till they were dry. I have other recollections of that Brocas. There it was that, with a gun hired at Eton, which, from its look, might have been Robinson Crusoe's, I shot a swallow flying: the first shot I ever fired. Ah, you may call it a fluke! I stood triumphant over him; but, as Pope says, 'wondered how the devil he got there.'

That finest of all exercises, rowing, we enjoyed in perfection. Were we not proud when a match had been made between four officers of the Blues and four Eton boys! They saw our boat practising, and gave it up at once: this increased our

contempt for the Blues. We had a tradition that they had run away somewhere in Germany, nobody knew where, or when. That didn't signify; we firmly believed it, and when, about this time, an alteration was made in their dress, and their long pigtailed cut off, our story was, that it had been done to prevent the enemy from seizing them by the tail, and making them prisoners in their flight. The river was a resource to us even in winter. If that passed without a flood, we considered Father Thames had used us ill. Ruin, perhaps, to farmers and cottagers, it was sport to us. Streets impassable—chairs to stand on, upon the ground-floors—were treats; but the best of all was to get into a punt, and make one's way right across the country over what had been meadows.

Length of time had reduced many laws to dead-letters, and effected strange compromises. Beyond the precincts of the college, all was out of bounds, except to the sixth form, who were, in some respects, policemen—quasi-monitors. You would see two boys walking quietly along the street. Instantly, madly, they would rush up an entry; but a gentleman, or a big boy, would say encouragingly: 'Come on.' They would re-appear, and quietly resume their walk: they were out of bounds. The bugbear was a master, or a sixth form. They had 'shirked' (done homage to authority), and had been 'called on' (the homage acknowledged as sufficient). A sixth form, as a kindness to a lower boy, would 'give you his name'; that is, you need not shirk him; but if you were at any considerable distance from college, or engaged in any mischief, then shirking must be real.

The very nicknames of Eton were superior, and often elegantly classical. Take a specimen. There was in my time a boy named McGuire, who, if prizes were given for knock-knees, would have carried off the first prize anywhere. Now, Homer has a stock of phrases with which he is apt to fill up his verse, just as lawyers use 'common forms' for their prose. One of these, frequently occurring in the description of a hero, is *phaidima guia* (beautiful limbs), and Paddy McGuire bore the appropriate name of 'Phaidima Guia.'

The collegers were a separate caste, the true foundation of the whole. For the maintenance and education of seventy poor scholars, had Henry VI. founded the school. Like all charities that ever were, it came to be abused: the rich were admitted on payment, and browbeat the poor. The 'King's Scholars' came to be sneered at as 'Tug-muttons.' In time, they got knives and forks, and ceased to feed classically with their fingers. After a long interval, luxury invaded them, in the shape of potatoes, which were added to their mutton; and next, a benevolent but ignorant fellow (ignorant of the proper way to dress potatoes) had them peeled, as a refinement. His name was handed down to posterity, hitched into a Latin verse, as 'Peely-potato-Robertus.' A leaven of gentility had been gradually introduced into Holy Henry's charity-bread, and the batch began to rise. Still, the poor, the fewer and further between, continued to be admitted into the Septuagint. I have heard of a head-master, Davis, a bricklayer's son; and Heath, a washer-woman's (the masters used to be, exclusively, old Etonians); and I can just remember one or two collegers, sons of Eton tradesmen. At length, competition has swallowed up charity.

In hardihood and veteran character (from greater length of residence), the collegers stood higher than their more fashionable brethren; and though hardly exceeding one-tenth of the whole number, when Eton had to contend with the outer world (especially in cricket), they were the pith and pride of the community. Yet the feeling between the two classes was not very kindly. The bigger gowmsmen seemed tacitly to have adopted towards the oppidans (town-boys, not in college) that amiable sentiment of the Roman emperor: 'Oderint, dum metuant.' 'College' was full of mysterious terrors to little boys. Strange tales were told of 'long chamber,' with its fifty beds. Among its legendary sports, the antique mode of rat-catching may be worth notice. There is an abundant head of game; a battue is arranged for to-night; all is hushed—lights out, and rats, too, feeding; for the untidiness was considerable, and the floor afforded pretty picking to such scavengers. The rat-holes might have appeared, to a stranger, innumerable; but each was marked, and watched. To each, an earth-stopper was appointed, who silently inserted an open stocking into it, with the mouth outwards. The word 'All right' is quietly passed; suddenly, lights are kindled; up jumps everybody, making every imaginable noise—all but the earth-stoppers, who are lying hid, motionless, each under the bed nearest to his hole. Every rat rushes home—darts into the stocking; the earth-stopper pounces on it, closes the mouth, swings it aloft, and rat is a prisoner.

At particular seasons, it was customary to way-lay little oppidans, haul them into long chamber, and torment them with rug-riding or blanketing. Rug-riding was simply being enclosed in a bed-rug, and dragged roughly over the floor at a gallop. Tossing in a blanket was a time-honoured ceremony, requiring both strength and skill to do it well. Four picked collegers hold the corners of a blanket, with a little victim in it; the leader chants a mystic verse of unknown antiquity:

Ibis ab excusso missus ad astra ago.

(Shot out of the blanket, you shall be sent to the stars.)

As he repeats it, his companions, taking the time from him, begin to give an oscillating motion to the blanket: 'Ibis ab (gentle twitch at the four corners) excus (do.) so (do.) missus ad (do.) astra sa (do.) go (grand twitch)!' and go he must; for as the leader shouts the last magic syllable, the united strength of the company is brought into action; and with a twitch, enough to rive any but the very toughest of blankets, up sails the inside passenger. Look out! hold it well up to catch him! that is the only danger. Bad accidents have happened from holding it carelessly, so low that the poor little devil (fallen angel) struck the floor.

To college, too, though the oppidans joined in it, belonged another old Eton custom—the 'Montem,' venerated rather than venerable. It sprang, in fact, from the same unholy alliance of charity, mendicancy, and gaiety which has produced the modern nuisance of bazaars. It was a collection, made every third year, for the outfit of the captain of the collegers, who was fortunate enough to get a vacancy at that time in King's College, Cambridge. (There was a good deal of management in this.) Eight or ten of the senior collegers, in fancy dresses, scoured the country, and laid it under contribution, demanding money under the name of

'Salt.' The whole school, some in very costly masquerade, headed by the captain, marched in procession to Salt Hill (a village about two miles off), where a flag was waved upon a mound. A dinner for all, and an evening's riot, finished the ceremony. Crowds of old Etonians attended, and all the mothers and sisters who could anyhow manage it. The collection sometimes amounted to one thousand pounds. But latterly the captain was little the better for it, so much being wasted on the show, which he had to pay for. The Montem was well got rid of some years ago.

But every summer brought the glories and the joys of election-week—the speeches and the boats last, not least, the holidays. The speeches were weary work, but the audience was grand. The foremost men of England were there, to see a dozen or so of big boys, in evening-dress, get up and recite, tamely enough, Greek and Latin speeches, unintelligible to a parcel of ladies, and little better to men who had probably forgotten what Greek and Latin they might ever have known. But the procession of boats was the pretty sight! (There was another on that hearty national holiday, George III.'s birthday, the fourth of June.) A ten-oar and half-a-dozen eights, the rowers in fancy-dresses, pulled up to Surley Hall, where the whole school dined, and had a day of unlimited licence; the boats returning to Windsor Bridge at night, where fireworks concluded the display. The only evil was the finery of the dresses; I suppose that is worse now; but I have known the feather in a cockswain's cap cost forty guineas.

You have gone through Eton, and are about to leave it—your friends will make you presents of books, handsomely bound. Some popular boys would get quite a library. Yet one more duty remained—to pouch (fee) the head-master and your tutor. The least you could give was ten pounds to each; and you got a book in return. *I have now a receipt from Dr Keate, in the shape of a copy of Lucretius.* The evils of Eton are patent, but quite unlikely to be cured: extravagance, and the preference of useless to useful learning.

As regards extravagance, the main difficulty would be of the same nature as that which neutralises reform among the lower classes—home influence. Your parish school may be perfection, but the children may have to return at night to a father, poacher, and drunkard, or a mother, Babylonian, and thief. In like manner, if you could keep down extravagance during the half-year at Eton; yet the holidays must be spent in parks and palaces, at Paris, or in Belgravia. The wonder is, that under such circumstances eight hundred sons of mammon should learn so much good, and eschew so much evil as they do; and the credit is their own. What is really learned at Eton, they teach one another; it is truly a system of mutual instruction. The generous and manly feeling which is the real glory of Eton, lives and thrives among the boys themselves. In some respects, Etona is not what she was. If she were, she would be out of keeping with the altered state of society; but amid all vicissitudes, she holds, and does not appear likely to lose, her place among schools. And it is the first.

There is no nobler allegory in all classic antiquity than the torch-race. Four hundred years and more, has the torch of Eton been bravely borne aloft. Let the present runners look to it! Let them never cease to keep before their eyes

the duty of handing it to their successors undimmed. Long and brilliant be the race that is yet to come!

Floreat Etona!

BROUGHT TO LIGHT.

CHAPTER XIX.—THE ISLAND OF INCHMALLOW.

JOHN ENGLISH, walking up from Normanford to Cliff Cottage on Thursday evening, was overtaken by Brackenridge. 'Your purpose still holds good, I suppose, to go off to the island to-morrow?' said the latter after the usual greetings. 'You could not have more favourable weather—mild and bright, and no frost.'

'I have not forgotten my promise,' said John, 'and I certainly intend to keep it.'

'I have arranged for a boat to be ready for you at half-past ten, as agreed on,' said the chemist. 'For myself, I am going from home to-morrow, and shall not be back for nearly a week.'

A mild and genial morning was that of Friday, but less bright and sunny than the mornings of several preceding days had been, and John English's practised eye told him that a change of weather was impending. 'It will hold fair till I get back,' he said, as he scanned the clouds again; and then he set off at a rapid pace on his way to Finger Bay. The distance was only six miles and a half, and that was nothing of a walk to John English.

He had got beyond the toll-bar on the Eastriagh road—beyond the toll-bar, but not quite so far as the lodge of Ashleigh Park, when he heard the approaching clatter of hoofs on the hard road behind him. He did not look round; but the sound ceased close at his elbow, and a voice that thrilled him, a voice that he loved to hear better than any other in the world, addressed him: 'Mr English, of all people in the world! Why have you been so long without coming to see us at Belair?'

John turned, and took the little hand so frankly proffered, and bared his head for a moment, as his long brown fingers closed softly over it.

'Do you not know,' he said, 'that I received a polite *congé* from Lady Spencelaugh several weeks ago?'

'I know nothing of the kind,' replied Frederica; 'neither can I in any way account for such treatment. Sir Philip has asked after you several times, and I was obliged to put him off with some vague excuse, being myself at a loss to understand why you had never come up to Belair since the last occasion on which you dined there.'

'You cannot be more at a loss than I am, Miss Spencelaugh, to account for my sudden dismissal.'

'It cannot be accounted for,' said Frederica. 'But Lady Spencelaugh is mistress of her own house, and has the privilege of doing as she likes in such cases. And so enough of an unpleasant topic.—Will you take a commission from me, Mr English?'

John signified how happy it would make him to do so.

'I want you to obtain for me a complete set of your Roman photographs,' said Frederica. 'By what day can you get them for me?'

'I shall have to write to London for them, and can hardly get them down before Tuesday.'

'On Tuesday, then, I shall expect them. But do not send them up to the Hall, Mr English;

bring them yourself—that is, if you are not otherwise engaged. On Tuesday, between eleven and three, remember. And now I must bid you good-morning, for my way lies down here to Ashleigh Park.'

'One word before you go,' said John. 'Sir Philip Spencelaugh—is he better than when I saw him last?'

Frederica's dark eyes turned on John with an almost fearful look. She shook her head sadly. 'He is no better,' she said. 'He never leaves the house now. I dare not trust myself to say more. Adieu!'

John stood like one spell-bound till the last flutter of Frederica's veil was lost among the trees. He had seen her again, and she had smiled kindly on him; and he was to see her again the following week—so ran the joyous burden of his thoughts, as he went on his way through lane, and coppice, and solitary by-paths where no human being seemed to have been for years, till the ocean burst suddenly on his view; and there below him was Finger Bay, with a man pacing the beach, and a tiny boat moored to the rocks. John found a rude footway, by which he scrambled down to the shore; and on approaching, was surprised to find that the man he had seen was none other than Jerry Winch. 'Brackenridge has surely never sent him to row me across to the island!' muttered John to himself.

'Good-morning, Jerry,' he said as he drew near. 'What are you doing at this out-of-the-way spot?'

The lad took off his conical hat, and gave one of his sweeping old-fashioned bows. 'Jerry is here to row the gentleman across to Inchmallow,' he said.

'I was not aware that the art of rowing was among your accomplishments,' said John.

'Jerry knows how to row,' said the lad quietly. 'He has been to Inchmallow often with people in summer-time to see the ruins. He could find his way there and back in the dark.'

'In that case, we will start at once,' said John as he led the way to the boat. He was fond of rowing, and the anticipated pleasure of a good pull had been one great inducement for making the excursion; stripping off his coat, he now took the stroke-oar, and having pulled out into deep water, Jerry set the boat's head for Inchmallow, which was only just visible this morning through the haze.

A long silent pull through the green water, swelling as gently just now as any summer sea, for there had been nearly a month of fine weather—silent, because Jerry was not talkative at the best of times, and in the presence of the great magician, which he believed John to be, it was not to be expected that he should speak except when spoken to; while John's thoughts were too bright and busy for him to care about conversation. Once or twice, while John rested on his oar for a moment, Jerry's hand wandered into the folds of his waistcoat, to feel whether the amulet, which Brackenridge had lent him as a safeguard against the machinations of the dread Katakango, was still safe. It hung by a ribbon round his neck; and the charm itself, whatever it might be, was stitched up with variegated silks in a piece of sealskin, which smelt strongly of spices and strange drugs. Armed with this potent safeguard, Jerry felt tolerably brave, and went through the duties of the occasion without falling into a state of nervous incapacity, which was what the chemist had dreaded more than anything else.

So, after a time, the mainland began to look dim and distant through the haze; and the little rocky island of Inchmallow rose pleasantly to view out of the green waste of waters. Jerry steered the boat into a little sheltered cove, and made it fast to a large boulder, and then John stepped ashore. Whatever might have been its state of cultivation at some far-distant time, the island was now wild and desolate enough to have suited the tastes of the most unsocial of hermits. It was only about a mile and a quarter in circumference, but the irregularities of its surface made it seem much larger. On three sides, it presented a jagged, irregular frontage of rocks to the sea, known to frequenters of the island as 'The Shark's Teeth,' and ranging from ten to fifty feet above high-water mark. These rocks were fringed with a thick growth of stunted shrubs and bushes, all with their heads turned inland from the rough wintry sea-wind. The ground inside this rocky barrier was thickly carpeted with long coarse grass, and dipped down towards a central hollow, sheltered, warm, where lay the ruins of the hermitage.

John English, standing on the fragment of a broken pillar, took in the features of the scene. Here and there, a portion of a wall was still standing; with one or two doorways, and part of a small circular tower, with a winding staircase inside, leading originally to a belfry, or, it might be, to a look-out across the sea; but beyond the arch of the chapel window, which had been spoken of by Brackenridge, and which, though small in size, was of exquisite design, there was nothing worthy of John's pencil. He had brought his materials with him, and he sat down at once on the broken pillar, and began to sketch the window. An hour later, with his pipe in his mouth, and his sketch-book under his arm, he wandered slowly back towards the shore. With the completion of his task, his thoughts had flown back to Frederica; and it was rather by instinct than by the exercise of any other faculty, that he retraced his way to the shingly cove where he had landed. The sea was at his feet: he brought himself back by an effort from the delicious dreamland in which he had been wandering, and looked around.

Jerry and the boat were gone!

But gone whither? John scrambled up on to a pinnacle of rock close by, and looked steadfastly around. There was nothing to be seen but the water in front of him, and the desolate island behind, and over everything the gray mist, growing grayer and denser as the day advanced; but nowhere either Jerry or the boat. John called aloud: 'Jerry! Jerry Winch! where are you?' And then he waited breathlessly, but there came no response. 'The foolish fellow has grown tired with waiting, and has gone round to some other point of the island,' muttered John to himself; and with that he set off to explore the little domain, bounding lightly from rock to rock, examining carefully every little indentation of the shore where it was possible for a boat to lurk, calling Jerry's name at intervals; and so, after a time, he found himself again at the point from which he had started, having gone completely round the island; and with that the conviction burst upon his mind that he had been purposely abandoned. Once more he called Jerry by name, louder than before. After a short space of breathless silence, there came a low fiendish 'Hoo, hoo, hoo!' out of the mist; and then there was nothing but the dull plash of the waves

on the shingle, and the straining beat of John's own heart.

He sat down on the shore, and buried his face in his hands, and his very soul seemed to sink down into a black abyss of despair, appalled by the thought of the terrible fate in store for him. Death by starvation and hunger—such was to be his doom. During the summer months, hardly a week passed without the island being visited by one or more pleasure-parties; but at that dead season of the year, no sane person would ever think of visiting so desolate a spot; and John knew enough of that dangerous coast to be aware that passing ships gave its hidden dangers as wide a berth as possible, and never, even in the fairest weather, ventured within hailing distance of Inchmallow. Whether his abandonment resulted from the working of some black tortuous thought in Jerry's own addled brain, or whether the simpleton had been incited to the evil deed by others, was a matter on which it were useless just then to speculate. John remembered with a pang of regret that he had not mentioned his intention of visiting Inchmallow to any one except Brackenridge, and the chemist had gone from home for several days. As for Mrs Jakeway, she would doubtless grow uneasy after a time at her lodger's continued absence; but then, John had always been an unaccountable mortal, and had not unfrequently left his lodgings for two or three days together, without giving his landlady any previous intimation of his intentions. Nay, even supposing that the old lady grew alarmed at his non-return, where, or of whom, was she to make inquiry about him? If she went to the police—what then? John was sufficiently acquainted with Jerry Winch's mental peculiarities to know that the simpleton could keep a secret, if it were to his interest to do so, with more than the cunning of a sane man. He could not help admitting that his chance of rescue was a very faint one. Months might pass away before Inchmallow were visited by a single soul; while a few days, ten or twelve at the outside, would put an end to all his troubles. This was not the first time he had borne hunger and privation; his frame was strong and hardy, and his constitution good; and he knew that he was better calculated than most people to stand such an ordeal, which, however, in the present case, meant nothing more than a prolongation of suffering, for even the strongest must succumb at last. And Frederica—would she ever know his fate? Yes; weeks, or it might be months hence, when his body was found, the news would spread, and would penetrate even within the guarded precincts of Belair; and she would learn then why he had never fulfilled her commission. She would feel sorry for him, of course; her gentle nature would not admit of anything less: simply sorry, and nothing more. While he?—But it were better not to let such thoughts carry him too far; so he arose at once, and broke away from his reverie, and started to make a careful exploration of his little domain. In less than a couple of hours, he had completely exhausted it, but had found nothing whatever in his search that would contribute in any way to support human life. Fortunately, his flask was full of sherry, and he had four hard biscuits in his pocket. An ounce of Cavendish tobacco, a meerschaum pipe, and a box of fuses, completed the list of his possessions. He was dressed in a suit of stout winter tweed, and a

Glengarry bonnet; but had no overcoat, or other extra protection against the weather.

A careful examination of the ruins had shewn him a small cavernous opening among the foundations of the crumbling tower. It was only about four feet in height, arched over with brickwork, and having a floor composed of dry sandy earth; and John thought himself fortunate in finding in its furthest corner a heap of dry bracken, which had been put there by some unknown person, for some unknown purpose, and which he at once appropriated for his bed; here, when the short winter-day had come to an end, and John had given up all hope of rescue till the morrow, he coiled himself up in the dark, like a wild beast in its lair, and went to sleep: his wandering life had given him this advantage, that he could go to sleep anywhere. He awoke about two o'clock—he read off the time on his watch by the light of a fusee—and crawled out of his den to consult the weather. Fog—everywhere fog; hiding earth, sea, and sky behind its dull, dank curtain. With a shiver, John crept back to bed; but sleep refused to come a second time, and he lay tossing with wide-open eyes till the tardy daylight, yellow and sickly, looked in upon him. Then he got up, and walked down to the shore.

CHAPTER XX.—THE WOMAN IN GRAY.

Fog, everywhere fog; not so thick as it had been in the middle of the night, but thicker than on the previous day, and shutting him in at a distance of forty or fifty yards as with an impenetrable wall. John English could not help a sinking of the heart when he looked around; his prospect of escape seemed to him, just then, even more remote than on the previous day. A pipe of Cavendish constituted his breakfast. He felt ravenously hungry, but he fought against the feeling, buckling the belt round his waist a little tighter, and determined to reserve his wine and biscuits till his need should be still greater. There was a broken fountain among the ruins from which a little streamlet still welled forth, as cold and pure as when, centuries ago, the monks first enshrined it in carven stone, and filled their pitchers with its limpid freshness; and it now served John both for drinking and washing purposes. It was no use, he thought, dawdling about all day, doing nothing, and letting the fog chill him to the marrow; so he set about a systematic course of pedestrian exercise, walking from one side of the island to the other at a quick pace, and then back; and this he did, with short intervals of rest, till night came on again. A mouthful of sherry, half a biscuit, a pipe of tobacco, and then to bed. He was thoroughly tired out, and slept soundly.

The third day: Sunday. No change in the weather. The fog still as heavy as before. This day was passed by John as the preceding one had been. Allowance of wine and biscuit as before. The influence of the day seemed to make itself felt even on that lonely isle; John felt more humble-minded and resigned to his fate than he had hitherto done.

The fourth day: Monday. No change, except that the fog seemed a little lighter than on the previous day. John kept up his exercise, but was obliged to rest longer and more frequently than before. He caught himself once or twice waking up from a sort of half-stupor as he walked, in

which he had forgotten where he was, and had fancied himself going about his ordinary avocations at Normanford. That feeling of ravenous hunger which had tormented him so much previously, now came on at intervals only; but in its stead he was racked with strange pains, which caught him suddenly, and tortured him almost beyond endurance for a time, and then left him as unexpectedly as they had come.

John was awakened before daybreak on the morning of the fifth day by the loud thunder of the waves as they broke on the rocky shore of the little island. He crept out of his den, and stumbled his way down to the beach. The fog was still as thick as ever, and the morning was perfectly calm; but a heavy sea was rolling grandly in with the morning tide, and John knew at once that there had been a great storm out on the Atlantic, perhaps a thousand miles away, of which these angry waves were the only traces that would reach so far. His hunger this morning was so extreme that he could not help giving way to it a little by indulging in a double allowance of wine and biscuit; but even with this assistance, he found himself considerably weaker than he had yet been, and could only get through about half the amount of exercise he had set himself to do. Once he fancied himself with Sir Philip Spencelaugh, walking in the great park of Belair; and when he shook off the hallucination, and came back to the reality of his position, he could not stifle the sob that burst from his heart. Sometimes he would murmur to himself, half aloud: 'I shall die, and she will never know how truly I have loved her;' but beyond that he was silent. Nearly three hours of this day were devoted by him to writing down in his pocket-book an account of how he came to be left on the island; and after that, he gave a brief outline of his history from childhood; concluding with the narration, in as few words as possible, of what had happened to him, affecting his personal history, since his arrival at Normanford. He also gave the addresses of two friends who were to be written to, and who would see to the proper disposal of his remains. He sat for a long time when his task was done, musing sadly, on a sheltered seat he had found among the rocks on the beach; watching, with thoughts that were far away, the great green waves rolling in with a regularity that was grand from its very monotony. He felt now as though he had almost done with earth—as though he were at liberty to turn his thoughts to higher subjects; but through all his musings the image of Frederica moved, serene and beautiful, leading his mind upward, even as Dante was led by saintly Beatrice, to heights sweet and solemn, fragrant with airs from Heaven, where earthly tempests never rave.

He sat thus till the afternoon began to darken, and then he rose and wandered slowly towards the ruins; but his cramps came on by the way, and he was obliged to sit down, and wait in silent agony till they left him. It seemed to him, to-day, that all the way as he walked back to the ruins he was followed by a ghostly monk—a monk in a black robe, and sandalled shoon, who walked behind him with bowed head, counting his beads; stopping when John stopped; starting again the instant that he started; never looking up, but going through his rosary slowly, bead by bead, and then beginning afresh. Although John knew that it was merely a delusion of his own weakened senses,

he could not resist the shudder that ran through him whenever he glanced over his shoulder, and saw the dark weird figure following noiselessly behind—and such backward glances were very frequent; his head seemed to go round without any will of his own in the matter. He turned and confronted the figure, and it stood motionless with downcast head, except that its fingers were still busy with its beads. He advanced towards it, and as he did so, it retreated, still keeping the same relative distance between them. He tried once or twice, by stopping suddenly, to catch the light pit-pat of its footfall—if it had any; but the very instant that John stopped, it stopped, and was evidently not to be caught by so palpable a device. Half laughing, half shuddering at his own folly in being thus terrified by a mere spectral illusion, John quickened his pace; and a few minutes later he crept in at the door of his den, and flung himself on his bed of bracken with a sigh of relief. He looked up after a time, and the figure was there, sitting in the doorway, still busy with its beads. Although nearly dark by this time, he could see it plainly, by some inner light, as it seemed, that emanated from itself.

After a long silent stare, John said slowly between his set teeth: 'I think I know how to exorcise you, my boy—at least for the present;' and with that he took up his flask, and drained off his last modicum of sherry, and then set to work to munch his last biscuit, keeping his eyes meanwhile turned steadfastly away from the spot where the figure was sitting. When he had eaten the last crumb, he turned his head to look for the figure. It was gone. With a laugh that seemed far more dreary than any tears would have done, he turned himself round on his bed, for he felt very weak and weary, and remembered nothing more.

Once again he awoke, some time towards the middle of the night, and this time with a strange sound in his ears—a loud shrill whistle repeated again and again in quick succession. He started up on his bed, and then, still doubting the accuracy of his senses, stumbled out into the open air. For the first time since his sojourn on the island, the night was comparatively light, for although the fog still hung low and heavy, the moon, no longer hidden by thick clouds, shone brightly through it, and transfused it into a silvery haze. Again that sound—loud, clear, and shrill. Surely it must emanate from some living being. John's heart beat thickly, and for a moment or two both eyes and limbs failed him, as he sank half fainting to the ground. A minute to recover himself somewhat, and then up and away, as fast as he could go, in the direction from which the sound came. He tried to shout, but could not; and so, breathing hard, and stumbling, and then stopping a moment to listen, he at length overtopped the little sand-ridge, and came down on the 'shining levels' of the beach. What his first glance shewed him there might well have been taken by him for another phantom of a weakened brain: a dark, hooded figure, less tall than the first one, with something pendent from its waist, which it lifted ever and anon to its lips, and blew shrilly, and then stopped, as if waiting for some answering signal. As John came into view, the figure waved its hand to him to advance; and then he saw a little boat moored close behind, and felt that he was saved; and a great throbbing of gratitude for his deliverance went up to Heaven. 'Come!' said the figure,

with another wave of its hand, as he drew nearer; 'I am here to save you. Do not delay, or we shall miss the turn of the tide.'

It was the voice of a woman that spoke, but it came with a muffled sound out of the gray hood, which left no feature visible by that dim light, and John failed to recognise it. Still like a man in a dream, John stepped into the boat, and seated himself on the cushioned seat indicated by his guide. The woman followed, and a vigorous push with the oar sent the boat from land. 'In that basket at your feet you will find something to eat and drink; but after so long a fast, you must be cautious not to take too much.'

A minute or two later, the isle of Inchmallow faded ghostlike in the mist.

The hooded woman pulled slowly and steadily, and the tide helped them on their way. 'It must surely be a blissful dream,' thought John, as he lay back with closed eyes on the cushions of the boat. Who was this woman, that had come so mysteriously to his rescue? He asked himself the question once or twice, but he had not sufficient energy left to be strongly curious even on that point: just then, he cared for little or nothing except the one great fact, that he was saved, and that he should see Frederica again. Soon the great cliffs of the mainland loomed dimly into view. 'Let me at least know the name of my preserver,' said John, as he stepped ashore in obedience to a gesture from his conductress.

'That you must never know,' said the woman in gray; 'and you cannot serve me better than by not attempting to learn it.'

'Is there no other method left me of shewing my gratitude?' asked John earnestly.

'Yes; one thing more you can do to oblige me: do not strive to punish the simpleton by whose foolish act you so nearly lost your life. Let him go in peace: he knew no better. And now, farewell. Behind yonder turn of the road, you will find a little country inn. Go there, and knock the people up; they will gladly take you in. There stay till you are strong enough to return home. Farewell.'

She pushed off before he could say a word in reply; and presently the fog took her and the boat, and he saw them no more.

NOTHING TO SPARE.

WHAT! hast thou *nought* to spare? Alas! thy lot

Indeed is hapless; thou art very poor.

Poorer than thy poor brethren who have not

The hoarded much, that crieth still for more!

Where are thy baubles? Where thy glittering toys!

Where thy rich trappings! Thy amusements, where!

The daily luxury, that only cloy?

Oh! look, and see if thou hast '*nought* to spare.'

Where is thy wasted time? Thy unbreadth word

Of gentleness! Thy hidden talent, where?

The look of pity which thou mightst accord?

Oh! do not tell me thou hast '*nought* to spare.'

Bethink thee, ere thou speakest so again,

And for thy needy brethren have some care;

Oh! be more grateful to thy Father, when

So much He giveth thee—so much '*to spare*.'

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THE MONKS OF COCKAIGNE.

IN FIVE CHAPTERS.

CHAPTER I.—HOW THE MONASTERY OF COCKAIGNE CAME TO BE FOUNDED.

AT half-past six o'clock on the evening of the 15th April 1852, four men entered the smoking-room of the *Cheshire Cheese*, and took their hard cherry-wood seats around a social board, with four legs, varnished to represent mahogany. Three of them filled and lit long clay-pipes, piles of which were arranged about the room; one smoked a cigar which, taken from its box, and calculated alone, cost him exactly fivepence-half-penny. Presently, a waiter brought in a china bowl filled with punch, and placed it on the increasingly social board—a lovely object, as it rested steaming in their midst, with a ladle gracefully reposing within it, and old-fashioned glasses—neither wine nor ale glasses, but in size and shape essentially peculiar to punch—clustered around it. The scene would have been perfect but for the incongruous cigar.

The man smoking it was named Percival Stone, an acute member of the Stock Exchange, who was making money, but preferred to live quietly until such time as he should be rich enough to cut jobbing, and kick away the ladder by which he had risen; for he had relatives in what is termed 'good society,' who would have been ashamed of him at present, if he had appeared in the one club of which he was a member, or had nodded to them in the Park; so Percival avoided the West End. He was tall, fair-haired, blue-eyed, big-whiskered, Roman-nosed, neatly dressed: not like his neighbour, Joseph Warrender, a solicitor, whose features were both intelligent and pleasing, but whose necktie was always awry, his coat fluffy, his gloves torn, his boots, even in the driest weather, muddy. He had seized upon the ladle, and was helping the punch, not without spilling some of it. Number three was a fine man; black hair crowning his head, black hair framing his face, black hair tickling his nose, black hair serving him for a shirt-front; that is, I believe he wore a linen one, but it was a piece of absurd superstition—you could see nothing between

his nose and watch-chain but a silky, jetty horsetail; his complexion was sallow, his figure military, indeed, Jack Markam had served in the Indian cavalry, though he had exchanged the barrack-room for a merchant's office in the city of London, to the enlargement of his income and the diminution of his liver. The remaining *convive* had not run up to the height of Jack or Percy, but his stature was that which has always been found the most capable of enduring bodily fatigue, and is likewise most usually combined with a high order of intellect; his features were, perhaps, less regular than those of his companions, but the intelligence which beamed from every line rendered them far more attractive. I must, however, be silent upon his merits, and leave others to do him that justice which— But, thank goodness, William Stesso need not act as his own trumpeter. What his profession was, is not of the slightest importance.

'I am miserable!' said Joe Warrender.

'Of course,' said Bill Stesso. 'If you will make a hearty meal off narrow-bones and toasted cheese, you must expect unhappiness to be your next portion for some time afterwards. If, now, you had contented yourself with a chop?—'

'Or a steak and oyster,' substituted Jack Markam.

'Or half a fowl,' proposed Percy Stone.

'You would now experience that feeling of peace and contentment which soothes the senses, and beautifies the features of your companions.'

'Pshaw!' said Joe. 'My digestion is all right; but I do regret being stifled up here in a musty room in London, instead of spending this delicious spring evening in the country.'

'Ah!' said Percy. 'One might just now be whipping a river for trout.'

'Or cream for a dairymaid,' suggested Jack. 'If some are better off than ourselves, others are worse. Think of those poor fellows who are married.'

'True!'

'Who have families.'

'True!'

'Who may not indulge in either tobacco or punch.'

'True!!'

But Truth, probably in consequence of her habitual residence in a well, often has a damping effect upon the conversation, and all sat ruminating and slowly smoking for several silent minutes.

'I bid the ordinary sum for anybody's thoughts,' said Percy at length.

'Gone!' answered Jack, rapping the table. 'Joe's regrets set me thinking about my house in Surrey.'

'Ah, you have a house in Surrey?'

'Yes, indeed. Two years ago, I had a nice patch of freehold left me on the banks of the Thames, and I have built a house upon it, which is just finished, and I am looking out for a tenant. To earn my penny fairly and fully, I was also thinking that I was an ass not to build two smaller houses, in one of which I might have lived myself. For what should I do with three sitting and eight bed rooms?'

'The situation is convenient for a man whose work is in London, then?'

'Within a mile of the station, and an hour of town.'

They all relapsed into a longer silence than before; at last Joe asked: 'What is the lowest rent you mean to take?'

'One hundred and fifty,' replied Jack.

'What! Unfurnished?'

'Unfurnished.'

'Well, but if it does not let, what will you take?'

'A hundred.'

'That is the real lowest?'

'The real lowest.'

The four friends had a sympathetic suspicion of what was passing in Joe Warrender's head, and glanced at one another inquiringly, but none of them spoke. The lawyer was tacitly allowed to have the ear of the house, though it was thirty-one puffs and a sip before he beat upon the drum of it. Why *will* not our senators take to smoking 'churchwardens' during debate; there would then be some chance of their listening patiently to what other honourable members had to say, instead of watching so eagerly for an opportunity of letting off their own oratorical fireworks.

When Joe had properly considered the importance of his proposition, he suggested: 'Let us take it. Each of the other three shall pay Jack twenty-five pounds a year, and all other expenses shall be equally divided. We will furnish the house at the common cost; and if ever our association breaks up, the landlord shall take the furniture at a professional valuation, or it shall be sold, and the proceeds divided, at his option.'

'It is not a bad idea,' said Percival.

'On the contrary, it is a good one,' said Bill; 'for adding the price of a season ticket, the rent will not be higher than what I am paying for chambers, and my term is on the point of expiring.'

'Well, for my part,' said Jack, 'I am ready to agree to the terms; and if you all decide upon establishing a happy family at Aitham, I will see about fitting up the Priory at once.'

'The Priory! Is it called a Priory?'

'Yes; that is the absurd name which my builder has had painted on the gate-post, without consulting me.'

'He was guilty of no absurdity; he was directed by the hand of Fate,' said Stesso solemnly. 'We will found a Brotherhood (Limited), devoted to

celibacy and gudgeon-fishing; our House shall be called Cockaigne Priory, and ourselves the Monks of Cockaigne.'

With one voice the other three exclaimed: 'Agreed!'

'While retaining, for the sake of convenience in business, our ordinary names in our intercourse with the outer world, we shall be known amongst ourselves simply as Brother Percy, Brother Joe, Brother Jack, and Brother Bill.'

'Agreed!'

'We must have a billiard-room,' said Brother Jack; 'the garrets are unusually lofty, and can easily be fitted up for the purpose.'

'And boats,' said Brother Joe. 'There is a capital boat-house, I feel sure, at the bottom of the garden, and we can get any amount of wherries, outriggers, and canoes at a builder's mile and a half down the river.'

'And some sort of trap,' suggested Brother Percy. 'There is a two-stalled stable and a coach-house.'

'Brother Jack is a grand landlord,' cried Brother Bill in enthusiasm. 'I vote we make him Prior.'

'No, no! We are a republic. Perfect Liberty (except to keep dinner waiting, or introduce female relatives or friends, even for the purpose of shewing them over the establishment); perfect Equality (except in stature, ability, income, and dexterity with the oar or the cue); perfect Fraternity, without any exception whatever, and down with tyrants, especially female ones. Let that be our motto.'

'Rather a long one, if we are to have it stamped on our letter-paper,' said Brother Percy doubtfully. 'Can we exist without a head? Even a republic must have a President.'

'Because a republic has women in it, and women upset all the Rights of Man.'

'Let us compromise,' said Brother Jack. 'Each of us shall be acting Prior in turn for a week at a time, the order to be decided in the first instance by lot, but ever afterwards remaining the same. The duties of the Prior shall consist in regulating the household, which shall be composed of two elderly female servants—as hideous as can be conveniently procured—a groom, an occasional gardener, and perhaps a butlers; in ordering dinner, at which meal he shall preside and carve; and in making and pouring out the tea for breakfast. Placet aut non placet?'

'Placet!'

'Then ring the bell, and order writing materials. Brother Joe shall draw up a concise list of our rules and regulations without a fee. None of your six-and-eightpenny tricks with us, you know, Brother.'

'Sordid considerations are beneath me!' said the lawyer-monk with a lofty air, as he dipped his pen.

When he had written out a short but satisfactory document, a terse page which would have leavened fifty for a paying client, and the others had signed their names to it, the glasses were filled, the four stood up, and clasped left hands over the punch-bowl, after the fashion of the ladies in the second scene in the bowing act of the *Lancers*, while they held their bumpers tenderly with the right.

'Let us swear,' said Brother Jack.

'We swear!'

'Stop, stop; you can't swear to nothing in that manner, like cats. We swear to endeavour to be ready for dinner at the proper time, and not to

take it amiss if, when we happen to be late, the others begin without us.'

'We swear!'

'That we entertain as great enmity as is compatible with human weakness to woman, the tyrant of the century, and repudiate her influence.'

'We swear!'

'That we will be as good-humoured as we conveniently can, and yield to the Prior of the week in all things, unless his opinions are, in our estimation, inferior to our own.'

'We swear!'

'Should one of these four hands now clasped in amity ever hesitate to relieve or defend a Brother; should it ever be raised in anger against a Brother; should it ever write malignantly of a Brother, or should it ever be offered matrimonially to a lady—may warts grow thereon for ever!'

'It is just! Prosperity to the Monks of Cockaigne!'

'Or, in the words of a toast common amongst secular Cockneys, "Our noble selves."'

The glasses were drained, and the Brothers sat down, much impressed with the solemnity of the rite they had just performed. But it was long afterwards remembered by one of them that the right hands had been employed in holding the glasses, and the vows had therefore been administered over the left. But no one observed the fact, or, at all events, cried *Abest omen* at the time.

CHAPTER II.—HOW THE MONKS OF COCKAIGNE SETTLED AT AITHAM.

Cockaigne Priory was soon got ready for the reception of the Order; four garrets knocked into one, and fitted with a skylight, made a capital billiard-room, which was at once furnished with a good table, ivory-topped cues, and the newest improvements for scoring games. Six bedrooms, furnished with equal comfort, shewed that the brethren had no intention of neglecting the rites of hospitality; what would have been the drawing-room, had there been a lady in the place, was well stocked with papers, magazines, and Mudie-books; the furniture of the refectory was handsome and solid; a good plain cook, and an equally plain, hard-working housemaid, rising fifty each of them, inhabited the lower regions; two horses, four dogs, and a groom, tenanted the stables; an inside car stood in the coach-house, and several punts and boats of various kinds lay high and dry in the boat-shed, or were moored off the bottom of the lawn, which had been levelled to serve as a bowling-green, and a brand-new set of the implements employed in that pleasing game, which swells the muscles, cheers the mind, improves the health, and stirs the appetite, all without fatigue, lay piled in a box in the small conservatory. One thing had for a time nonplussed Brother Jack, who had been reared at Eton, and was half a drake: there was no accommodation for a plunging-bath, for the river was shallow where it laved the garden-bank, and the site, moreover, was commanded by the windows of neighbouring houses—a consideration shocking to modest celibacy. But the aquatic monk had conquered the difficulty. There was a lock some five hundred yards up-stream, and Tommy Caius, the guardian of it, had agreed, on certain terms, to have it filled every morning at an hour when boats and barges were never passing, and to fix a ladder to the smooth and well-like sides for the exit of the

brotherhood, who, if they had rashly plunged therein, without that precaution being taken, would have been left literally cooling their heels and rubbing their noses against the slippery walls, like flies in a slop-basin.

And so, everything being prepared for their reception and comfort, the Monks of Cockaigne took possession of their priory, and reduced their theory of industrious and anti-ascetical conventual existence to practice. Their life was calm and uneventful. They rose every morning at half-past six, and hurrying on flannels and P-jackets, took boat for the lock, where they bathed in a gymnastic fashion; practising wonderful headers over ropes, turning somersaults, diving, swimming with their hands alone; with their feet alone; with but one hand or one foot; with their limbs contracted into strange attitudes; with their clothes on, and disporting themselves generally more like Bounding Brothers of the Mediterranean, at Neptune's Music-hall, than ordinary sons of the Thames. And in these amiable contests all were victorious, for each beat the others in a different department. Brother Percy took the most elegant headers; Brother Joe could stop the longest under water; Brother Bill could go the fastest through it; while Brother Jack excelled in floating on his back, and playing dismal tunes upon an accordion, like an instrumental merman. After a quarter of an hour or twenty minutes spent in such practices, they took a sharp, short row, returning to the Priory by half-past seven. They were shaved, dressed, civilised beings at eight, when they sat down to breakfast, for which meal, and its subsequent pipe, they had an hour—the inside car being ready to take them to the station at nine. At a quarter past nine, the train arrived, and whisked them up to London, where they separated, each gaining his particular crank by a little after ten.

After 'gathering money all the day,' as Dr Watts beautifully teaches us, they returned to Aitham by the 4.50 express; and should any pain or care remain, they drowned it in the bowl—a game at which occupied the hour which elapsed before dinner most delightfully—and the peals of laughter which arose from the players often caused the passing and perspiring rower to rest upon his oars, with the suspicion that the Lotus-eaters were right, and that his life of self-imposed toil was a mistake; often roused pensive Patience in his punt, cheering his flagging spirits with a gleam of hope, and causing him to throw in more ground-bait, and impale a fresh gentle.

The Monks of Cockaigne were not much tainted with that vice of the cloister, gluttony. Brother Percy was perhaps rather an epicure, occasionally bringing some red mullet, a bit of salmon, or some such delicacy, home from London with him; and Brother Joe took great pains about the sherry; but the fact of their habitually dining at eating-houses like the *Cheshire Cheese* and the *Cock*, while living in London, shewed that though they might be particular in having things good of their kind, they were not fond of elaborate repasts. The dinners served in the refectory were very simple, much the same, in fact, as you would find in most English middle-class families, and not at all the luxurious banquets which four bachelors, who were making money, might be expected to indulge in. If you sat down with them, indeed, you would trace the hand of a masculine caterer; the leg of mutton had been hung just the right time, and was

as tender as chicken; the salad, carefully prepared by Brother Percy himself, was quite a different thing from ordinary salads; the curry was made by a cook who had been patiently instructed by Brother Jack, who himself had acquired the art in India; the beer was never flat, or thick, or medicated, or corrected with soda; the wine was dry and soft, and pure, and of the right temperature. But on ordinary occasions, the brethren were out on the lawn again, an hour from their going in to dinner; and after conversing and digesting for the period of a cigar, they would take to canoe or skiff, and skim away over the waters, passing generally through the lock, where the scenery was prettier, and the stream less rapid. It was but rarely that they raced against each other, or put on spurts, or extended their row to a fatiguing distance; they were happily free from all aquatic superstitions, and boated for the sake of enjoyment, not to induce heart-disease, or develop the biceps into a monstrosity. So they slid along easily up-stream; or glided silently under the boughs of overhanging trees that fringed the garden-banks; or stole up the dead waters on the sheltered sides of aits, disturbing the callow cygnets, and hissed off by their mothers. Or one would seek a part where the shallow stream rushed murmuring over the shelving gravel, and dropping a mimic anchor, would tempt the dace with black gnat and palmer; or two of the brethren would take boat together, one with the sculls, forging gently along, within casting-distance of the banks; while the other, rod in hand, dropped a clumsy imitation of a bumble-bee on all the spots near which the vulgar chub might be supposed to lie. Then home, as night swallowed up evening—home to a claret-cup, a soda and brandy, or a glass of cold grog, with a vesper pipe, and perhaps a rubber, a game at cribbage, or a billiard encounter, as their fancies drew them; but on fine warm nights, they were as often as not too cozy and chatty to care for extraneous amusement. But however that might be, they were seldom out of bed at eleven, for even visitors of less regular habits found that early rising and outdoor exercise produced a tendency to yawn before that time.

When the weather was wet, and the river consequently unattractive, the brethren prolonged their after-dinner sitting in the refectory, and lightened their cellar by an extra, though still a sober bottle or two; and then they repaired to the billiard-room, where, perhaps, a couple of acquaintances, who knew their habits, and resided in the neighbourhood, joined them; and the evening was passed merrily in a game at pool.

Or, occasionally, one or more of the monks would be tempted by some new and promising comedy, or by the performance of a favourite opera, to remain in town, and return by the last train; but such dissipation was rare.

More frequently, they arranged a holiday, and made a longer excursion up the river, dining at some picturesque river-side inn, and returning in the cool of the evening; or they would devote the day to fishing, and attack the roach, dace, barbel, gudgeon, and perch, in regular form, with punts and professional fishermen.

And so the summer sped.

It may well be imagined that the establishment of four eligible bachelors in Aitham made some slight stir among the ladies residing in that place, where society was limited, and suitors rare. The

young ones dreamed of picnics, carpet-dances, and lively discourse tending to flirtation; their mothers' hopes, resting more upon what was solid, tended towards respectable establishments and comfortable marriage-settlements for their offspring; while the nerves of Miss Globe, the mistress of a finishing establishment not a quarter of a mile from the Priory, were shocked into a state of chronic twitter by the formation of a den of wolves so near her innocent flock. The innocent flock, if by chance the monsters, on the way to the station, passed them as they issued for their morning walk, left the w out of their twitter.

But the Monks of Cockaigne were firm; the school-girls smiled encouragement, but they kissed no responsive hands, obtruded no surreptitious letters into Minerva House. Mr Smith, the happy father of three adult and charming daughters, made their acquaintance in the train, and, wife-directed, called upon them. They asked him to dinner, and sent him home smelling strongly of tobacco, the use of which had for many years been denied him, and now got him into sore trouble; but they avoided entering his dangerous drawing-room. Other attempts to draw these monastic badgers failed in like manner; and their fair neighbours were soon persuaded, every woman of them, that they were bears, boors, sots, gamblers, and selfish curmudgeons. Nor were ingenious fables wanting. It was asserted that Brother Jack had a dark wife living at Kurrachee, whom he had shamefully deserted; that Brother Percy was also married to an unhappy lady, who had been separated from him on the grounds of his barbarous cruelty; and that the affected misogyny of Brothers Joe and Bill resulted from the fact, that they could not persuade any lady to have them: whereas these vituperated young men were only social conservatives, who found themselves very comfortable and happy in their present condition, and dreaded any change, however specious or even attractive in form; prudent mariners, who had seen old friends and companions founder before their eyes, and wished to give a wide berth to the reef upon which they had split.

They could not avoid tacking pretty near it at times; attractive young ladies, attired in wicked boating costumes, passed and repassed them on the river in the summer evenings, and were even occasionally shut up with them in the lock, when their pretty screams and witch-like laughter, as the flood boiled, bubbled, and subsided, and they sank lower and lower in what presented the appearance of a watery grave, were enough to penetrate the hardest heart. A widow with a handsome daughter lived in the very next house, and bevy of beauties were often assembled on her lawn, which was only separated from that of the Priory by a quickset hedge.

But the brethren were firm; only Brother Percy gave signs of frailty one autumn morning as he lounged in the garden between breakfast and train time.

'Uncommonly fine girl that!' he exclaimed, gazing over the hedge.

'Brother Percy,' cried Brother Jack, who was Prior of the week, 'I am surprised at you!'

'Oh, I merely spoke artistically; I only admire her as I would a horse, or a mountain, or a flower.'

'That is different,' said the Prior; 'yet I would confine my admiration as much as possible to less dangerous beauty. A man gazes upon highly-finished stilettoes till his fingers clutch, and he

thinks of his enemy: he watches the brilliant colours of a serpent, and the poison-fangs are fixed in his flesh: he admires the mechanism of the newest thing in concussion-shells, and the amiable missile slips through his hands, explodes, and renders him fit for nothing but sausages: his eyes rest carelessly on a pretty girl, and sanity, liberty, happiness, are imperilled.

'You speak like a book, Jack,' said Brother Percy; 'but take care! By Jove, you are running into the same danger yourself!'

'I? I was only observing yonder swallow,' returned the Prior.

'What swallow? Mine?' said Percy sarcastically. 'You must think it capacious, with strong powers of gulp, to try and get that down, Brother.'

'The Prior is not learned in ornithology,' said Brother Joe, who had just lounged up; 'what he took for a swallow was a Betty Martin.'

The fact that a glimpse of a female form in a neighbouring garden gave rise to an exhortation, a moral reflection, an equivocation, and two bad puns, sufficiently shews how strictly the Monks of Cockaigne kept the rules of their Order during the first summer.

Strongly as the brethren struggled against the acknowledgment of the unpalatable truth, summer and autumn faded away: the evenings closed in quicker and quicker, and the morning plunge in the lock became a painful instead of a pleasurable anticipation. At length, Brother Joe got the rheumatism, and Brother Percy a cold in the head, and then the struggle was given up; the bathing was discontinued, the boats sent off to the builder's, the cellar examined and replenished, and fires fairly began.

FREEMASONRY.

THE popular notion with respect to the masonic brotherhood is somewhat vague and uncertain. It is principally associated with curious ceremonies, terrible oaths and ordeals, a very close acquaintance with a red-hot poker and an incandescent gridiron, lamb-skin aprons like a toll-collector's bag, mysterious prefixes and affixes to the members' names, and frightful punishments to intruders, who are kept off by a dreadful officer called the Tyler. It is generally supposed that freemasons are a band of brothers, fond of social intercourse, sirloins, and champagne; and that they are a set of jolly good-fellows, a fact which nobody can deny.

Now, a recent papal allocution having excited public attention to the masonic body, we take this opportunity of giving our readers a little information concerning that secret institution.

The freemasons boast that their fraternity is one of the oldest institutions in existence, and has existed from a time whereof the memory of man runneth not to the contrary. Some say that King Solomon was the founder of the science; others, that it existed among the Egyptians who built the pyramids; while others, bolder still, pretend to trace it back as far as the time of Noah. We do not, however, intend to dive so deeply into the troubled waters of history, and shall content ourselves with stating that freemasonry such as exists at the present day is of a very modern origin, although founded upon pretty nearly the same principles as ancient freemasonry. In the middle ages, bands of skilled workmen wandered all over Europe, building those magnificent cathedrals and

other edifices which have been the admiration of every succeeding age. No one was admitted into the craft unless properly qualified, and was duly examined as to whether he possessed a competent skill as an operative workman; and as masons, from the very nature of their business, were wanderers upon the earth, each person, on his obtaining admission into the craft, was intrusted with certain secrets, by which he was enabled to shew that he was a skilled craftsman, and to obtain employment from his brethren wherever he went, without being obliged to undergo a further examination as to his masonic qualifications. Certain laws were promulgated for the regulation of the order, and for preserving good-conduct and social harmony among its members. Each band of workmen formed a lodge, which was presided over by some eminent brother, who saw that the members of his lodge properly performed their allotted task, and received their just due. It is some sixteen hundred years since the first lodge was formed in England, under the auspices of Caransius, who collected a number of ingenious masons from different countries, and appointed his steward, St Alban or Albanus, to be the principal superintendent, or Grand Master, of their assemblies. From that time until the seventeenth century, freemasonry flourished with varied success; the fraternity being employed in building cathedrals, churches, and the like; their last important work being the building of St Paul's Cathedral, under the management of Sir Christopher Wren, who was the Grand Master of the lodge of masons connected with the building, which lodge held its assemblies at a tavern in St Paul's Churchyard, called the *Goose and Gridiron*—a lodge, we may mention, which is still in existence under the name of the Lodge of Antiquity, although the place of their meeting is now in the congenial quarters of the *Freemasons' Tavern*.

During the reign of Queen Anne, masonry made but little progress; and subsequently, the number of lodges fell off, the annual festivals were but very thinly attended, and the number of masons rapidly diminished. It was then determined by the brethren that the privileges of the order should no longer be confined to operative masons only, but that any one duly proposed, approved, and initiated, should be admitted to a participation in them; so that freemasonry from an operative became but a speculative science. The different tools and implements made use of in architecture were selected to imprint serious and solemn truths on the memory of freemasons, whose principal object is to afford mutual aid, support, and protection to one another. Freemasonry is the centre of union between good men and true, and the happy means of conciliating friendship among those who must otherwise have remained at a perpetual distance; and being founded on the broad principles of morality, virtue, and brotherly love, unites under its banners men of every country, sect, and opinion—Jew or Gentile, Mohammedan or Hindu; any one, in fact, who believes in the existence of that Supreme Being, who was the glorious architect of heaven and earth; and as freemasonry is universally spread over the four quarters of the globe, wherever a member of the craft may go, in every nation he will find a friend, and in every country a home.

Mr Laurie, in his *History of Freemasonry in Scotland*, mentions that in 1748, M. Preverot, a

gentleman in the navy, was shipwrecked on an island whose viceroys were freemasons. Along with his ship, M. Preverot had lost all his money and effects. In this destitute condition, he presented himself to the viceroy, and related his misfortunes. The viceroy made the masonic signs, which being immediately returned by the Frenchman, they recognised and embraced each other as brethren of the same order. M. Preverot was conducted to the viceroy's house, where he was furnished with all the comforts of life, till a ship bound for France touched the island. Before his departure in this vessel, the viceroy loaded him with gifts, and gave him as much money as was necessary for carrying him into his native country.

During the first American war, a young English officer was lying wounded in an intrenchment, and was about to receive the *coup de grâce* from a bayonet, when he caught sight of an American officer, and indicated to him that he was a freemason; the officer knocked aside the bayonet with his sword, and thus saved the life of his enemy, whom he took to his own home, treated as a brother, and kept for two or three months in his family until his wounds had healed. The officer thus saved, came back to Scotland, and married a young lady, a relative of the noble family of Erskine; and the issue of that marriage was Lady Alison, the wife of the historian of Europe.

Freemasons are a body recognised and allowed by the state, and favoured by the law, and in the act of parliament which was passed for the suppression of secret societies, a saving-clause was inserted in favour of freemasons' lodges. It is thought by some—and among others by the pope—that a freemasons' lodge is nothing more or less than a religious and political discussion society. It is true that in some cases freemasonry has been brought to bear upon politics; and in America, some forty years ago, a somewhat serious agitation was caused among the masons and the anti-masons, the latter headed by John Quincy Adams, who used his influence as President of the United States to put down 'the abominable institution.' It is said that one William Morgan having announced for publication a book professing to divulge the whole secrets of freemasonry, was kidnapped, under pretended forms and warrants of law, by his brother-masons, removed from the state of New York to the borders of Canada, near the falls of Niagara, and there most barbarously murdered. The different states were for many years much excited upon the subject—a regular warfare arose between the masons and anti-masons; newspapers and magazines were started, and many pamphlets and volumes published. Several persons were punished for the abduction, but the actual murderers, it is said, were sheltered by masonic lodges, and rescued from justice. But, notwithstanding all this, masons' lodges have as much to do with religious and political discussions as the attendants at a county ball, or the guests at a wedding-breakfast; and when we consider the number of eminent men who have been and are freemasons, we cannot believe them such a dangerous and wicked set as some folks would have us believe. Frederick the Great, Washington, the present Emperor of the French, the late President Lincoln, and the king of the Belgians, princes and dukes by the dozen (including the Duke of Wellington), archbishops, bishops, and many of the leading men of modern

times, have gone in boldly for the mystic gripe, and been initiated into the secrets and mysteries of freemasonry. George IV. and William IV. were both masons, and it is hoped by the fraternity that before long the heir-apparent will become a brother.

Until the year 1813, the freemasons in England were governed by two Grand Lodges, each presided over by a royal duke; but in the year named, both lodges became amalgamated, under the title of the United Grand Lodge of England—the Duke of Sussex being appointed the Grand Master, an office which he filled with much ability and zeal until 1830, when he was succeeded by the present Grand Master, the Earl of Zetland, under whose rule the craft has increased alike in prosperity and numbers.

The supreme power is vested in the Grand Master, who is elected annually, he being assisted in his duties by a number of lieutenants, generally one for each county or district, called provincial Grand Masters, who govern the craft within their respective jurisdictions. The proper style of the craft is 'The Ancient Fraternity of Free and Accepted Masons'—that is, persons who have received the freedom of the corporation, and have been duly accepted or initiated into its mysteries; and when a person is once made a freemason, he remains a freemason for ever. For dishonest actions or improper behaviour, he may, however, be turned out of the lodges of which he is a member. When a regularly constituted body of freemasons assemble for masonic purposes, the place of meeting is called the lodge, although the term is also applied to the freemasons themselves; just as we use the word church to apply equally to the building in which the worshippers congregate, as well as to the congregation itself.

No lodge can be formed without a charter or warrant of constitution from the Grand Lodge, obtained on petition to the Grand Master. The lodge having been properly formed by virtue of such warrant, it is then consecrated in a solemn and impressive manner by some skilful deputy of the Grand Master; a procession is formed; the chaplain offers up a prayer; and a variety of other formalities having been observed, the Deputy Grand Master then solemnly dedicates the lodge to God, to masonry, and to benevolence and universal charity. The Hallelujah chorus appropriately closes the ceremony.

Ancient craft masonry consists of three degrees—including the Royal Arch—Entered Apprentice, the Fellow Craft, and the Master Mason. The regulations regarding the admission of members into the fraternity are necessarily very stringent, in order that none but worthy men may be admitted into the craft. A lodge of masons is called together by summons sent to each member, and in such summons are set out the names, addresses, and occupations of all persons applying for admission into the lodge. When the lodge is held, each candidate is proposed and seconded, and then balloted for. If three black balls appear against him, he is rejected. In some lodges, one or two balls will exclude a candidate; but in any case, three will. Each candidate must be of the nobler sex, of the age of twenty-one (except in certain cases), and at the time of his initiation, in reputable circumstances; and as the candidate has to sign his name to a declaration of these facts, an individual who cannot write is therefore ineligible.

The book of Constitutions, published in London by the command of the Grand Master, and which

forms the *lex scripta* of freemasonry, declares that the officers of a lodge are the Master and his two wardens, two deacons, an inner and an outer guard, the latter being more usually known as the tyler. There must also be a secretary and treasurer; and there are also in many lodges a chaplain, master of the ceremonies, and stewards. The master, and treasurer, and tyler are elected yearly by the members by ballot. The appointment of the other officers rests with the Master of the lodge.

The fee for initiation varies in the different lodges; but the minimum is, except in certain cases, three guineas for a county, and five guineas for a London lodge. There is also a yearly subscription by each member of a lodge, varying in amount from a few shillings to as many pounds.

The freemasons are not, like the Odd Fellows and Foresters, a friendly society, in the legal sense of that term. They are not legally entitled, in case of illness, to any pecuniary assistance from the funds of the craft, nor will the widow of a deceased brother be entitled to anything from her late husband's lodge. But what freemasons are not legally bound to do, they will often do voluntarily and for charity's sake. There is a very handsome school at Battersea Rise for maintaining, clothing, and educating female children, daughters of decayed freemasons. There is also a Masonic Institution at Tottenham for the sons of indigent or deceased freemasons, of which excellent Institution our most gracious Queen is patroness; and there is also a Royal Benevolent Institution at Croydon for aged freemasons and their widows. In addition to these, there is a benevolent fund of some four thousand pounds a year distributed monthly to distressed masons. For all these charitable purposes, portions of each candidate's initiation-fee and yearly subscription are paid into the treasury of the Grand Lodge.

From what has been already stated, it will be seen that the ladies are excluded from all masonic honours and secrets, giving rise, we dare say, to many matrimonial 'tiffs.' An anecdote is related of an occurrence at Vienna, shewing that the fair sex are the same there as here with respect to curiosity. Several German ladies having been baffled in their attempts upon the secrecy of their husbands and admirers, converted their curiosity into revenge, and attempted to inflame Maria Theresa, the empress-queen, against the lodges in Vienna. Their attempt was in some measure successful, as they persuaded her to issue an order for surprising all the freemasons in the city when assembled in their lodges. This plan was, however, frustrated by the intervention of the Emperor Francis I., who, being himself a freemason, declared his readiness to be answerable for the conduct of his masonic brethren.

It is one of the inviolable rules of freemasonry that none but males can be admitted. The ladies are therefore rigorously, and, as they say, unfeelingly excluded from a participation in the mysteries and privileges of the craft.

Notwithstanding this, one instance is on record of a young lady of noble birth having been made a freemason; but the means she took to obtain the honour were dishonourable in themselves, and therefore unworthy of being adopted by other members of the fair sex. In France, the fair creatures, excited perhaps by the perfection of character which their husbands had reached through being freemasons, or, what is much

more likely, roused by the spirit of inquisitiveness which has accompanied all of them since our mother Eve, introduced a Masonry of Adoption for women. The members were called sisters; and the labours of the lodge being ended, balls and banquets pleasantly wound up the evening. The first of these female lodges, called *La Candeur*, was opened in Paris in 1785, a duchess being the Grand Mistress. After the Revolution, the Empress Josephine presided over the 'Lodge Impériale d'Adoption des Francs Chevaliers' at Strasbourg.

The Royal Arch is the highest degree in freemasonry recognised by the Grand Lodge of England. The masons in this degree are called companions, and when assembled, a chapter.

In addition to those we have already mentioned, there are nearly thirty other degrees—to which, however, but very few masons aspire. There are several masonic orders of chivalry, such as Knights Templars of Jerusalem, Knights Hospitallars of St John of Jerusalem, Palestine, Rhodes, and of Malta. These hold encampments, and the members assume the most strange and high-sounding names.

After the revival of freemasonry in the last century, it was customary to hold the lodges at taverns, each lodge being usually distinguished by the name of the house in which it assembled. But since masonic halls have come into vogue, other distinctive names have been introduced, which are of a somewhat strange and fantastic character. Falmouth rejoices in a Lodge of Love and Honour; Winchester, in a Lodge of Economy; Gravesend, in a Lodge of Freedom; the *London Tavern* has a Lodge of Felicity; Fetter Lane a Strong Man Lodge; Cambridge, a Scientific Lodge; Whitehaven, a Sun, Square, and Compasses Lodge; Burnley, a Lodge of Silent Temple; Warrington, a Lodge of Lights; Preston, a Lodge of Unanimity; while Madras has a Lodge of Perfect Unanimity; Calcutta has a Lodge of Humility with Fortitude, and another of Courage with Humanity; Crewe has a Lodge of the Four Cardinal Virtues; Haworth, a Three Graces Lodge; *Freemasons' Tavern*, a Lodge of the Nine Muses; while Heckmondwike has an Amphibious Lodge, composed, we presume, of frogs, crocodiles, and hippopotami.

There are nearly eleven hundred lodges under the control of the Grand Lodge of England: of this number, some one hundred and seventy are in London, or within ten miles of the Freemasons' Hall in Great Queen Street; over five hundred and sixty are scattered over other parts of England and Wales. Rutlandshire has none; Bedfordshire, but three; while Lancashire has nearly one hundred. There are others in the Channel Islands, India (there are ten in Calcutta), Cape of Good Hope, West Indies, North and South America, Australia, New Zealand. The 1st, 6th, 12th, 14th, 31st, and 89th regiments of foot have lodges attached to their respective corps. In addition to these, there are nearly one thousand Royal Arch chapters under the same jurisdiction. In the above numbers are not of course included lodges in Scotland or Ireland; each of which countries has its own Grand Lodge.

In round numbers, there are about one million and a quarter of free and accepted masons scattered upon the face of the globe. Of this number, some one hundred and fifty thousand are English masons; one hundred thousand, Scotch; fifty thousand, Irish. There are about six hundred thousand on the continent of Europe; half that number in the United

States; and fifty thousand in other parts of the world. In England, there are two or three thousand persons initiated each year; and papal allocutions and feminine denunciations notwithstanding, the masonic body is said to be everywhere increasing.

IRELAND SEVENTY YEARS AGO.

SEVENTY and eighty years ago, Ireland was unquestionably much behind England in civilisation. Even the virtues of those days partook somewhat of the nature of vices—Irish hospitality was reckless and ruinous, and Irish courage rash and cruel. As in India at the present day, the mountain tribes still retain the feudal manners of the middle ages, so in the times we are going to describe, there existed, away from the Lord Lieutenant's court and its surrounding halo of light, the wild and almost savage habits of the seventeenth century. Insolent exclusiveness, a wanton and cowardly contempt for the weak and defenceless, a defiant disregard of law, and a ferocious love of fighting, deformed even men of the highest principles and the noblest blood.

What is tolerated in a capital, will always prevail to a greater degree in the provinces. The street-brawls in Dublin seventy-six years ago would not have disgraced London during the Wars of the Roses; and such trade-fights as Pepys describes as the back-sword fights of his day, between the watermen and butchers, or the butchers and weavers, were mere school-boy quarrels to the desperate conflicts of the Dublin factions of seventy-six years ago.

In 1790, a deadly hostility long cherished between the Liberty Boys, or tailors and weavers of the Coombe, and the butchers of Ormond Market, broke into open war. The battles often lasted two whole days, shops being closed, and all traffic and business suspended in the locality of the fight. The bridges were taken and retaken, and the combatants struggling up to Thomas Street, and down again to the Broad-stone, left, as they ebbed and flowed, a wake of maimed and wounded. The butchers used their broad sharp knives with all the dexterity of habit, not to stab, but to *hough*—that is, to lame their adversaries for life by cutting the back tendons of their legs. The Liberty Boys would sometimes playfully retaliate by hanging the butchers they captured by the jaws to the hooks in their own meat-market. In these savage affrays, the students of Trinity College generally fought against the butchers. In a certain battle, when the weavers had been driven back to their dens in the dirty Liberty, the butchers seized some under-graduates, and pitying their youth, and respecting their social rank, hung them on hooks in Ormond Market, each lad by the waistband of his breeches.

These gownsmen, who were prompt to avenge the wrongs of their order, used to fight, and inflict mortal wounds too, with the heavy iron keys of their rooms, which they slung in the sleeves or tails of their academic gowns. Any bailiff that dared to follow his victim into the College quad, was instantly dragged to the pump. They on one occasion nailed a bailiff by the ears to this pump, at the express direction of one of the fellows, who happened to be passing at the time.

Foremost in reckless eccentricity and violence in those days were the 'Bucks,' or fighting dandies. Their favourite amusement was to cut off the end

of their scabbards, in order that the point of the sword might protrude, so as to be able to prick an adversary without killing him. More than one dilatory barber was, it is said, put to death by the Dublin Bucks for not keeping his appointment. In the coffee-houses, they drew on you if you touched their coat, and sometimes almost for looking at them.

In 1784, six Bucks (a lord, two colonels, and three aides-de-camp of the Lord-Lieutenant) were returning home along Ormond Quay, Dublin, flushed with wine after a party at the Attorney-general's, when they suddenly resolved to go to a public-house kept by a man named Flattery, and 'sweat' him, that is, make him give up his fire-arms. They first pinked the waiter, then insulted the landlady; and on the landlord knocking one of the fellows down, they drew their swords. On the landlord arming himself with a gun, and clearing the house, the Bucks led on some soldiers to sack the place, which they would have done, had not some volunteers come to the aid of the sheriff, and quelled the riot. The Bucks, however, being of high rank, the Duke of Rutland did not even order the arrest of the offenders.

An insolent Buck was once trailing his morning-gown (but this story is of an earlier date) at Lucas's, a fashionable coffee-house at Dublin, near the Royal Exchange, when a quiet man, crossing the room for a newspaper, happened to tread on the train of the dandy, who instantly flashed out his sword, and drove the offender to the nearest wall. But as the bully drew back to make a savage and deadly lunge, the quiet man, in the agony of despair, drew a small ornamental tuck that he wore merely for ornament, sprang on one side of the point, and stabbed the 'Pinkindie' to the heart.

The less ferocious Bucks were extravagantly silly. They perpetrated all the more preposterous of the chivalric absurdities, ignoring altogether the knightly ideal of self-sacrifice and honour. Seeing the beautiful Duchess of Rutland dip her hands into a finger-glass after dinner, Colonel St Leger seized the glass, and drained its contents. 'You will have another treat to-night, Sallenger,' laughed the good-natured Duke, 'for her Grace washes her feet after supper.'

Another Buck earned the sobriquet of 'Jerusalem Whaley,' by a bet he made to go to the Holy City, play ball against its walls, and return in a given time.

Duelling was another reproach of the tardy civilisation of Ireland seventy years ago. Who could refuse to fight, when it was every gentleman's wish to be able to boast that he had shot his man? There could be no good manners while it was considered a sign of courage and spirit to be quarrelsome. Attorney-generals and chief-justices fought duels, and as for barristers, they were always fighting. Grattan shot a Chancellor of the Exchequer; Curran fought an Attorney-general; and as for Lord Norbury, he fought half-a-dozen persons, and, as the phrase ran, 'shot up into preferment.'

In these pugnacious times, pistols were generally kept at good inns, and the ghastly order used to be, 'Pistols for two, breakfast for one.'

Sword-fights in the streets of Dublin were by no means uncommon. Such an encounter once took place in St Stephen's Green between Fighting Fitzgerald and a man-about-town. They sprang at each other like game-cocks; a crowd collected, and a ring was formed. Irishmen appreciate a

fight. 'For God's sake, part them, or they'll kill one another,' cried a philanthropist among the bystanders. 'No, no,' replied a grave man who stood next him; 'for Heaven's sake, let them fight it out, for then one will be run through and the other hung for the murder; so we shall get rid of two pests at the same time.'

One of the great duellists in the south of Ireland was a rascal named Hayes, whose nose was remarkable for a huge fleshy wart, at which his adversaries always aimed. A certain man refusing to fight this bully, 'Nosey,' as he was generally called, forbade his son his presence till he brought him the ear of the offender. With true Albanian readiness, the son executed his commission.

Another notorious madman in this way was Pat Power, a fat, drunken, red-faced, powerful scoundrel. When he challenged Bob Briscoe, an old boon-companion of his, he shewed his lingering friendship for him by shooting off only the top of one ear, and half one whisker. This fire-eater was always ready to fight a duel for any friend who required his services. When in England, Pat Power was once or twice insulted in the coffee-houses he frequented. Once when supper was served up to him, he found under the covers nothing but potatoes. Power whispered his servant, and quietly ate the potatoes, much to the scornful delight of the jokers. Just as he had finished, his servant reappeared, with two covered dishes, one of which he placed before his master, and one before the Englishmen. When the covers were removed, a loaded pistol was seen in each dish. Power, cocking his with an angry click, told his adversary to take up the other, saying they were at a nice distance for a close shot; and that if one fell, he would then give satisfaction to the other. The Englishmen instantly fled from the room, and Power then paid the bill, and left the place triumphant.

Bryan Maguire was another stark-staring mad duellist. He was a big, burly, cashiered officer, with a bull neck and an elephant's shoulders. His 'humour,' as Nym would have said, was to stand on a street-crossing, and to jostle into the heaped-up mud any one who dared attempt to pass him. His domestic habits were equally New Zealandish. He seldom rang the bell for the servant, but fired at it till it sounded. His wife had such confidence in his skill, that she was in the habit of holding out a lighted candle for Maguire to snuff with a pistol-bullet at so many paces. This infamous bully used to sit for days at his open window. If any one passed whose manners irritated him, he would fling some rubbish at him. When the passer-by looked up, Bryan would spit in his face, and offer him a loaded pistol and an invitation to an instant duel.

Abduction was another barbarous custom prevalent in Ireland from the middle ages till late in the last century. As the motive of abduction was nearly always money, the savage practice had not even a tinge of romance or wild chivalry to sanctify it. A popular notion prevailed that it was no abduction if the girl rode on the saddle, and the man behind her. In 1707, an act was passed rendering abduction by force a capital offence. An Abduction Club existed at one time in the south of Ireland. The members drew lots for the heiresses of the country, and the club hired emissaries to ascertain the habits of the family, the houses the young lady was likely to visit, and the best means of carrying her off safely.

The saddest tragedy in connection with this infamous crime occurred in Derry in 1761. A reckless, dissipated young merchant squireen, named M'Naghten, persuaded the daughter of a Mr Knox of Prehen to plight herself to him. The pretended marriage being set aside in the spiritual court, M'Naghten threatened to lie in wait and murder the judge. The result was, that the rascal was obliged to flee to England, whence, however, he returned to hide himself in the woods at Prehen. Hearing that Mr Knox was about to take his daughter to Dublin to wean her from the love of such a scoundrel, M'Naghten and three men lay in wait for the carriage, and stopped it. They first shot and disabled a blacksmith who was the husband of Miss Knox's nurse, and her armed guard. The blinds being drawn, M'Naghten discharged a heavily-loaded blunderbuss into the carriage, killing Miss Knox on the spot. A shot was then fired from the carriage, which hit the murderer, who was at the same time wounded by a shot from Mr Knox's servant, who had hidden himself behind a turf-stack. The country was soon alarmed, and five hundred pounds offered for the culprit. A company of light horse scouring the country, found the wounded wretch hidden in a farmer's hayloft. He made a desperate resistance, but was lodged in Lifford jail. At the trial, M'Naghten was brought into court in a blanket, and laid on a table in the dock. The murderer was condemned to death, and was hung on the road near Strabane and Derry. M'Naghten appeared on the day of execution clothed in black. Exerting all his remaining strength to throw himself off the ladder, he did so with such impetuosity that the rope broke, and he fell groaning to the ground. The crowd, pitying his coarse and misfortune, tried to induce him to escape, but the man refused, saying proudly, 'that he would never live to be pointed at as the half-hanged man.' He called to his servant, who was also waiting to be hung, removed the rope from his neck, and placed it on his own. He then collected his energies, mounted the ladder, threw himself off, and died without a struggle.

An Irish execution was a ghastly sight, an element of reckless buffoonery blending with its cruelty and horrors. When a man was condemned to death, his relatives usually sent him his coffin, as a mark of remembrance and kind feeling. The man on whom the pathetic and fine old song of *The Night before Larry was stretched* was composed, was a crippled outcast, named Lambert. He spent the last night of his life playing cards and drinking on his own coffin. Although cowardly, he was ferocious, and had always urged the murder of those whom he helped to rob. On his way to the gibbet, he screamed and fought, and had to be dragged by the cord about his neck to the gallows. The great desire of a condemned man was to get his friends to promise to have the surgeons open his jugular vein, in hopes of recovering him, because a celebrated Dublin murderer had once been resuscitated. The hangman (with execrable taste) was always disguised in a fantastic manner. He wore a grotesque mask on his face, and on his back an enormous hump, formed by a concealed wooden bowl, on which he received the shower of stones that poured on him, and rebounded from him the moment the cart drew from under the murderer's feet.

Tom Galvin, the hangman, was a notoriety in his day. Persons used to visit him in his old

ago to see the rope with which he had hung many of his own nearest relations. The favourite practical joke of this wretch was to suddenly and slyly slip the rope round a visitor's neck, and give it a sudden chuck, so as to nearly strangle him. If a criminal was ever respited, the old man would curse and grumble at any one 'taking the bread out of the mouth of a poor old man.' He was always impatient and testy if the criminal on the ladder took up too long a time with his prayers. 'Long life to you,' he used to say; 'make haste wid your prayer; the people is getting tired under the swing-swung.'

The most barbarous execution, however, recorded in Ireland was an amateur one, when a lieutenant in the Wicklow militia, a tall, robust man, named Hepenstal, finding no tree to hang a 'Croppie' on, actually killed the rebel by swinging him over his shoulder with a drum-cord.

In 1793, a gang of robbers was captured near Bruff. One of them was a woman named Farrell, who had, it appeared, always been expected to find cord for persons condemned to death by the gang. She had been known to take off her petticoat, and twist the torn strips into a rope, the strength of which she would sit down and complacently test.

Such were some of the barbarisms prevalent among a fine, generous, but reckless people at the end of the last century. Regarding our Irish kinsfolk with affection, let us hope that improved legislation, and the increased demand for labour produced by the incessant drain of emigration, will soon help to remove the last traces of such national errors as we have just described.

A MAN WITH A LARGE FAMILY.

THE Old Woman who lived in a Shoe is the traditional representative of the parent afflicted with a large family. The Old Woman might have had seventy children; perhaps she had more; certainly she had so many 'she didn't know what to do.' There is a man in Bristol, however, who beats the Old Woman out of sight in respect to the number of his family. How many has he, then? the reader will ask. Well, to reply with the same precision of language as was used by the member of parliament, who, not being familiar with the principles of Euclid, once described a rent in a ship's side as 'about as long as a bit of string,' it may be said that George Müller of Bristol has more than a mile of children. Place them in a line, with a couple of yards between each of them, and then count up what space will be covered by one thousand one hundred and fifty children—that being the number for which George Müller has to provide daily. It is considered a large family when fifteen sit down to table—but eleven hundred and fifty! That is something like a family. What a fortune the man must have, to fill so many mouths. It is a respectable colony that has to be dealt with! Eleven hundred and fifty dinners for three hundred and sixty-five days a year; ditto breakfasts and teas; eleven hundred and fifty children to clothe and to educate! Then they live in houses which are more like castles than ordinary dwellings. Beds for eleven hundred and fifty; school-rooms for eleven hundred and fifty; play-rooms for eleven hundred and fifty; nurseries for a large portion of the eleven hundred and fifty; play-grounds for those who are old enough to dance on the spring-

board or swing on the round-about, and toys for the little ones. Then there is an army of nurses, and teachers, and servants. Again the reader will say: 'What a fortune the man must have!' The surmise is entirely erroneous. George Müller is a poor man. He has nothing but what people choose to give him, and the rule of his life is never to ask anybody for anything, and never to publish the name of anybody who gives him anything. What! A poor man keep eleven hundred and fifty children in these handsome dwellings, feed them, clothe them, and educate them? Preposterous! So it would appear; and yet it is not preposterous, when the matter is explained, although it may have something of the wonderful, and even of the miraculous, in it.

George Müller, whose name will probably hereafter be identified with orphanages, as the name of Robert Raikes is identified with Sunday schools, is a Prussian by birth, having been born at Kroppenstaedt, near Halberstadt, in 1805. His father was a collector of excise for the Prussian government. In 1829, Mr Müller came to England, with the intention of becoming a missionary in connection with the London Society for Promoting Christianity among the Jews. This connection, however, never was formed, and he became the minister of a small congregation of 'Brethren' at Teignmouth. In 1832, he went to Bristol, and with Henry Craik, the eminent Hebrew scholar, became a minister among the Brethren there. These co-workers stipulated that they should have no fixed salary—a practice which Mr Müller adopted at Teignmouth; and from that day to this, Mr Müller has never had any salary, although he has preached regularly in Bristol for over thirty-four years. A man who has no means, who declines to accept a salary, and who also makes it a fixed rule of life never to ask anybody for anything, is in rather a peculiar position. Mr Müller having adopted this course, had nothing to depend upon but what people who knew his habits chose to give him. One person would send him a present of a hat, another would send him a suit of clothes; and it happened at times that these precarious gifts did not always come exactly when they were wanted, and Mr Müller occasionally was dressed in the reverse of what is called 'the extreme of Fashion.' Still he preached, cheerfully; and shortly before 1836, notwithstanding the fact, that many a time he had not sixpence in the world, he conceived the idea, that it was his duty to do something in the way of providing for poor orphans who had lost both father and mother by death. Accordingly, on the 11th of April 1836, he fitted up the house he was then living in at No. 6 Wilson Street, Bristol, for thirty orphans, who were to be supported in exactly the same way as himself—that is, by the bounty of donors, who, under no circumstances, were asked for anything, and whose names, whether they gave much or little, were never published. Viewed as an ordinary attempt to provide for orphans, this was an extraordinary experiment. What followed is a perfect romance of faith and benevolence. Often after Mr Müller had filled his house with orphans, he was reduced to the last extremity to provide for them. Sometimes he had to sell furniture to supply them with food. He made it a rule never to go into debt, and to pay for everything as it was bought; and many a time at the close of the day he had no money for next day's supplies. Still the orphans never went without either food or without ample clothing. The

struggles were extraordinary; and the manner in which the extreme necessities of the hour were frequently met, is one of the most singular stories that ever was written. Mr Müller was an enthusiast in the work he had undertaken; and believing that all his needs were supplied in answer to prayer, he went on increasing his accommodation for orphans. According to all ordinary calculations, he had gone too far with his practical philanthropy; but as there were still more and more orphans brought to him, he took them in, and then his house got too small to hold them. He was almost overwhelmed with pecuniary difficulties, but instead of being dismayed, he took another house. The two houses became too small for his ever-increasing family, and he took a third house, and then a fourth. Into these four houses, his family of orphans increased to one hundred and eighteen; and as the number continued to increase, Mr Müller decided to build a large house, in which he could place all the orphans together. He selected a site at Ashley Down, about two miles from Bristol, and the land and building cost over fifteen thousand pounds. Still he never asked for any money. People began to know the work he was engaged in, for they could see the orphans and the magnificent house which had been built for them.

The New Orphan House at Ashley Down was intended for three hundred and thirty orphans. Like the four rented houses in Wilson Street, however, this vast establishment soon became too small. Then Mr Müller built a second house, for four hundred more orphans; but after both houses were filled, orphans were still brought from all parts of the country to Mr Müller's doors; and seeing that his accommodation was still too small, he erected a third house, to hold four hundred and fifty more orphans. These three houses are now full. The expenses in connection with them last year—independent of the cost of building and furnishing—was over twelve thousand pounds, this being the current annual expense. Mr Müller adheres to his old plan: nobody is asked for any help, and all this money comes up annually. There is no regular list of contributors, as in connection with other institutions. Since Mr Müller commenced the orphanage work, he has received for the orphans the extraordinary sum of £233,485, 11s. 1½d. He publishes strictly-kept accounts; but whether a donor gives a penny or a thousand pounds, no name is given. It is no uncommon thing to see in these reports gifts of £1000, £2000, £3000, and upwards, and the only indications of the personality of the donors are a couple of initial letters.

In the reception of the orphans, there is no sectarian distinction whatever; and without favour or partiality, the orphans are received in the order in which application is made for them. No interest is required to get a child admitted; the only limit is the accommodation. Some time ago, Mr Müller found that his three large houses, built for eleven hundred and fifty orphans, were full; and he has commenced the erection of a fourth, which is to be followed by a fifth. When these new houses are completed, there will be accommodation for two thousand orphans.

The institution has already become more than national. It is known in all parts of the world, as we may see by the list of contributions received during the last year. These contributions include donations from all parts of England, Scotland, and Ireland, from the East Indies, from Australia, from

Natal, from Demerara, from New Zealand, the United States, Gibraltar, the Cape of Good Hope, and many other places. The donations vary from a few coppers saved by an errand-boy to a thousand pounds. Some people send jewellery to be sold for the benefit of the orphans, others send various articles of clothing, and others send money. Thousands upon thousands of pounds in cash and notes have been dropped anonymously into Mr Müller's letter-box. The donors who reside in Bristol have before them the great work; and the New Orphan Houses being open to the public on certain days in the week, they are visited by persons from all parts of the country.

The three houses now in operation contain, as already stated, eleven hundred and fifty orphans. Each of the houses is built on the very best principles to insure the health of the inmates. The various rooms are heated by steam, and the ventilation being excellent, the rate of mortality among the children is very low. The girls are trained for servants, and remain in the institution till they are eighteen or nineteen years of age; the boys remain till they are fourteen, when they are sent out as apprentices to such trades as they may select. It is an interesting sight to see so many orphans well cared for; but when it is known how they are provided for—nobody ever being solicited by the founder of the institution to give anything—Mr Müller and his large family give a complete answer to the cynics who assume that ostentation is in some way or other mixed up with the world's charity.

BROUGHT TO LIGHT.

CHAPTER XXI.—A MUTE WITNESS.

NEARLY a month had passed quietly away at the little station-house at Kingsthorpe, and nothing more had been seen or heard of Mr Henri Duplessis, or of Madame his sister. Abel Garrod began to allude to them less frequently in his conversation—an omission by no means displeasing to his wife; for Abel had a habit of dwelling on one topic day after day, long after it was worn threadbare for conversational purposes, in a way that sometimes tried Jane's patience severely; and to any other person it would have seemed as if the little drama, one scene of which had been enacted under that humble roof, had certainly come to an end, so far as the station-master and his wife were concerned, whatever other 'business' might remain to be done by the more important personages of the play. Such, indeed, would have been the case, had Jane Garrod been a woman of ordinary calibre—glad to make a few shillings by the letting of her rooms; pleased at being able to oblige so fine a gentleman as Mr Duplessis; and to have for an inmate of her house a lady of such distinguished manners, albeit of somewhat shabby appearance, as his sister—experiencing for a few days a sort of indolent gratification that the wearisome uniformity of her life had been so pleasantly broken; and then dismissing the whole subject to the recesses of a shallow memory, whence it would rarely be evoked again. But Jane Garrod was a woman of far different stamp—a woman of strong nerve; of an intense, silent, brooding temperament; not impressionable, or readily receptive of new ideas, but very tenacious of any idea which her mind had once thoroughly grasped.

There were several reasons why she should brood

over this episode of Mr Duplessis and his sister. In the first place, she thoroughly disliked the man: with rare intuitive perception, she seemed to see right through the smiling mask which he wore before the world, down into the twilight depths of his nature; and perhaps the view was not a reassuring one. Then, again, her dislike was deepened by the fact of his aspiring so persistently to the hand of the heiress of Belair; for all Jane's sympathies on that score went with handsome young Lord Blencowan, the Nimrod of the county, who did not, however, seem to take Frederica's refusal of him very much to heart. Other reasons there were why the subject was one not to be readily dismissed from her mind. From the moment when, with the assistance of the pocket-telescope, she had witnessed the meeting of Mr Duplessis and Madame on the platform, she had become possessed by a suspicion which she had not mentioned to any one, a suspicion afterwards turned almost into a certainty, when she pieced together in her memory the many strange scraps of conversation which she had picked up, by accident as it were, while waiting upon her guests. So she went quietly about her household duties, pondering much, but speaking not at all of the things deepest in her thoughts; and thus matters progressed till a certain Sunday morning, three weeks after the departure of Madame, when Jane announced to her husband her intention of walking over to the church at Normanford, and attending service there. Normanford was about six miles from Kingthorpe; and its church being the fashionable one of the neighbourhood, was attended by the family from the Hall, and consequently by Mr Duplessis.

Jane Garrod, from her seat in the second row of the gallery, could, by craning over a little, obtain a good back-view of Mr Duplessis. Yes, there he sat, stood, knelt, according to the requirements of the service; consummately dressed; serious and devout in demeanour—but Madame his sister was certainly not by his side, neither could Jane see her among the company that quitted the church. What she did see was Mr Duplessis whirled away in the Belair carriage, Sir Philip Spencelaugh being evidently well pleased to have him by his side; although there was nothing of pleasure discernible in the pale statuesque face of Frederica, gazing out with a far-away look in her eyes from the opposite corner.

That same Sunday evening, Jane's niece, Kitty, came down from the Hall to drink tea, and have a good gossip with her aunt, who had prepared for the occasion some tempting cakes of a kind the young waiting-woman was especially fond of, as a certain method of rendering her good-tempered and communicative. When tea was over, and Abel had gone to the station to look after his evening train, Kitty opened her budget of news. Jane allowed the chatterbox's tongue to run itself down in a florid description of certain articles of millinery which Miss Spencelaugh had received from town during the past week, before she attempted to turn the current of the girl's thoughts into the particular channel in which she wished them to run.

'Has Mr Duplessis been up at the Hall as much as ever during the past three weeks?' asked Jane at the first sign of a lull.

'This week and last week he was up nearly every day, more or less; the week before that, we hardly saw anything of him.'

'How was that? Was he away from home?'

'No, not away from home,' said Kitty: 'quite different from that, by his own account to Master, when they met together at the corner of the terrace, yesterday was a fortnight, and me within hearing behind the dairy-window all the time. I remember the day, because I broke a tea-cup out of the best set that very afternoon. Says Master to Mr Duplessis: "We've not seen you up at Belair for nearly a week. What have you been doing with yourself all this time?" To which Mr Duplessis makes answer that he has been laid up at home ever since Tuesday with the tic something-or-other in his face; but that he is better now; and then they go off together to look at the big vine in the conservatory.'

'Mr Duplessis made no mention to Sir Philip of any lady, I suppose?' said Jane.

'Any lady! No. Why should he? He wouldn't care to talk much about any other lady than Miss Frederica, I guess; and she doesn't care twopence about him.'

'Then she has not quite learned to love him yet?'

'No, nor never will, for all he's so handsome and smiling.—I don't think Mr Duplessis ever mentions a word to her about love or marriage, but goes on trying to win her, as I call it, without letting her know that she is being won. It reminds me of the way my brother Dick used to catch sparrows, which, as everybody knows, are awful cunning birds. They would hop round the trap with their heads perked on one side, as if they knew all about it, but always getting nearer and nearer, till they grew so familiar with the danger as almost to despise it, but still resolute not to enter; till all at once, and before they knew what was the matter, they would find the trap dropped gently over them, and their last chance of escape gone. Now, for all the world, that's just like Mr Duplessis and Miss Frederica.'

'On the Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday of that week,' said Jane to herself, when Kitty had come to a stand for want of breath, 'Mr Duplessis was not confined to his house by tic-douloureux, but was backward and forward here in attendance on Madame. He said, when he took her away, that he was going to take her on a visit to some friends. It is very evident that among those friends the people of Belair are not included. Where do those friends live, I wonder? and to what place has he taken her?'

It was on the night of this same Sunday that Jane Garrod first dreamed about Madame Marie. She thought that she was following her along a gloomy and tortuous road, that wound in and out among great desolate hills and thunder-riven cliffs, when suddenly the woman before her disappeared in a hidden gulf; and as Jane started back with a cry of horror, the face of Duplessis rose close before her own, the handsome features distorted with a grin of fiendish triumph, and the forehead dashed with a streak of blood. Jane awoke trembling with affright, and slept no more that night. On the Monday and Tuesday nights following, she had precisely the same dream; and other omens were not wanting. On the Monday morning, a wandering tinker called at the station-house, who ground and sharpened Jane's scissors; but when, in the afternoon, Jane wanted to make use of them, she found that they would not cut—an infallible sign that something had happened to somebody. Then, again, on the third morning of her dream, as she was

looking out of her bedroom window while dressing, she saw a black cat on the station-wall—a black cat of portentous size, which turned and bit its own tail three times, and then leaped down and disappeared. Neither Abel nor the lame porter saw this cat, nor was any such animal known to exist in the neighbourhood.

If Jane Garrod had heard any one term her a superstitious woman, she would have scouted the imputation indignantly; but she had been brought up in a part of the country, and among people, where implicit credence was placed in dream-lore, in omens, and apparitions; and the influences of early training were not quite eradicated. Jane affected, even to herself, to attach no weight to the strange dream which she had dreamed three nights concurrently; but, in addition to the other omens spoken of above, it doubtless served to develop more rapidly a purpose which had been slowly ripening in her mind for some time; and so another uneventful week drew to a close.

On Saturday morning, Jane announced her intention of going over to Fairwood to make her usual monthly purchases of groceries and other household stores. Fairwood is eight miles from Kingthorpe; and Jane's practice was to walk over early in the morning—for she was country-bred, and thought nothing of the distance; to spend the day in making her purchases, and in paying brief visits to sundry old friends, returning home with her goods in the carrier's cart late in the afternoon; and from this custom she did not intend to deviate in the present instance. She had not forgotten that the high-bodied gig in which Mr Duplessis took his sister away from the station had struck her at the time as being the property of Luke Grayling, landlord of the *Silver Lion* at Fairwood. Now, Luke's wife and Jane Garrod had been school-girls together; and the latter rarely visited Fairwood without calling at the *Silver Lion*, where a hearty welcome always awaited her, and an invitation to whatever meal might be in progress at the time—and there generally was some meal in progress, call when you might, at the *Silver Lion*.

On this particular Saturday, Jane contrived to get through her shopping and visiting earlier than usual, so as to be in time for the three o'clock tea, in which Mrs Grayling always indulged on market-days, as a meal that came in readily in the interval between the country business of the morning and the town custom of the evening. Mrs Grayling greeted her old friend warmly, and the two were presently seated at the tea-table, gossiping over times past and present. Jane did not exactly see her way to bring round the conversation to the wished-for point; but a remark made by her hostess at length enabled her to lead up to it without subjecting herself to being questioned on a topic respecting which she would just then much rather be silent.

'I suppose we shall have a grand wedding before long,' said Mrs Grayling, 'between this Mr Duplessis and the young lady at Belair?'

'That's more than I can say,' replied Jane. 'Have you ever seen Mr Duplessis?'

'Only once, and that was a month ago, last Thursday,' answered the landlady; 'and a right nice-looking gentleman he is. He came early in the afternoon, and hired our new gig and the gray mare, and drove away in a style which showed that he knew how to handle the reins. I should most likely have asked him his name, for one doesn't

like trusting one's best horse to a stranger, however fine he may be dressed; only our hostler's lad, who was in the stables at Belair before he came to the *Silver Lion*, knew him again in a moment, and says he to me: "That's Mr Duplessis of Lilac Lodge—him as is going to marry the rich Miss Spencelaugh." So, when I heard that, I just slipped on my best cap, and ran down into the yard—for Luke was out—to see that everything was right for him; and most polite and affable he were.'

'He brought back the horse and gig all right, and without accident, I suppose?' said Jane.

'Bless you, yes. He got back the same night about seven o'clock. He came back the same as he went—alone. I thought he looked rather pale and excited-like; and I noticed that one of his gloves was split right across the back, and his hat damaged a little; and that his light overcoat, which, on his return, he wore buttoned close up about his neck, seemed on one side as if it had been dragged along a dirty road; but he accounted for all that naturally enough by saying that he had been out with some friends, one of whom had taken rather too much wine, and had afterwards got larking, and damaged the hats and coats of the others all round. He laughed heartily while he was telling me, and said something about bright eyes and a pretty cap, which made my colour come so that I ran back into the house, leaving the hostler to settle with him; and I didn't see him again.'

Jane Garrod sipped her tea, and pondered in silence for a minute or two over what she had just heard.

'But the strangest part of the story is yet to come,' said Mrs Grayling after a short pause, bending over the table, and speaking in a whisper. 'I haven't spoken about it to a soul, though it has troubled my mind a good deal; even Luke doesn't know of it; and I wouldn't mention it to you, Jane Garrod, if I didn't know of old that you are a woman who can keep a secret.'

Mrs Grayling rose from her chair as she spoke, and having turned the key in the door, went to a cupboard in one corner of the room, and took from it a work-box, which she unlocked, and drawing something from a secret drawer, held up the article for Jane to look at.

'A woman's blood-stained handkerchief!' exclaimed Mrs Grayling in a whisper; 'marked in one corner with the name of "Marie." It was found by Tim the hostler under the seat of the gig, the day after Mr Duplessis was here.'

Jane felt all the colour desert her cheeks as she gazed in silent horror at the handkerchief, knowing well whose property it had been.

'There is this fact to be borne in mind,' said Mrs Grayling after she had returned the handkerchief to its hiding-place—'that the gig had been used, as one of a number of other conveyances, at a large picnic, the day before Mr Duplessis hired it, and had not been thoroughly cleaned between times; and it's as likely as not, I think, that the handkerchief belonged to one of the young ladies who were at the party; though how it came to be in that condition, of course I can't say. Anyhow, both Tim and I agreed to say nothing about it—that is, unless we heard of somebody being missing; for, you see, it might only get innocent folk into trouble, and turn out a mare's-nest after all; and altogether it's an unpleasant thing to have anything to do with. What's your opinion?'

'I think that you are right,' said Jane; 'but I would keep the handkerchief carefully by me: some day, when you least expect such a thing, it may be wanted at your hands.'

The Kingsthorpe carrier that evening set down Jane Garrod as very poor company indeed: a sociable, neighbourly gossip, in his opinion, enlivened the dullness of the way wonderfully; but for once, even the vacuity of his own mind seemed pleasanter to him than the presence of that pale, gloomy, preoccupied woman, who responded to all his observations in monosyllables, and who looked, as he said to himself, 'as if she had got a murder on her mind'; and he was not sorry when he set her down at her own door, and jogged on his way alone.

CHAPTER XXII.—JANE GARROD'S QUEST.

Abel Garrod was struck next day with the pale, anxious looks of his wife, and thought to himself that she was getting to talk less than ever, which was decidedly a pity, as tending, in his opinion, to make life duller than it need be. But, well or ill, Jane went to church twice that Sunday—not to the church at Normanford, but to the little church at Kingsthorpe, only half a mile away; thinking, perhaps, thereby to calm her thoughts, and tranquillise her mind. But, for once, the service took no hold on her, the words seeming to float far away above her head, as though addressed to quite other ears than hers. Do what she might, her thoughts would go back to that terrible token hidden away in the landlady's work-box at Fairwood; and whichever way she turned, she seemed to see before her Marie's pale frightened face, as she had seen it in that last moment ere it passed from her sight for ever. Monday was spent by Jane in a silent inward struggle—the whole of the day, and far into the night; and Abel waking up some time in the dark hours, found his wife pacing to and fro in the bedroom, and heard her muttering strange words to herself.

'I can hold out no longer,' she said; 'I must go on with it. An invisible hand draws me forward, and I cannot resist. Oh! why was not this task given to another?'

Abel marvelled greatly, but being wise in his own dull way, asked no questions, and pretended to be asleep.

Any one going from Kingsthorpe to Fairwood has the choice of two roads by which to travel. The old road is straggling and tortuous, but tolerably level; and winds pleasantly along for a mile or two of the way, close to the high cliffs which shut out the sea on that part of the coast; by it, the distance between the two places is eleven miles and a half. The new road cuts straight across country, regardless of hill or dale; and although by no means so picturesque as the old road, has this great advantage over its rival, that it makes the distance to Fairwood but eight miles and a quarter, and has, in consequence, monopolised the whole of the traffic between the two places; for Fairwood is not touched by the railway. About half a mile before reaching Fairwood, the two roads, old and new, merge into one, and are here joined by the road from Berryhill and other inland towns; at which junction a toll-bar has been judiciously planted, with a thoughtful eye on the pockets of all, not being foot-passengers, who may choose to come or go by any of the three routes. To the garrulous

graybeard who administered the office of collector at the toll-bar, went Jane Garrod on the afternoon of Tuesday. Jane's visit was made with a purpose; but she was too cautious to let the old man—with whom she had one of those state-of-the-weather acquaintanceships, common enough between people who live wide apart in country places—suspect anything of the kind. During the summer and autumn months, the old man had generally a store of mild ginger-beer in thick stone bottles, set out at his door for the delectation of thirsty wayfarers; and Jane, when she reached the gate this afternoon, bade the old man good-day, and then asked to be supplied with a bottle of the beverage in question; and sat down in the roomy porch, that she might rest herself, and discuss it with the amount of leisure requisite for its proper appreciation. The afternoon was close and warm for the time of the year, and Jane was really tired with her long walk.

'It's a long tramp, Mrs Garrod, all the way from Kingsthorpe, at your time o' life—not that you be so very old either,' said Matthew as he drew the cork with a trembling hand.

'Ay, that it is,' answered Jane; 'and I never walk it without wishing I could afford to keep my carriage, and ride like a lady. It would be pleasant, now, to have Luke Grayling's gig on such a day as this. A nice trap to ride in—I daresay you know it?'

'Ay, I know the trap you mean well enow,' said Matthew. 'It has been through this gate more than once, or twice either.'

'It's not much used, I think, except for picnics and pleasure-parties,' said Jane.

'I dun know about that,' said Matthew. 'I seen it with a young couple in it going a-pleasuring, more than once; and then, again, I seen it t' other way. Why, no longer ago than last Thursday-night was a month, about half after six, a gent druv up in it all alone, and the moment I clapt eyes on it, I knew it was Luke Grayling's turn-out. "And where be you sprung from?" ses I to myself. "You came down th' owd road from Kingsthorpe, but I never seen you go that way this morning." And then I settled that he must have gone round by Leavenworth, which would account for my not seeing him pass my way. While I was turning the matter over in my mind, the gent paid me the toll, and had got a fair start again, when he turned the horse's head round, and druv back. "I've had a spill," ses he to me, "and got into the mud. I don't like going into Fairwood this figure; and if you can find me some soap and water, and a clothes-brush, and will hold my horse for five minutes, I'll give you half-a-crown for your trouble." Now, it isn't every day that I've the chance of earning half-a-crown in five minutes; so I nodded my head to him, and got him the soap and water; and then he got down from the gig, and I saw that his hands and face were all muddy, and his hat crushed, and his coat dirty into the bargain. So I minded the horse, while he titivated himself up a bit; and he gave me the half-crown all right, and druv off; and I've never clapt eyes on him since.'

'Some young spark, most likely, who didn't know how to drive properly,' said Jane.

'Not so young, either,' said the old man. 'About forty, I should take him to be. A fine, handsome gent as ever I clapt eyes on; with long moustachers, and a dust-coloured overcoat buttoned up to his throat. He seemed to me to look very white and ill: he had likely hurt himself with falling out of

the trap; though how he could fall out, I can't think. He asked me whether I had any brandy in the house; but I told him I had only ginger-beer, and wanted him to try a bottle; but he only laughed, and shook his head, and said it was no matter.

The old man had nothing more to tell; and bidding him good-day, Jane went on her way to Fairwood, from which place she booked herself by coach to Berryhill, and went home thence by rail.

She was up and doing next morning an hour before her usual time, so as to get through her household work as early as possible, anxiously considering meanwhile what her next step ought to be. Now that she had thoroughly made up her mind to go through with this matter, she was determined not to flinch from anything that it might lead to. She felt, indeed, as though she were being led on by a will other than, and superior to, her own. The one point of the case, as it then stood, on which her mind most persistently dwelt, embodied itself in the following proposition:

'Mr Duplessis left Kingsthorpe, in company with his sister, at half-past three o'clock in the afternoon, taking the coast-road, probably as being more unfrequented than the other—a road which has no lanes or by-paths leading to anywhere, except to one or two solitary sheep-farms among the hills. He did not reach the toll-bar till half-past six, and then alone, and with evident traces of a struggle on his clothes and person. Allowing an hour and a half as ample time for the drive between the two places, how was Mr Duplessis employed during the remainder of the time, and what had become of Madame in the interim?'

On the road itself, if anywhere, she must look for the further unravelling of the mystery, whose dread presence haunted her by day and night.

She set out as soon as the early dinner was over, outwardly as calm and impassive as ever, but trembling inwardly with vague fears, that grew in proportion with the vagueness of her search. For when she put the question steadily to herself: 'What am I going to look for?' she could only reply: 'I do not know, and I dare not guess; but I feel that I must go on till the end, even though I should never know peace of mind again.'

The old round-about coast-road to Fairwood turned sharply off to the left about half a mile from Kingsthorpe Station, becoming all at once muddy and picturesque, and seeming as though it had left civilisation miles behind it. Jane knew every inch of the way; when a girl, she had traversed it scores of times with her mother; knew it for three miles of its course as a road overshadowed with moss-grown trunks and interlacing boughs; shut in by high green banks, the chosen home of primrose and violet; knew it further on, where it came suddenly out of hiding, out on to the bare summits of the cliffs, open to every wind of heaven, with the unquiet sea fretting far below; knew it here for a road unfenced, and dangerous for strangers to traverse on dark nights, when to wander three yards from the beaten track would be sudden destruction to man or beast; knew it still further on, towards the end of its course, where it deserted the sea and the breezy sheep-walks, and shut itself in between decorous stone-walls, and parted with some of its mud and all its picturesqueness, and succeeded in mending its ways, and in becoming thoroughly dull and commonplace.

With slow steps and anxious eyes, Jane Garrod traversed this road as far as the first stone-wall, and then back again. 'Nothing to-day, nothing to-day!' she muttered to herself with a sigh of relief as she turned wearily into the house.

She passed next day quietly within doors; but the day following that, a fever of unrest began to burn once more in her veins, and she felt that there was no peace for her till one more effort, at least, had been made to solve the dark mystery which seemed to have shut out for ever her old happy frame of mind. Again, with slow steps and anxious eyes, she traversed the old coach-road as far as the first stone-wall without discovering the slightest token such as she half-expected yet dreaded to find. When she had got about half-way on her return, she felt compelled to sit down and rest for a few minutes; anxiety of mind seemed of late to have weakened her bodily strength. She knew the point from which the finest view on the whole road could be obtained, and as she was now close to it, she made for it instinctively. It was the headland called Martell's Leap. It stood boldly out from the ordinary cliff-line on that part of the coast, and was clothed at its summit with short fine grass, while its white scarred front had an almost perpendicular fall of more than two hundred feet to the boulder-strewn beach below. It was called 'Martell's Leap,' because, as the story ran, more than a century before, a certain Squire Martell rode his horse over the brink in a fit of madness, and was dashed to pieces at the foot. Jane sat down on the grass close to the edge of the cliff, and loosened her bonnet-strings, and rested her aching head in her hands, and closed her eyes, and went back in memory to the time—more than thirty years before—when she and her mother, coming from one of the lone moorland farms, used to ride in a clumsy country cart along that road to market, and never passed the headland without a shudder at the thought of the mad squire's terrible leap.

Jane's reverie was interrupted by the barking of a distant sheep-dog. She opened her eyes, and gazed out seaward, and drank in the full beauty of the scene. Far away, on the very verge of the horizon, there was a trailing pennon of smoke from some home-coming steamer; and nearer at hand, the sea-birds were wheeling and screaming; but no other sign of life on sea or shore. She had been gazing for a minute or two down the face of the cliff, in a vague, purposeless sort of way, when her wandering glance was caught by a pretty red flower, growing about half-way down; but broke suddenly away from that, attracted by something fluttering in the breeze—something twisted round a bramble a foot or two below where she was sitting; and as she looked, her eyes dilated, and her heart seemed to stand still, and she grasped the grass with both her hands, to keep herself from falling. What was it that she saw?

A fragment of a woman's dress!

As soon as she had recovered in some measure from the surprise of this discovery, she took off her bonnet and shawl, and stretching herself out at full length on the grass, drew her body half over the edge of the precipice; and reaching down with one hand, she succeeded, after several attempts, in grasping the fragment of silk, and in getting safely back again. Then she sat down, and rubbed the silk gently between her hands, and cried a while silently, and then she went sorrowfully home.

Her quest was ended; she had gone as far as she durst go; from that point, other and more competent hands must take up the clue which she so thankfully laid down, and work out the dark story to its end.

COTTON-SUPPLY.

The Reports published from time to time by the Cotton-Supply Association shew that practice of cotton-cultivation in various parts of the world is progressive, and it is interesting to note how the cultivators persevere in their work, even under adverse circumstances. The island of Dominica sends eight small bales, and would have sent more had not unexpected drought and unusually heavy rains all but destroyed their first planting. Jamaica sends a sample grown in the Rio Bueno district, and reports that there are thousands of acres of virgin soil in that part of the country on which cotton could be profitably grown. Cape Coast also sends an instalment of cotton for sale; and Bombay asks for a supply of small bullock-ploughs to enable native cultivators to prepare ground for planting. But it is in Turkey that the Association have had most success: they have, in the words of the Report, 'restored it as a cotton-growing country, with promise of permanent benefit to the empire. A powerful stimulus has been given to agricultural and mechanical improvement, and a large amount of capital has been advantageously applied.' Coming nearer home, we find a project for cotton-growing in the south of Hungary, in furtherance of which an application for seed has been received from Vienna. Then turning to the other side of the globe, we gather that in Tahiti and some of the adjacent islands, cotton of a long silky fibre can be cultivated with advantage, and that hundreds of thousands of acres of the most fertile land in the world are there available for the cultivation. But experience shews in those countries, as elsewhere, that cotton-growing depends on good government as well as on soil and climate; and it may be that material interests will effect what moral teaching has hitherto failed to achieve—namely, steady habits of industry, and an appreciation of settled government.

TRUE CHIVALRY.

[In the cholera-wards of the London Hospital, in a scene of suffering and death sufficient to try the stoutest heart, a lady-volunteer nurse has passed her time since the beginning of the epidemic, moving from bed to bed in ceaseless efforts to comfort and relieve. So very youthful and so very fair is this devoted girl, that it is difficult to control a feeling of pain at her presence under such circumstances. But she offered her help at a time when, from the sudden inroad of cases, such assistance was urgently required, and nobly has she followed her self-sought duty. Wherever the need is greatest, and the work hardest, there she is to be seen toiling until her limbs almost refuse to sustain her. And the effect of the fair young creature's presence has been that the nurses have been encouraged by her never-failing energy and cheeriness, so that dread of the disease has been lost in efforts to combat it. This is an instance of devotion which would be an insult to praise—it need only be recorded.—*Lancet*.]

LISTEN, where o'er startled Europe,

Roll the dreadful peals of war:

Echoes from opposed armies,

As of thunder heard afar!

Hark, how each disputes the glory;

How both sides the victory claim;

How the lying wires alternate

Flash for each a transient fame!

Let them vaunt their fatal conquests;

Let them boast their thousands slain;

Let them count the widows, orphans,

Made for vile Ambition's gain!

Shall no other deeds be blazoned,
Than fell war's triumphant wrong?
Shall the hero-deeds around us
Not be shrined in grateful song?

Not amid the din of battle,
Proudest victories are won;
Feats of daring not less glorious
Are by fragile Woman done.
'Mid the haunts of human suffering,
Many a noble fight is fought;
Where unheeded by blare of trumpet,
Deeds of Chivalry are wrought.

Lo, where Cholera's fainting victims
Write within the Spital walls;
Where by foulest terrors girded,
Death the stoutest heart appals!
Fearless, undismayed in spirit,
'Midst the horrors rampant there,
Moves with noiseless step a maiden,
Gentle, young, and passing fair.

Like a ray of heavenly mercy,
Tender, steadfast, meek, and calm,
She around each couch of anguish
Sheds sweet Pity's priceless balm.
Beaming in a halo round her,
Sympathy's divinest grace
Lends to all a new-born courage,
Lights with love that loathsome place.

Brave, serene, her self-devotion,
Eager in the fearful strife,
Steals from livid death its terrors,
Soothes the parting pangs of life.
Ever where the need is sorest,
Tend the maiden's efforts still;
Frail of form, fatigue still conquering
With the might of dauntless will.

Easy is the soldier's daring,
While the hostile thunders roar,
And the fateful balls, thick-volleyed,
Like a hissing hailstorm pour.
'Mid the crash and cloud of battle,
Death but seems a common foe,
Whom with level chance we close with,
When we render blow for blow.

But a grander thing I count it—
Higher courage far, I ween—
Thus unarmed to beard the tyrant,
In his ghastliest aspect seen.
Blazon, then, a deed so noble,
Rather than triumphant wrong;
To True Chivalry, all honour!
Shrine we it in grateful song!

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MY HOLIDAY.

IN THREE CHAPTERS.—CHAPTER I.

AN amusing peculiarity in the office which I have the honour to hold, is the obligation of being a member of so many public bodies, that I would frequently have to give my presence at five or six places at precisely the same hour—a thing not easily done, even with the aid of a carriage and pair of horses. In circumstances of this perplexing nature, it is necessary in some degree to compound with conscience—sometimes preferring one Board, and sometimes another, with perhaps a kind of leaning to some one in particular. In occupying the critical position here referred to, if I have had any preference at all, it has been for the Commission of Northern Lights, a body invested with the duty of managing all the light-houses on the sea-coast of Scotland and Isle of Man, now amounting to nearly sixty in number (to say nothing of buoys and beacons), and involving an expenditure of eight-and-twenty thousand pounds per annum.

This Northern Commission may be accepted as a fair specimen of that little understood state of affairs in which many people, for the honour of the thing, give their time and trouble for nothing—certainly nothing in the way of cash. A story is told of Joseph Hume having, in his virtuous indignation in parliament, described the Commission of northern luminaries as being a regular and costly job, when he was set right by the Lord Advocate of the day, who stated that the whole remuneration derived by the Commissioners for their trouble consisted in a dinner once a year—whereupon Joseph, in a state of munificent repentance, declared that they should in future have two dinners instead of one! These two dinners are now, accordingly, a settled institution in Edinburgh, the head-quarters of the Commission; and, from experience, I am able to confess that the institution is conducted in no niggard fashion. Supposing the story to be correct, the Lord Advocate might have added in explanation, that a dozen or so of the Commissioners are indulged with an excursion, free of expense,

annually in the *Pharos*, a powerful and commodious paddle-steamer belonging to the Board, which is employed in carrying stores to, and in making periodical inspections of, the several light-houses.

Who is to go in the *Pharos* is sometimes a matter of delicate consideration. The Commissioners consist of certain crown-officers, and sheriffs of maritime counties, along with some provosts and bailies; and at a meeting for the purpose, the selection is properly adjusted, not a little depending on the wish of the parties, for what some may consider to be a privilege, others view as a positively irksome or impracticable duty. In the present year, I was honoured by being named one of the excursionists; and not disinclined to a little airy variety in the routine of public business, I ventured on giving my assent. The only real pinch was how to get away. The *Pharos* was to depart for its voyage on the west coast on the 23d of July, but owing to certain matters of pressing public concern, I could not leave for some days later; by these means, I lost the Clyde, Galloway, and Isle of Man part of the excursion, and had to be taken up in the harbour of Belfast, where the *Pharos* was appointed to lie tranquilly during Sunday the 29th.

Apropos of the Isle of Man—what has it to do with the Northern Commission? Thereby hangs a tale. Light-houses, as is very reasonable, are supported from the proceeds of statutory dues payable by the ships which are presumed to benefit by them—outgoing foreign vessels paying the dues on starting, and vessels entering port paying on arrival—the whole managed in a neat way by the officers of customs. In old times—say fifty years ago—the Isle of Man had its own system of lights, which were so bad as to be complained of by the Liverpool traders; and it became obvious that these lights should pass under the authority of one of the three Boards of the United Kingdom—the Trinity House of England, the Ballast Board of Ireland, or the Northern Lights of Scotland. The method adopted for settling the question was exceedingly rational; it was to ask what each Board would take to light the Isle of Man,

and adopt that which was cheapest. The Trinity offered to maintain the lights for twopence per ton on all vessels that passed; while the Northern Commission declared its readiness to accept the very small sum of a farthing per ton. This was in 1821, since which time the Isle of Man, in the matter of light-houses, has been connected with Scotland. The farthing per ton was a shrewd conception. So large is the number of vessels passing the Isle of Man, that this forms the best-paying branch of revenue of the Northern Lights.

Not having seen Belfast for twenty years, I was not prepared for its vast extension and numerous street improvements, or for learning that the annual income of its harbour has risen, since 1848, from £23,000 to £52,000—looking to which notable circumstances, one is inclined to feel somewhat incredulous on the score of alleged Irish poverty. Belfast, at all events, possesses one unmistakable evidence of social advancement—a fetid river and harbour; so loathsome and insalubrious were its waters, that the *Pharos* could not make out the entire Sunday at its handsome quay; and, receiving me on board, dropped down for the night to the open sea adjoining Carrickfergus.

Skirting along the north of Ireland, and then shooting across to the southern points of the Hebrides, I enjoyed my first day at sea. In passing, we took a look of the Giants' Causeway, which all on board pronounced to be a poor affair in comparison to Staffa. At the Rhins of Islay began that systematic visitation of Scottish light-houses which was pursued for the next fourteen days, among the outer and inner islands, and along the coast of the mainland as far as Cape Wrath; from which limit the vessel retraced its course southwards to Oban, leaving the east coast, and Orkney and Shetland Islands, for next season.

With the drawback of generally dull and moist weather, suggestive of an improvement of Scott's well-known lines:

O Caledonia! stern and wild,
Wet-nurse for a poetic child—

and occasionally tossed about in a rather unceremonious way, life glided on pleasantly in the *Pharos*; there being in it that nice blending of duty with amusement, good living, and leisurely converse, which constitutes an enviable mode of existence—at anyrate, I do not know of anything better in this world of ours. Five sheriffs, the provost of Inverness, the senior bailie of Glasgow, the secretary, and myself, made up the party—a joyous set of mortals, who, with one or two exceptions, scorned to be sea-sick, in nearly all weathers played at shovel-board on deck, and quite as regularly made their appearance at meals as they took to the boat to visit the several light-houses.

It is customary in these excursions by the *Pharos*, for one to be chosen 'commodore,' who has the high function of presiding at table, regulating the routes as well as general procedure, and of deciding what shall be the daily bill of fare—in which last capacity he has frequent serious communings

with the cook. Our commodore on this occasion was the Sheriff of Forfarshire, who happily tempered power with discretion, kept all in good-humour, and deservedly received a vote of thanks for his services, not the least of which consisted in keeping a capital cuisine. Breakfast at 9 (a Scotch breakfast), lunch at 1, dinner at 6 (full dress), tea at 8, and anything you like at 9; all in bed by a little after 10. Such was the usual routine in the alimentary department—any modification in the fare, considering the amount of fresh air and hard work encountered, being quite out of the question. It added not a little to the comfort of the party, that the ship anchored in a quiet bay every evening about dinner-time—that, in my opinion, contributing materially to digestion—and did not start on a fresh cruise till 7 next morning, which allowed a walk of a couple of hours on deck, to promote a relish for the kipper, the fresh herrings, and the other edibles which at 9 garnished the table of the saloon.

I have never lived for a time on board any vessel so entirely satisfactory as the *Pharos*. With the exact discipline, promptitude, and courtesy observable in war-ships, it offered the comforts of a well-regulated home—the alimentary arrangements above hinted at; a library, if you wished to indulge in reading; and a snug little room on deck, provided with telescopes, charts, and maps, where one might lounge at ease, and be ready to turn out in a moment with field-glass in hand, to scrutinise the wildly picturesque shores of the Hebridean Archipelago.

There was always some little bustle and fun, along with a becoming air of business, on landing. The stoppage and anchoring of the vessel about a quarter of a mile from the shore, the lowering of a boat, into which the party trooped in walking trim, and the serving out of capacious and well-kept sea-cloaks, as a shelter from the spray while darting over the waves, formed the ordinary routine of disembarkation. One thing was never missed—the landing of 'Milo.' All who have sailed in the *Pharos* have made the acquaintance of Milo, a middle-aged, brown water-spaniel, somewhat lazy from not having much to do, but solemn in character, and to all appearance, impressed with the conviction that he is an essential member of the crew. Milo always makes a point of going on shore with the Commissioners, in order to have a ramble about, while they are engaged in their grave official investigations. When the landing is at a precipitous quay, up which you have to climb by a fixed iron ladder, poor Milo is somewhat nonplussed; but the difficulty is got over by his being placed on the back of one of the sailors, whom he grasps round the neck with his forepaws, carried in which fashion up the steep ladder, he is set down in safety; and by the same pleasant process of locomotion, he returns to the boat, after enjoying his scamper over the scanty herbage which clothes the rocky promontories.

In these landings, there was considerable uniformity. For the most part, the light-houses are

placed on bold headlands, at a distance varying from a hundred yards to a mile and a half from the landing-place. Each establishment consists not only of a tall stone tower, with its lofty lighting apparatus, but of a cluster of neat dwellings for the keepers, to which, in all cases, there is convenient access from the shore by a road made at the expense of the Commission. The making of these roads forms, in some instances, a heavy item of outlay, but is indispensable for the construction of the works, and afterwards for facilitating the regular and safe transmission of stores. Reaching the spot, and throwing aside walking-sticks and loose upper-coats, the Commissioners mount in the first place by winding stairs and ladders to the summit of the tower; there they sagaciously examine the bright burnished lamps, lenses, and reflectors—some, perhaps, by dint of repeated investigation, acquiring for the first time an intelligent idea of the difference between the two great modern systems of lighting—the catoptric and dioptric. All, at least, are struck with the singular beauty and ingenuity of the works, and of their great value as regards averting shipwreck and the saving of human life. Noble outposts of humanity and civilisation are these gigantic structures! Would not any one be proud to take part in their organisation and maintenance?

Large lenses and prisms of different shapes for concentrating and sending forth the rays of light from effulgent oil-lamps, constitute a leading feature in the apparatus. Formerly, Great Britain could not produce these lenses in perfection, owing to the obstruction to experiment caused by the glass-duties, and our light-houses were therefore supplied with the needful apparatus by France. Now, the works are of home-manufacture, glass, lamps, reflectors, and everything—Chance of Birmingham for lenses, and Milne of Edinburgh for brass and lamp-work, being the main producers; the cost of a fully-equipped apparatus is from £800 to £3000, according to the class and character of the light. The outlay in building a light-house varies, according to dimensions and other circumstances, from £4500 to six times that amount; but sometimes the cost is considerably higher. Something, I learn, in the way of sufficiency, depends on the spirit which happens to influence the Trinity House of England and Board of Trade, which, by statute, exercise a certain control over the operations of the Northern Commission—the Trinity as regards sites and projects, the Board of Trade as regards plans, revenue, and expenditure. It was not always so; and some appear to think that under the new régime the spirit of economy has weighed a little too heavily on the construction and general character of the light-houses lately erected on the dangerous sea-shores of Scotland. A pretty bold attempt was made about sixteen years ago to abolish the Scottish and Irish Boards, and concentrate the entire management in the Trinity House. A recommendation to this effect came, as I think, with a peculiarly bad grace from the Royal Commission employed to look into these affairs; for in drawing a comparison, it had to acknowledge that the 'Scotch light-houses are in the best state of general efficiency, the English next, and the Irish third.' The Northern Commission was accordingly let alone, and continues as effective as ever, under the administration of a vigilant secretary and the body of unpaid officials, who seem to take a surprising degree of interest in its operations. Something of

its success is doubtless also due to the Stevensons, a well-known family of engineers, who have done great things for Scottish and colonial light-houses. The late Robert Stevenson, the father, was the eminent constructor of the light-house on the Bell-Rock, and for the Skerryvore we are indebted to his elder son, Alan, recently deceased.

Were I giving a formal history of light-houses, I should specify a number of things which characterise the Scotch establishments, and have led to the foregoing testimony of their marked superiority. I will refer only to what no one can avoid noticing—the respectable appearance of the keepers and their families, the large number of children, the neatness and substantiality of the dwellings, and the air of comfort which universally prevails. One would almost think that a blessing was showered upon the fraternity, in compensation for the exile which all less or more necessarily experience. But it is to be kept in mind that the 'service' is somewhat enviable, and commands a superior class of officers. To the excellent pay of from fifty to seventy guineas a year, are added a uniform, a free house, coal and candle, a garden, and a cow's grass if it can be obtained, books and periodicals—changed about for mutual convenience—medical attendance, and lastly, the visits of a missionary.

When the keepers have to do duty in those light-houses which stand on isolated rocks in the ocean, and must for weeks be absent from their homes, they are, over and above all these various advantages, provided with rations. The Board also furnishes the houses of the keepers in every particular, and by means of regular inspectors, preserves the whole in good order. It could not well be otherwise. Like soldiers on duty, keepers are moved about from place to place, according to promotion in the service, health, wish for change, and other causes; and when ordered off to some new scene, the family has only to carry away its personal luggage, with perhaps a few fancy articles, such as a favourite canary in a well-wrapped-up cage, a geranium in flower, or a stuffed solan goose, prized as a chimney-piece ornament. Quitting one home, it may be in a wild islet of Shetland, and reaching another possibly on the more genial shores of Mull, the wanderers find it a facsimile of that which they have left—the very eight-day clock, in its burnished mahogany case, that confronts them as they enter the new mansion, presenting, as it were, the face of a well-known friend, and in familiar sounds ticking an accustomed welcome.

Social economists speculate on plans for making life-assurance a matter of compulsion. This is done by the Northern Lights in a way worth describing. From the annual salary of each man who enters the service, the sum of £3 is deducted, and laid out in insuring his life. The insurance is taken in the name of the Commissioners, who, on the decease of the assured, draw and pay the amount to his family. According to the age at commencement, the sum ultimately realised ranges from £100 to £130, and comes as an acceptable boon to the bereaved widow and children. The good effected by this arrangement is incalculable. There are likewise retiring allowances for superannuated and well-behaved officers.

Comparative seclusion, remoteness from friends, at most only one or two neighbours with whom to hold rational converse: Are not these terrible drawbacks on the current sources of happiness of these light-house keepers? Not at all. Instances

are not unknown of individuals sinking under the quietude and sameness of their mode of life; but these are exceptions. As a general rule, the keepers and their families are a happy set of people, well read as to what is going on in the world, and accustomed to make the best of opportunities for bettering their circumstances. The periodical visits of inspectors, and of the *Pharos* or some other vessel with stores, are events of moment. But the greatest event of all during the year is the arrival of the Commissioners, when the flag is hoisted in their honour, and requests are entered in the note-book of the secretary. Some keepers solace their spare hours with handicrafts. One is a good tinsmith; another amuses himself with a turning-lathe and carpenter's bench; and I heard of a third who is noted among the islands as an excellent bootmaker. Setting aside all such useful recreations to fill up the time, let us again remember that these light-house keepers belong to a class of society who value the importance of an assured income, along with the other substantial benefits and social elevation of the service, above mere sentiment. Neither man nor woman whom I talked to complained of loneliness. No; it was not there that the shoe pinched. Revealing, as I thought, a fine trait in the Scottish character, that which only and really detracted from the happiness of the situation, was the difficulty—often the entire impracticability—of getting proper schooling for the children. 'I have not been at church for four years, and scarcely expect to be ever at one again,' said the wife of a keeper. Another whom I spoke to, gets to church twice a year in a boat, the voyage thither being fourteen miles, along a rugged coast full of suik rocks. However, the desire to do a duty to offspring goes beyond any such consideration. The want of schools is the subject of constant lament; for without education, how are the children to get on in life. As a make-shift, sometimes an elder girl teaches the younger, or the parents themselves try to take the matter in hand, while the missionary also to a certain extent helps in the business of elementary instruction. I am not without a hope that the Commissioners, with the sanction of the Board of Trade, will fall upon some expedient to insure the education of the numerous children connected with their establishments. A few migratory young schoolmasters making periodical rounds, would go far to remedy the evil.

I inquired if there was much intercourse between the keepers and the widely scattered families of the Gaelic-speaking natives. Very little, was the reply. As a rule, the Board find it necessary to discourage the visits of these poor people to their establishments, on account of personal habits which are adverse to the scrupulous cleanliness insisted on in the dwellings. Those who are acquainted with the miserable condition of the natives of the more remote western islands, will not be surprised at this species of exclusiveness. Wherever placed, the cluster of buildings composing the establishment, with their whitewashed walls, form a kind of oasis in the desert—a bit of civilisation planted and flourishing in the midst of scenes of savage sterility and human degradation.

Mention of these circumstances reminds me that the service has two prizes, to which all keepers with ambitious views properly aspire. These are appointments to the Bell-Rock and Skerryvore, in

both of which the keepers reside for weeks in the midst of the ever-surg-ing waves, and only enjoy the society of their families at stated intervals. How do we explain the paradox? Simply enough: higher pay, rations, and chiefly convenient schooling for children. The Bell-Rock, with a family residence at Arbroath, where schools abound, was on all hands referred to as the *ne plus ultra* of light-house appointments—a thing sighed for, but not easily obtained, and when quitted, looked back upon as a kind of 'Paradise Lost.'

And now, let us be off for Skerryvore, which some people think, myself for one, is worth travelling a thousand miles to see; but the voyage must be left to another chapter.

THE MONKS OF COCKAIGNE.

IN FIVE CHAPTERS.

CHAPTER III.—SIGNS OF DISSOLUTION.

THE Monks of Cockaigne made the best of the inevitable winter; drew the curtains, poked up the fire, lit the gas, and kept the billiard balls rolling; and those friends who were admitted into their circle—and the two guest-chambers were always tenanted—looked back afterwards upon their visit as one of the brightest and merriest halts of their earthly pilgrimage. The brethren fancied at first that they would be dull in the long winter evenings, and they had beds fitted up in their business chambers in London, expecting that town amusements would often detain them, and that the midnight railway journey, which was refreshing in the dog-days, would prove a miserable business during a hard frost. But they found that they did not bore one another at all; on the contrary, the evenings passed too rapidly, and it was more as a duty than for a change that they went after Christmas to see the most gorgeous of the pantomimes.

Yet they watched for spring with the curiosity of childhood; but in this they were not singular, for it is pleasant to observe the interest which hard-working city-men, sleeping in the country, take in the sprouting of the snowdrops and crocuses. That was a grand evening at the Priory upon which Old Tackles announced the appearance of trout under the weir, and the legality of spinning for them. They had him into the refectory, made him drink wine, and engaged his professional services for the morrow, when they all went out, and had a short try with the trolling-rod before breakfast; while Brother Jack returned by an early train, and spent the afternoon in attempts to capture one of those rare prizes of the Thames angler. When the others came home by the dinner-train, they found him in such high spirits that they expected a feast of fresh trout, but he had not been so preternaturally successful as actually to catch a fish. His excitement was caused by his having had a run, an event which seems to be almost as great a source of joy and triumph to a Thames trout-fisher as a fox-hunter, and probably for the same reason. If he kill, there is a trout or a fox the less, and the creatures are too rare to be destroyed without a pang. In short,

when you have a bloodless 'run,' you eat your cake and have it too, in spite of the proverb.

The visible certainty that there was a large trout under the weir, and that amongst the myriads of small worthless fry with which the Thames is so well stocked, he *might* select the angler's bait for his breakfast or supper, animated Brother Jack with such enthusiasm, that he fished for him every morning and evening throughout the spring, and though he caught nothing, the daily attempt was a fair inauguration of the season which had passed so pleasantly the year before; and the boats and canoes were had up from the boat-builder's, and again enlivened the water at the bottom of the garden; the box of bowls was unlocked, and the brethren once more began gradually to resume their summer habits. But when the sun gained ascendancy over the chilly mists of early morning, when Tommy Caius was once more called into requisition to fill the lock and fix the ladder for their morning bath, then indeed the Monks of Cockaigne congratulated themselves on the final flight of winter, and the commencement of a new series of harmless and healthful pleasures.

Thus for some weeks everything went on as calmly and delightfully as before, but soon an inexplicable cloud settled over their happiness. First, Brother Joe grew dull and moody, loving to separate himself from the others, and scull or paddle about in solitude, none knew whither; then Brother Percy took to poetry and walking—boating and fishing, he said, only exercised the arms, and he felt his mind and legs dwindling for want of exercise—lastly, and most seriously, Brother Jack met with an accident. He was very skilful and daring in his management of a canoe, and one of his favourite feats was to shoot the rapids. For this purpose, he would get Tommy Caius to raise a couple of the sluices which stayed the water from rushing over the weir in such a volume as to depress the level of the upper river, and so affect the operation of the lock; and then, allowing the current to draw his little craft into the gap thus afforded, he would dash down the liquid-gleaming steep with a velocity which threatened to thrust him to the bottom, but the next moment would shew him paddling safely and calmly away through the boiling waters beneath.

One evening, Brother Percy took his rod and walked off, announcing his intention of fly-fishing from the bank; Brother Joe said that he had letters to write, but would take a scull up the river when he had sent them to the post; so Brothers Jack and Bill got into their canoes, and commenced paddling up-stream amicably together, passed the lock, and continued their course on the upper waters, when the swollen state of the river attracted their attention. There had been a great deal of heavy rain during the two previous days, and the turbid water rolled down in such increased volume, that to prevent its bursting the lock gates, the sluices had been raised, and the torrent roared over the weir in one unbroken cataract. The sight was too tempting to Brother Jack.

'I must shoot those rapids!' he cried. 'I will land just below, afterwards, and carry my canoe over without going through the lock, so it will not take five minutes. Do you mind?'

'Not a bit,' said Brother Bill, who had seen the other perform the feat so often, that he had got to think little of it. 'I think I will follow you.'

'For goodness' sake, don't! You must try it for the first time when the water is lower, and some one is below in a wherry to pick you up, if you upset, which you are almost sure to do; and if you got entangled with your canoe and paddle, swimming might not help you. But now you would be certain to lose your balance, and I should get drowned in trying to save you. Stop here for five minutes; there's a good fellow.'

'All right,' replied Brother Bill; and his companion paddled cautiously towards the brink, looking for the most favourable opening between the posts. He was soon satisfied, and turning the prow of his canoe towards the spot, he gave one or two sharp strokes with his paddle, and then, as he glided over the edge of the torrent, leaned backwards, like a horseman topping a wall. Unfortunately, the branch of a tree, which had been swept down by the current, had stuck at that very point, where it lay concealed, an inch below the surface. The canoe caught in it, capsized, and in a moment Brother Jack was hurled down headlong, his shoulder striking violently against a post on the right.

Brother Bill was close to the tongue of land which ran from the weir to the lock, and a few strokes of his paddle brought him to it. He sprang ashore, and leaped rather than ran down the bank to the foot of the weir to lend assistance to his friend, but to his horror he could not see him. Brother Jack was a very strong swimmer, but the force with which he had been dashed against the post had paralysed him, and he was sucked under by the eddying waters. At last, that is, after ten seconds, which seemed ten minutes, he appeared on the surface, struggling faintly with one hand in mid-stream. 'Keep up, Jack; I'm coming!' cried Brother Bill, and rushed into the river. The rapid stream hurried both down, and it was with great difficulty he reached him, but he did so, and putting one hand under the armpit of the injured man, who, though half insensible, instinctively refrained from clutching at his deliverer, he managed, by treading water, to keep his face above the surface, and so the pair were swept onwards. This position of affairs lasted a long minute; and Brother Bill, whose mouth and nose kept dipping under the water, was well-nigh exhausted, when his head bumped against something hard, a hand grasped his hair, and a voice cried: 'All right, Mr Stesso, I've got yer;' and presently Old Tackles, who was out after the invincible trout, dragged them into his punt, where Brother Jack lay motionless.

'Why, he's as lumpy as a barbel!' cried the fisherman with concern; 'but he can't be drowned, cos I seed him kicking just afore I collared yer. Mind how yer handle him; I think his arm's broke.'

'Jack! I say Jack, old fellow!' cried Brother Bill, 'you are not drowned, are you? Speak, there's a good chap.'

Brother Jack groaned.

'What on earth is the matter?' cried the voice of Brother Joe, who came sculling up.

'An accident to Jack.'

'What's the row there?' shouted Brother Percy from the bank.

'Accident!' returned Joe. 'Run for a doctor, while I prepare things at home.'

Without further inquiry, Brother Percy threw down his rod, and started off to the surgeon's

house at a run; while Brother Joe dashed up to the landing-place, which was now not fifty yards off, and rushed up the garden, shouting: 'Molly! Sally! Get Mr Markam's bed ready, and begin boiling water and heating cloths.'

Having delivered which bewildering injunctions to the startled domestics, he returned to help Brother Bill and Old Tackles to carry the patient to his chamber. When they had got a pint or two of water out of him, and a good dose of brandy into him, he revived considerably, and anathematised them, when they hurt his arm, to their great joy and relief. Fortunately, there was only a flimsy jersey on the upper part of his body, and this they cut off tenderly, and then, pulling away the sheet off his bed, placed him between the blankets, by which time Brother Percy and the doctor arrived, breathless. Extensive bruises and fracture of the collar-bone, but nothing serious—that was the doctor's utterance; and then he set the bone, and arranged the pillows, and made him surgically comfortable with bandages and strapping, and prepared to take his departure, saying that he would send something.

'But I need not take it, need I, doctor?' asked Brother Jack.

'That is on your own responsibility,' he replied laughing. 'The fomentation, however, you had better use freely, and at once; you will find those bruises very painful else.'

'They hurt tidily now!' grunted Brother Jack.

In a day or two he was about again, and no more needed one of the Brothers to shirk London and look after him; but when the other three left, he would establish himself in the garden with his pipe, a newspaper, a novel, and Ruff's *Guide to the Turf*, and was quite happy and contented till their return.

So far from feeling dull was he, that he prolonged his convalescence far into the summer, and left the management of his business to his partners and clerks; though there was really nothing to prevent his daily journey to and fro a fortnight after the accident. But he could not handle an oar, and was dependent upon one of the brethren to pull him about; and as Brothers Joe and Percy speedily relapsed into their solitary and mysterious habits, that task devolved principally upon Brother Bill, and a stronger friendship sprang up between these two than had ever existed between any of the monks, firm allies as they had been for some years previous to the formation of the Order.

'You saved my life, you know, old fellow,' said Brother Jack one evening when they were skirting the weir in a boat, and contemplating the scene of the accident.

'Don't mention it,' replied the other; 'you would have done the same for me.'

'Exactly; but I didn't; and that makes all the difference. It is a thing one cannot exactly thank a fellow for, but I would do anything to prove that I don't think lightly of it—that is, nearly anything.'

'What is the exceptional deed?'

'Ah, that is a secret,' said Brother Jack, laughing and shaking his head. 'But I will tell it you, perhaps, some day.'

And indeed it had become evident to Brother Bill that this one too was afflicted with a piveness similar though not equal to that which had toned down the spirits of the others.

What could it mean? What mystic influence

could there be in the place, that the most sociable of men should become Zimmermans in so short a period? It was all very well for those who were affected, and who enjoyed themselves after their own fashion, but it was a terrible bore for Brother Bill, who retained his pristine nature; and after vainly waiting for several weeks to see whether they recovered their spirits, he determined to speak out.

So one fine evening, as the four lounged on the bowling-green, smoking their after-dinner cigars, he said: 'Let us hold a chapter.'

'All right. What is the verse?'

'I have been done. When I joined the Order, I had no idea that you were *bond-fide* Carmelites, affecting a certain amount of jollity for the purpose of proselytising.'

'What on earth do you mean?'

'I mean,' rejoined Brother Bill, 'that you have all become as melancholy as comic singers, and as unsociable as biterms; and I mean that our only chance of avoiding the dulness of the cloister is to establish a confessional.'

'With you for the confessor, I suppose?'

'No; each in turn shall confess to the other three; and Brother Percy, who has shewn the greatest depravity, that of reading poetry, shall begin.'

'Placet!' cried the other two. 'Confess, Brother Percy.'

CHAPTER IV.—CONFESSION.

'Eh?' said the impenitent; 'has any one noticed a change in me? Oh! I certainly thought at times that I was rather indifferent company; but Brother Joe seemed so much worse, that I hoped he would conduct attention away from me, even as a thunder-cloud draws the lightning from one less highly charged. That simile does not sound all right, but I am in training to write a poem for myself, those professional fellows not half expressing my feelings, and I must practise my imagery.'

'Brother,' said the Prior of the week reprovingly, 'you are making your last dying—No, I mean your confession, and it ill becomes you to practise your poetry therein. We want simple facts.'

'All right,' replied the rebuked one: 'then the fact is, I have got a heart complaint.'

'What! Angina pectoris?'

'No, that is not her name. When our brotherhood was formed, I deemed myself iron-clad against all the arrows of Cupid; but a gun of heavier metal and sharper bolt than I dreamed of has been brought forward to penetrate my sides—I beg pardon, for the last fortnight I have been thinking in comparisons. The long and the short of the matter is, I am spoony; and as, after a long struggle against my weakness, I have finally determined to get introduced to the lady, and marry her, I was seeking for an opportunity of breaking the intelligence to you, and am glad that Brother Bill has afforded it.'

'A lapsed bachelor!' groaned the latter, holding up his hands.

'I really could not help it,' continued the fallen Brother. 'I was fly-fishing innocently over the shoal off Bargeman's Folly one day, when a young lady came with a camp-stool and a portfolio, and commenced sketching on the bank, not twenty yards from me. The dace would not rise, and I had nothing to distract my attention, so I looked at

her, and oh, my heart turned to water! I had seen her casually before, but she had never made the impression upon me that she did that day. I will not describe her, first, because I could not do justice to her beauty; and secondly, because you would all fall in love with her likewise, and I do not wish for rivals. A dog attended her, a pug, one of those hideous little creatures which ladies are so fond of, probably because their intense ugliness acts as a foil to their own charms, but whose only other merit consists in the fact, that they cannot bite you, because their tongues are too big for their mouths. Presently, Bob, the butcher's bull terrier, whose renowned performance upon rats we witnessed in the winter, came trotting up, and Pug went to meet him. With that wonderful sagacity which distinguishes those animals, each knew that the other was also a dog, and they wagged their tails, and played about, and putting their noses together, communicated their ideas. But soon the pug, pampered and insolent, made some remark derogatory to Bob or his belongings, for the terrier's tail suddenly stiffened, and he seized the rash offender by the throat. The pug yelped chokingly; his lovely mistress sprang up, scattering her sketches to the ground, and screamed musically for assistance. My skiff was anchored; so I stepped into the water, which was not knee-deep, and waded to the shore. To wrap my handkerchief round Bob's tail, and then bite it till he relinquished his hold, grasping him tightly by the collar the while, lest he should merely transfer his teeth to my own windpipe; to swing him round my head, and hurl him far into the river; to raise the bleeding, howling pug, and place him in his mistress's arms—all this was the work of a moment. She thanked me with effusion, and with her every word I became more and more deeply enamoured. She lived on the Aitham side of the river, and was anxious to get home at once, and seek surgical assistance for my rival. As it was some distance to the ferry, I offered to take her across; she consented; so I waded out, drew up the anchor, brought the skiff to shore, placed her and the pug inside it, gathered up her sketches and the camp-stool, ferried her across, and escorted her home. When she had thanked me for the last time, and the door closed upon her, I was an altered man. Since then, I have walked about the lanes and fields, and wandered on the river-banks, in hopes of meeting her. I have done so five times, and raised my hat, receiving in return a bow and a smile. And there I am at present; but I can stand it no longer, and I must get an introduction, and call.

'Alas!' said Brother Bill, and it was the only appropriate comment upon the story; but Brother Joe misinterpreted the observation.

'Ah, yes,' said he, 'nothing but a lass could have broken up our happy fraternity.'

'What! are you too in love, then?'

'I am. Only I have had no romantic adventure like Brother Percy's, nor have I ever spoken to the object of my passion, as he has; yet, like him, I am determined to make the acquaintance of the lady, and ask her to incapacitate me for a Monk of Cockaigne. My passion has been of slow growth: I was slightly smitten on the first Sunday that we were here, and I have got worse and worse with each successive morning sermon.'

'Oh!' groaned Brother Bill. 'Short-sighted that we were! We ought to have had a private chapel. I rather wondered, I must confess, at your

very regular attendance at divine service. But why have you, too, isolated yourself so much? Have you also been constantly dodging the object of your affections?'

'Not exactly,' replied Brother Joe, stammering. 'The fact is, I was a great ass; but the house she lives in can be seen from the river, and I, I!—'

'You passed your time in rowing backwards and forwards, in hopes of catching an occasional glimpse of your charmer's dress between the garden bushes.'

'Ah, Brother Bill, you have been in love yourself!'

'O yes; I have had the measles, the whooping-cough, and most other infantile disorders.'

'Fellow-victim, shake hands!' exclaimed Brother Percy to Brother Joe; and they did so.

'I should like to see the two ladies,' said Brother Jack after a pause. 'I wonder whether I have noticed either of them.'

'Well, there she is!' 'Well, there she is!' shouted the two simultaneously. And the young lady in the next house was seen coming out of the garden-door and descending the steps.

'Nonsense, Joe; don't chaff, because I am really in earnest,' said Brother Percy.

'I was never less inclined to joke in my life, my dear fellow. That is the lady I mean to ask to be my wife!'

'Then I pity you, my boy, for we are rivals.'

'Pity me! Confound your conceit! Excuse me, my dear fellow, but really, your vanity is absurd.'

'Sir!'

'Come, come, Brothers, don't quarrel,' said Brother Jack. 'If you are each in love with the same lady, and that lady is Miss Forrester, who lives with her mother in the adjoining house, I am sorry for both of you, as she is engaged.'

'Engaged! And to whom?'

'To me. Mrs Forrester sent to inquire after me at the time of my accident; I called to return thanks—saw Mary, and, by Jove, she struck me much as she did you. I spent a considerable part of the days in her society while you three were away on business; improved the opportunity to the best of my poor ability, and this very morning she consented to become mine.'

CHAPTER V.—DESECRATION.

Three years later, Mr William Stesso—no longer, alas! Brother Bill—went to see some old college-friends at Oxford at the time of the commemoration, and when the festivities were over, he joined a party which agreed to row down all the way to London by easy stages; and so he once more passed the house where the Monks of Cockaigne had lived together for a brief space so happily. Under pretence of heat and want of breath, he persuaded his companions to rest upon their oars, while he gazed on the well-remembered spot.

The rose-trees and shrubs had sprung up wonderfully; a verandah had been built, which was overgrown with jasmine and honeysuckle; croquet hoops were ranged round the bowling-green, and a group of crinolined ladies and simpering dandies were engaged in that flirtiferous game. He raised his eyes in disgust to the top story, and saw looking-glasses and a wash-hand basin reared against the large plate-glass windows, and even while he gazed, a woman became visible, bearing in her arms a long-clothed baby, which she was swaying to and

fro. The billiard-room had been turned into a nursery!

'Pull on all!' he cried; and dashed his oar into the unchanging stream.

AT A MUSSEL-FARM.

HAVING often heard of the curious industry that has been carried on so successfully for many centuries in the Bay of Aiguillon, in France, I resolved to visit the place, in order to see for myself what had been really achieved. The industry in question consists of the systematic breeding and cultivation of mussels. Now, as mussels are, in these days of fishery-competition, of vast importance, if not for food, at least as bait for the capture of the food-fishes, too much cannot be told concerning them, the more especially if the telling of what one knows will induce British fishermen—who trust a good deal to chance for their bait, and who frequently cannot go to the fishing-grounds for want of it—to do what is done by the fishermen of France, who could shew them how to insure a constant supply of that absolute necessary of a successful fishery, by the simple plan of growing it.

It is no exaggeration to say that, although the British people are shy of eating the mussel, except when it is cooked for sauce—and a very excellent sauce it makes—countless millions are annually required by our fishermen for bait. There is one little fishing-village in Scotland which I know, from personal investigation, uses for its own share, for the baiting of the deep-sea lines required in the cod and haddock fishery, close on five millions of these molluscs, which have all to be sought and gathered from the natural beds, the men, and the women as well, having frequently to go long distances to obtain them. These figures will not be thought to be exaggerated when I say that each deep-sea line requires about twelve hundred mussels to bait it; and as many of the boats carry eight or ten lines, it is easy to check the calculation. The fishermen, it is hoped, may by and by come to grow their own mussels, as do the industrious men of Aiguillon; and if they do not turn mussel-farmers after what I have to tell them, they will have themselves to blame for the ultimate extinction of the mussel, for the natural scalps are giving way under the present increasing demand for bait.

'Where is Aiguillon?' was naturally enough the first question I had to answer, after determining on my tour; but no one could answer it. I asked many who are interested in fishery matters, but none of them had heard of the mussel-farm. Aiguillon, they said, was mentioned in Murray's Guide, and doubtless the site of the fishery would be there. But the mussel-farm is not at the Aiguillon mentioned by Murray, which is a town of nearly two thousand inhabitants, on the left bank of the Lot, about a mile above its influx into the Garonne. My Aiguillon, indeed, is not even on the same line of railway, although it is at an equally great distance from Pall Mall. In fact, Murray contains nothing at all about my Aiguillon. Murray has a soul above mussels, and, to speak the truth, doesn't even seem to care much about oysters, seeing that he sometimes neglects to mention localities where they are grown in the greatest profusion. I found my Aiguillon at the port of Esnandes, which is itself a curious out-of-the-way place.

In order to see the mussel-farm, it is necessary first to get to Paris, and to take the Orleans Railway to Poitiers, then to change to the line for La Rochelle, after reaching which place, a *voiture* must be hired for the rest of the journey, Esnandes being about seven kilomètres from Rochelle. I need not weary the reader with a description of all that is to be seen on the Orleans Railway, which, as all the travelling world at least knows, runs through the most historical part of France. Looking from the window of the railway carriage, I enjoyed for a few hours the lovely champaign scenery of the claret district of France. There are vine-fields, and big joint-stock walnut trees, and cherry orchards, and cherry orchards, walnut trees, and vineyards over and over again, all the way to Bordeaux. Then there are little patches of water; and dark-green grassy quadrangles laid down every here and there, guarded by those tall alder trees one sees in such profusion all over the continent. Every here and there, too, may be seen a distant château on its finely-wooded hill; then come a few old farmhouses, their inner yards alive with the minute industry of the plodding husbandmen. Anon we pass the outskirts of old historical towns, tempting one to break one's journey.

It might have well suited others to perform these pleasures of travel—my errand was to see *la moule*. History had no charms for me till I had seen the mussel-farms, which I had come so far to visit. To my exceeding astonishment, almost no one in La Rochelle knew anything about the industry of Aiguillon. I had to search far and wide to obtain information as to how to get to the place; another exemplification of the old story, that one may live all his life in London, and not be able to find his way to St Paul's. By virtue of a little Scottish perseverance, and the expenditure of much bad French, I at length found out that it was at Esnandes that they cultivated *la moule*. So, procuring a *voiture*, and a *garçon* to drive it, I sallied away out through the gates and barriers of La Rochelle; and after a pleasant drive through the vineyards and small farms of the district, on each of which there appeared to be a little flock of black sheep, I arrived in about an hour's time at my destination, much to the astonishment of the idle poultry and young dogs of the neighbourhood, which looked and acted as if they never had seen a *voiture* or a Scotchman before.

The port of Esnandes is very much like all other fishing-villages, and the fisher-people like all other fishing-people. As you enter the town, you feel that it has the usual ancient and fish-like smell; and you see, as you suppose, the same little boys with the overgrown small-clothes, that you meet with in the fishing-villages of England or Scotland. After passing a little way down the one street of the village, you observe all the way, right and left, the invariable mussel-middens, the worn-out old fish-baskets, and the various other insignia of the trade of the people, the like of which you can also see at Whitstable or Cockenzie. The people waken up the moment it is buzzed about that a stranger has arrived. At first, I thought the population were all out at sea, but I was so quickly surrounded by an inquisitive little crowd, that I speedily gave up that idea; and as soon as I had explained my errand to the buxom landlady of the village café, I was provided with a guide, who kindly escorted me to the *bouchots* (fishing hurdles), or rather to the

dépôt of the boucholiers, which is about a quarter of a mile from the village.

Having alighted from the carriage, I looked around me with some curiosity; but I saw no farm of mussels, no appearance even of there being a common fishery. About a mile away to the right, there was moored a small fleet of the common flat-bottomed fishery-boats peculiar to the coast. A few miles to the left, lay the Ile de Ré, famous for its oyster-beds; but where was the object of my search—the mussel-farm? Well, to make a long story short, the farm was at that particular hour covered with water; but, as the tide was on the ebb, I speedily obtained a view of the vast mud-fields to which the people of Esnandes are indebted for their peculiar fish-commerce. The story of the translation of these vast sloughs of mud into fertile fields of industry, productive of comfort and wealth, is short and simple, for the discovery of the bouchot was purely accidental. An Irish vessel, laden with sheep, having been wrecked in the bay, so long ago as the year 1235, only one out of all the crew was saved. This man's name was Walton, and he became the founder of the present industry by means of the bouchot system of cultivation. On finding himself saved, he at once set about finding a means of earning his own food, so that he might not be a burden upon the poor fishermen who had rescued him from the ravening waters, and who were themselves at the time well-nigh destitute of every comfort of life.

All around him, however, as Walton soon perceived, was one vast expanse of liquid mud, and what could any man do on such a barren field? Walton speedily solved the problem. He first of all invented a mode of travelling upon the mud-bed, for walking was an impossibility, as at every step he sank up to the knees in the miry clay. This boat is called a *pirogue* by the boucholiers, and it is still in use. By means of this simple machine, which I will by and by describe, Walton was able to travel along and explore the muddy coast, by which he found out that vast numbers of land and sea birds used to assemble on the waters and in the mud in search of food. A kind of purse-net for the capture of these birds at once suggested itself to the hungry sailor. This being made and set on the mud as a trap to float with the tide, was found to answer admirably, and every night large numbers of aquatic birds were captured in its purse-like folds. It was out of that little example of a destitute sailor's ingenuity that the present industry of Aiguillon was developed, for it was not long before Walton found the strong posts to which he had affixed his net all covered over with the spawn of the edible mussel; these he found grew very rapidly, and when mature, had a much finer flavour than the mud-grown bivalves from whence the spawn had floated. The Irishman soon saw how he could multiply his own food-supplies, and create at the same time a lasting industry for the benefit of the poor people among whom he had been thrown by his unfortunate shipwreck; he therefore went on multiplying his stakes, till he found that there was no end to the produce; so that in due time this accidental discovery became a rich inheritance to the fisher-folks of the district, for in ten years after the shipwreck, the bay was covered with an appropriate and successful mussel-collecting apparatus, out of which has grown the present extensive commerce.

The work of cultivation at Aiguillon is carried

on very systematically. I shall give what I learned about it, just as I saw it myself, or as it was described to me by my guide, a very civil and immensely voluble fisherman, who had the whole theory and practice of mussel-farming at his finger-ends, or rather at the end of his tongue. It was truly curious to consider that the same mode of cultivating and working was going on that had prevailed from the beginning—the invention having been perfect from the first. One of the most curious phases of the whole industry is the mode of progression over the fields which has been adopted by the men, for each man has not only to paddle his own canoe on these soft fields of mud, but if he have a visitor, he has to paddle his boat as well. The manner of progression is very primitive. The man kneels in his little wooden vessel with one leg, the other, being encased in a great boot, is fixed deep in the mud; a lift of the little canoe with both hands, and a simultaneous shove with the mud-engulfed leg, and lo! a progress of many inches is achieved; this action frequently repeated by the industrious labourers, soon overcomes the distance between the different fields, and when a new *trousseau* has to be carried out to the bouchots, or a stranger has to be conducted over the fields, two men will load a canoe, and work it out between them, not, however, without a few jolts and jerks, which, like a ride on a camel's back, is rather tiring to the unaccustomed. When three of the canoes are joined together by means of pieces of stout rope, the boucholier in the first one uses his left leg as the propelling power, while the man in No. 3 uses his right leg, and by this means they get along in a straighter line and with greater speed. This peculiar boat-exercise has no little of the comic element in it, especially when one sees a fleet of more than a hundred narrow boats all propelled in the same eccentric manner, by upwards of one hundred merry boucholiers. I may mention that the mud at Aiguillon is unusually smooth and soft; there are no sun-baked furrows to interrupt the progress of the canoe, a fact that is due to the presence of a little animal, which accomplishes for the boucholier what a regiment of a thousand soldiers could not perform.

In addition to the large and strong stakes originally used as holdfasts for his bird-nets, Walton planted others, in long rows, in the form of a double V, with their apex open to the sea, the sides being interlaced with branches of trees, to which the mussels, by means of their byssus, affixed themselves with great aptitude. These bouchots were also so arranged one with another as to serve as traps for the taking of such fish and crustaceans as frequent the coast; so that the fishermen had thus a double chance, being, of course, always assured when there is no fish, of a canoeful of mussels.

The men in search of fish depart for the farm a little time before the tide recedes, and taking their places at the mouth or apex of the V, they affix a small net to the opening, so that they are sure to intercept any fish that may have come in to feed with the previous tide. I made very particular inquiries into the constitution of the farm, and although disappointed at not finding it, as I was led to expect, a vast scene of perfect co-operation, I was pleased to learn that, although the bouchot had many owners, there was no violent competition among those who owned them. Some of these mussel-farmers have three or four bouchots, and the very poorest among them have a half, or a

least a third share in one. The system of family co-operation prevails very largely; I found, as in the case of the celebrated walnut-trees so often quoted, that one or two families, grandfathers, sons, and grandchildren were often the owners of several bouchots, which they worked for their joint benefit, dividing the profits at the end of the season.

The farm occupies a very large space of ground, equal to eight kilometres, and is laid out in four fields or divisions, each of which has its peculiar name and use. There are at least 500 bouchots, and each one represents a length of 450 metres, forming a total wall of strong basket-work, all for the growth of mussels, equal to a length of 225,000 metres, and rising six feet above the mud-bed on which it is erected. Great pains are taken to keep the bouchots in good order; repairs are continually being made; and along the protecting wall of the cliff by which the bay is bounded, there are to be seen what my guide called the *trousseau* of the bouchots—great, strong wooden stakes twelve feet long, and of considerable girth. These are sunk into the mud to a depth of six feet, the upper portion being the receptacle of a garniture of strong but supple branches, twisted in the form of basket-work, on which are grown the annual crops of mussels. The bouchots have different names, according to their uses and their situation. The *bouchots du bas* are those furthest away in the water: these are very seldom left uncovered by the tide; they are formed of very large and very strong solitary stakes, planted so near each other that there are three of them to each metre. The duty of these stakes is to enact the part of spat-collectors—the spat is locally called *naissain* at the Port of Esnandes—so that there may be always a store of infant mussels for the peopling and re-peopling of such of the palisades as may accidentally become barren. My guide, in describing to me the operations of the farm, used agricultural terms, such as seeding, planting, transplanting, replanting, &c., and he told me that operations of some kind are continually going on all over the farm. When it is not seed or harvest time, the bouchots have to be repaired or the canoes mended.

As near as I could understand, the spat of the natural mussel which voluntarily fixed itself to the outer rows of posts, attains about February or March to the size of a grain of flax-seed. In May, the young mussels are about as big as a lentil, and in about two months more they will attain to the dimensions of a haricot bean—the men of Esnandes then call the mussel a *renouvelain*—which is the proper time for the planting to begin; and this operation was in progress during my visit. It is simple but effective. When a few canoe-loads of these young mussels are required for the seeding of the more inland bouchots, the men proceed to the single or collecting stakes at the lowest state of the tide, armed with long poles, having blunt hooks at the end, by means of which they scrape off the seedlings. The men do not, however, scrape off more of the mussels than they require for the operation in hand, which must be completed before the flow of the next tide. Having filled a few baskets, each man paddles his canoe to the seat of work, and there commences the first stage of the work or planting, which is effected in a curious but characteristic way, the operation being called *la bûttise* by those engaged in it. Taking a good handful of the mussels, they are skillfully tied up by the boucholier in a bag of old netting or canvas,

and then deftly fastened in the interstices of the palisades, or bouchot basket-work, each group of mussels being, of course, fastened at such a distance as to have plenty of room to grow. Left there, the byssus of the animal soon forms a point of attachment; and the bag rotting away by means of the water, speedily leaves the mussels hanging in numerous vine-like clusters on the bouchots, where they increase in size with such great rapidity, as speedily to demand the performance of the next operation in mussel culture, which is called the transplanting. It is conducted with a view to the attainment of two ends; firstly, the thinning of overcrowded bouchots; and, secondly, to bring the ripe mussels gradually nearer to the shore, so as to make their removal all the more easy at the proper time. The change of habitation is effected precisely as has already been described; the mussels are again tied up in purses of old netting, although not so particularly as before; again the mussel, whose power in this way is well known, weaves itself a new cable, and the bivalve clings to its new resting-place as tenaciously as ever. It may be asked, why the mussel-farmers should so plant the mussels as that they will require constant thinning; but the reason is, that it is desirable for the purpose of their proper fattening that the mussels should be always, if possible, covered by the salt water; this, however, is not compatible with the extent of the crop; but all that can be done is done, and the mussels are kept in the front-ranks as long as possible. A third and last change brings the mussels as near the shore as they can ever get, so long as they are ungathered.

The labour of planting and transplanting goes on incessantly, till all the spat that had found a resting-place on the solitary stakes—that is, the advanced-guard—has been dealt with. The labour of all these varied operations is constant, and is carried on by old and young, male and female, both day and night, at times when the tide is suitable. Some portions of the farm are always under water; other portions of it, again, are uncovered at the ebbing of the tide; and this circumstance, I was told, has a great influence on the quality of the mussel; those being the best, as may be supposed, which are longest submerged, and kept at the greatest distance from the mud. Although the greatest possible care is taken to keep the mussels from being affected by the copious muddy deposits of the place, by means of allowing a good flow of water between the base of the bouchots and the sea-surface, yet some of the bunches become deteriorated, in spite of all the precautions that can be taken. This, of course, distresses the boucholiers, as one of their points is the superior flavour of their produce; indeed, it was the superiority of the mussels, as discovered by accident through Walton's bird-net, which was set so as to float high above the mud—the quality of the mussel more than the quantity—that influenced Walton to commence as a mussel-farmer; and to this day, it is still quality more than quantity that the boucholiers study at Esnandes. After the process of about a year's farming has been undergone, the mussels are considered to be ready for the market, and by the care of the farmer, the mussels are in season all the year round, although, of course, not so good for food at some periods of the year as at others; thus, the Aiguillon mussels are not so fine in the spring months as they are in the autumnal periods of the year, when they become

deliciously fat and savoury ; indeed, I can bear testimony, having had a feast of them, to the fact of their being better, larger in size, and more pronounced in their flavour than any of the British mussels I have tasted. About April, the mussels become milky and unpalatable, although there are still many branches of them fit for the market. It is in the months between July and January that the great harvest goes on, and the chief money-business is done. If the mussels are to be sent to a distance, they are separated and cleared from all kinds of dirt, packed in hampers and bags, and sent away on the backs of horses or in carts ; while those required for more local consumption are kept in pits dug at the bottom of the cliff, and within the enclosure where the men keep the *trousseau* of the *bouchots*. There are no less than a hundred and forty horses and about a hundred carts engaged in the trade ; and the mussels are distributed within a radius of about a hundred miles of Esnandes, more than thirty thousand journeys being made in the service. In addition to this land-carrying, forty or fifty barques are in the habit of visiting the port, to bear away the mussels to still greater distances, making in all about seven hundred and fifty voyages per annum.

Does the mussel-farm pay ? will, of course, be asked by practical people. Yes, it pays. I have obtained the following figures to shew that mussel-farming pays very well, not to speak of what is obtained by the round and flat fish which are daily captured through the peculiar construction of the *bouchots*. Every *bouchot* will yield a load of mussels for each metre of its length ; and this load is of the value of six francs ; and the whole farm at Esnandes is said to yield an annual revenue of about a million and a quarter of francs, or, to speak roundly, upwards of fifty-two thousand pounds per annum ; and when it is taken into account that this large sum of money is, as nearly as possible, a gift from nature to the inhabitants, as there is no rent to pay for the farm, no seed—as is the case at the Whitstable oyster-farm—to provide, no manure to buy—only the labour necessary for cultivation to be given, British fishermen will easily comprehend the advantages to be derived from mussel-farming.

BROUGHT TO LIGHT.

CHAPTER XXIII.—MR DUPLESSIS WINS THE GAME.

The master of Belair had been sick almost unto death, but was now slowly recovering ; and the hush of dread expectancy, which had brooded like an ominous cloud over the Hall and its inmates, so long as the life of Sir Philip was in danger, had already become as a shadow of the past ; and the well-trained household had imperceptibly glided back into the easy noiseless groove which circled the dull round of everyday duties at Belair. Yes, the baronet was slowly recovering ; he was 'much—very much better,' were the exact words which emanating, in the first instance, in the discreetest of whispers, from the lips of Dr Roach, spread rapidly from mouth to mouth as something that everybody was glad to hear ; for the sick man was universally beloved. But Dr Roach knew, and Sir Philip knew, that this attack, conquered with difficulty, was merely the forerunner of other attacks still more severe, before which the failing forces of life must ultimately succumb.

Gaston Spencelaugh had been summoned from Paris—an effeminately handsome young man, more at home in the drawing-room than the hunting-field, and fonder of a billiard-cue than a horse—who, now that all immediate danger to his father was over, went mooning listlessly about the house smoking interminable cigars, thinking a good deal of some absent Fifine, and voting the whole business which had called him from pleasant Paris a bore.

'You may be sure, dear, that it has been a very harassing time for your Marguerite,' wrote Lady Spencelaugh to one of her confidential correspondents. 'Poor dear Sir Philip has required constant attention night and day, and although no equal to the task of nursing him myself, I have felt it incumbent on me to be constantly on the spot, and to superintend personally every arrangement for his comfort. Gaston, dear fellow ! is at home ; very handsome, though it is I who say it, and with a style quite *comme il faut*.' In writing, thus, her Ladyship had considerably magnified her slight attentions to the sick man, which had merely consisted in three or four visits each day to the room where he lay ; on which occasions she would take a momentary glance at him, and murmur to the attendants : 'Poor dear Sir Philip ! How distressing to see him thus !' and then turning to the head-nurse, she would add : 'Be sure, Mr Smith, that you carry out the doctor's instructions minutely ; and let me be apprised the moment you see a change either one way or the other ;' and she would glide softly back to her own apartments where she would sit by the fire with a screen in her hand, for she was always careful of her complexion, and muse on what might come to pass in case Sir Philip should not recover. 'With my savings and his father's, Gaston would be tolerably well off, and could afford to make a very decent figure in London society. He would go into parliament, of course, when he had sown his wild oats ; and there is no reason why he should not marry into the peerage ; and then— Well, well.'

But Sir Philip Spencelaugh, although thus neglected in one instance, was not left entirely to the care of hirelings. The watchful eye and tender hand of Frederica were ever near him. She had a room fitted up for herself close to his own, that she might be always on the spot ; and her loving face was the first that met his gaze when his feeble senses flickered back to a consciousness of earthly things. He blessed her as he lay thus, and called her his own, his darling. They were the first words he had spoken for many weary days and nights ; and Frederica had to hurry out, that she might give way in solitude to the rush of happy tears that welled up from her heart.

Nearly five months had passed since Frederica gave that promise to her uncle that she would try to look upon Mr Duplessis with more favourable eyes, and grant him an opportunity of pleading his cause in person. It was a promise that was repented of as soon as made ; and, as we have already seen, the Canadian derived so slight an advantage from the permission accorded him, that he was fain to pass it by altogether as though it had never been given, and await the quiet processes of time, which when assisted by his own skilful by-play, might work some change in his favour, rather than frighten his beautiful quarry by a bold rush, and so lose her at once and for ever. He had consented to

play a patient game, in the full expectation of ultimately winning it: so accustomed had he been to winning such delicate hazards, sometimes almost without an effort, that, for a long time, no possibility of failure was suffered to cloud his mind; but at length it began to dawn dimly on him—and it was a thought that touched him to the quick with a sort of savage soreness—that he had been struggling all this time against a barrier of ice, before whose clear coldness all his petty wiles and stratagems, and little love-making arts, withered like exotics before the breath of winter. Admiration for his many brilliant qualities, Frederica might and did feel. She was young, and had a considerable fund of enthusiasm to draw upon; and she could not help liking this man who shone out so superior to the ordinary ruck of visitors at Belair. Then, again, he had a large claim on her gratitude, from the fact of having risked his own life to save that of her uncle: it was a deed that invested him in her eyes with a sort of heroic halo, through which many more faults than he allowed to be visible on the surface would have paled and grown dim. But, granting Duplessis all these points in his favour, and no one was more capable than he of making the most of them, the great indisputable fact still remained, that he found himself utterly unable to advance in her good graces beyond that coign of vantage to which he had so patiently worked his way, but which he had all along merely looked upon in the light of a stepping-stone to something higher. Let him venture but a step beyond it—and now and then he did so venture, treading delicately and with caution—and straightway the barrier of ice rose up before him, and he fell back to his old position, chilled and cowed, he hardly knew how or why, and with a bitter sense of humiliation and defeat working within him. Yes, five months had come and gone since that bright summer afternoon on which Sir Philip Spencelaugh told him of the promise which he had wrung from his niece, and the game seemed still as far from being won as ever. His patience was worn out at last; he was growing desperate; something must be done, and that immediately, for the demon of impecuniosity was knocking loudly at his door. He would make one last bold effort, assisted by the baronet, to win his beautiful prize; and then—why, then, if he were unsuccessful, he would let her go, and trouble himself no further about the grapes he could not reach. There were other grapes, not bad fruit by any means, as such things go, within his reach for the plucking; would it not be wiser in him quietly to accept this other fruit, and make the best of it, rather than waste further precious time on what was so evidently unattainable? There was Lady Wintermere, for instance, just home from the German Spas; a widow well dowered, and still, at forty years of age, passably handsome, who looked with favourable eyes on the handsome Canadian, and was by no means indisposed to encourage his attentions. As the husband of her Ladyship, even though her jointure were tied up beyond his reach, and as the master of Oakthorpe Grange, he would at once take a certain position in society; and it would not be his fault if he did not so *ménager* that all rents and revenues should percolate through his own fingers, and leave some grains of precious dust by the way. In any case, for such as he, the lot was by no means an unenviable one. But to give up for ever his sweet Frederica!—not forgetting all that she was heiress

to—there was the pang. He really loved Miss Spencelaugh, as much as it lay in his nature to love any one, other than himself; but he could not afford to waste more time in a fruitless love-chase. One last bold effort; and then, should he fail—Lady Wintermere and Oakthorpe Grange.

Late, one dull wintry afternoon, Sir Philip Spencelaugh sat propped up in bed, turning over with heedless fingers the leaves of a large-print copy of Massillon, bound in old calf, which lay on the coverlet before him. A shaded lamp stood on a small table close by his bed, and Crooke, his old and faithful body-servant, was moving noiselessly about the anteroom, within call. The old man's face was wan and pinched; but his eyes were brighter, and beamed with a fuller intelligence, Frederica thought, than she had seen in them for many months. At length the baronet spoke. 'Crooke, go and inquire whether Mr Duplessis is in the house. If he is, I should like to see him.' Then when Crooke had gone, he went on, talking to himself: 'No time to lose. I'll have it settled at once—at once. If she doesn't love him now, she will learn to do so after marriage. Girls like her don't know their own minds for a week together. No time to lose. It must be settled at once.'

Mr Duplessis was ushered into the room. After the usual greetings and inquiries were over, the old man motioned to the Canadian to seat himself on a chair close by the bed. Sir Philip lay back on his pillows for a minute or two with closed eyes before he spoke. 'Henri, my friend,' he said at last, 'I want to know how your suit with Frederica prospers. Is the wedding-day fixed yet?'

When Duplessis entered the room, it was with the full intention of stating his case to Sir Philip, but the baronet's question took from him the necessity of doing so. 'Miss Spencelaugh and I,' he replied, 'hold precisely the same position with regard to each other that we did six months ago.'

'How is that?' asked Sir Philip anxiously. 'Are your views or wishes changed in any way?'

'Not in the slightest degree,' replied Duplessis. 'To win the hand of Miss Spencelaugh is still the dearest hope of my life.'

'Then why haven't you won it? She gave you a chance, didn't she, months ago? Why did you neglect to take advantage of it?'

'The affection your niece has for you, Sir Philip, made her yield the point in opposition to her own wishes on the subject.'

'Pooh, man! That's more than you know. Don't you pretend to read the riddle of a young girl's heart: it lies beyond either your skill or mine to do so. But when once the point was conceded in your favour, why didn't you make the most of it?'

'I did make the most of it, in one sense. I pressed my suit quietly and unobtrusively. I did my best to work my way into the good graces of Miss Spencelaugh, and I failed. I still love her as dearly as ever I did, but I am afraid that she will never look upon me as anything more than a friend.'

'Tut, man! You are far too timid a wooer. No wench's heart that isn't given away beforehand can stand against a bold, resolute lover. They are soft, timorous things at the best of times, but as sly as the very deuce. If I had stood in your shoes, my boy, I would have forced Freddy into loving me—yes, sir, forced her!'

'Miss Spencelaugh is not a simple boarding-

school miss, to be won by a few honeyed phrases, and empty protestations of affection.'

'She is the best girl in the world, sir, though it is I who say it!' exclaimed the baronet warmly.—'And do you mean to say, Henri, that the minx isn't fond of you?'

'I am afraid, Sir Philip, that such is really the case,' replied the Canadian in a low, regretful voice.

'I tell you again, my dear boy, that you have gone too timidly about your courting. Freddy must like you in her secret heart, even though she won't acknowledge as much. I set my heart on this match long ago, and I don't think I could die happy unless it were to come off. I'll see Freddy about it myself; I'll see her at once. There's not much that she would refuse her old uncle.'

The Canadian's eyes glittered, but he answered the baronet in a low, earnest voice: 'Not for worlds, my dear Sir Philip, would I have Miss Spencelaugh's inclinations forced in the slightest degree in my favour.'

'No one wants to force her inclinations, sir. But I say again, there are not many things she would refuse her old uncle. Pour me out a little of that cordial, and then tell Crooke to ask Miss Spencelaugh to come to me.'

'But, my dear sir, you would not?'

'Not a word, Duplessis; I tell you I will have my own way in this matter, so don't try to turn me from it.'

'But you surely don't wish me to remain in the room during your interview with Miss Spencelaugh?' persisted Duplessis.

'You shall remain in the room, but out of sight. Freddy shall not know that you are so near; you shall hide behind that screen. Nay, I will have it so. No remonstrances, or, by Heaven! I will never speak to you again.—Never saw Farren in *The School for Scandal*—did you? No, I thought not. Then you missed a treat—you missed a treat. His screen-scene was the sublime of comedy.—But away with you, out of sight; I hear Freddy's voice as she talks to Crooke.'

The Canadian vanished; and next moment Frederica entered the room, and hastening up to the bed, flung her arms round the old man's neck, and kissed him fondly. 'You are better to-day, dear,' she said; 'I can see it in your face without your telling me.'

'Better—yes. The sight of you always makes me better. But, Freddy, I want to talk to you on a serious matter. I want to know how it is that you and Duplessis?'

'We will wait till you are quite well, dear uncle, before we talk about that,' said Frederica hastily.

'Not so, darling; there's no time like the present time. I have been thinking much on this matter while I've been lying here. I'm anxious about it. You don't know how deeply my heart is set on this thing. Five months ago, you promised that you would try to like my friend a little—that you would try to look more favourably on his suit. Has the task been too hard a one for you, darling?'

'I do like Mr Duplessis—as a friend.'

'But you do not love him?'

'No,' said Frederica faintly.

'Pardon your old uncle the question, Freddy: but no one else has stolen your heart away without my knowing it?'

Frederica did not answer, but a slight motion of her head implied dissent.

'And yet you do not love Duplessis?' resumed the baronet. 'Then my most cherished scheme falls to the ground, and my last earthly wish will never be realised. I cannot tell you, darling, how I have longed for this match to be brought about. But there—there! It cannot be, I suppose, and I will urge you no further.'

'Why wish me to marry at all, dear uncle? My greatest happiness is to think that I shall always stay with you—always be as a daughter to you. I wish for nothing beyond this.'

'But I shall not always be here, Freddy. Not many more days are left me in this world; on that point I am not deceived. But go now—I cannot stay more; I care not how soon the end comes.' All the light and life seemed to fade out of his face as he sank back on his pillows; the hollows deepened under his eyes, and his thin lips were contracted as with a spasm of intense pain. Frederica looked on in sore distress, all her woman's nature at war within her.

'But, dear uncle, Mr Duplessis himself?'

'Is here to answer for himself,' said the Canadian, as he stepped from behind the screen. 'Pardon me, Sir Philip, but I could play the eavesdropper no longer.'

'Listening, sir!' said Frederica, with a flash of scorn from her beautiful eyes.

'All my fault, Freddy—all my fault,' said the baronet: 'I made him go there against his own wishes. I questioned him, and he told me you did not care for him, and I—I thought he was wrong, and I told him to go behind the screen, and hear for himself.'

'A most unfair advantage to take of any one, said Frederica coldly.'

'Ay, ay, perhaps so. I see it now,' said the old man wearily; 'I was foolish enough to hope—but it matters not now what I hoped. It is all over—all over.'

The baronet ceased speaking, and no one answered him. There was silence in the room. The sick man lay with shut eyes, and white, drawn face; Frederica stood close by the bed, her slender figure stretched to its full height, with rigid arms and intertwined fingers, and a morbid fixity of features that made her seem for the moment like a piece of exquisite sculpture. Presently, her eyes wandered from the bed to where Duplessis was leaning in an attitude of dejection, with one elbow resting on the chimney-piece. Their eyes met. In those of Duplessis there was a soft, loving, wistful look—such a look as but very few eyes can express, and rarely those of a man; and it pierced through all Frederica's armour straight to her heart. He came a step or two nearer, and resting his arms on a high-backed chair of black oak, gazed fixedly at her with that same yearning, inexplicable look in his eyes.

'I am here in a very false position this evening, Miss Spencelaugh,' he said; 'but I freely trust to your kindness to overlook the fact, and to listen to the few words I have to say, for the first time and the last, on a subject that has been very near to my heart for a long time. I have been silent hitherto, and I should have remained silent had not Sir Philip broken the ice; but as the case now stands, I must—for after what has passed I can no longer remain dumb—try to fashion into words some little of what I feel. I have loved you long and truly—loved you from the first day I saw you'—and with that Duplessis told briefly, in warm,

impassioned accents, the story of his love. 'But the wild, mad dream I was foolish enough to cherish is all over now,' he ended by saying; 'and from this night, Miss Spencelaugh, I shall haunt your presence no more. In a few days, I shall leave Monkshire for ever.'

It was certainly a very finished piece of acting. He spoke in a minor key, slowly and almost solemnly, and there was a tender pathos in his voice which assisted his eyes wonderfully. Frederica felt herself strangely moved. The firm ground on which she had planted herself seemed to be slipping imperceptibly from under her feet. That voice, those eyes; surely truth and love— She felt herself sliding down towards some terrible abyss, from which only by a last desperate effort was there any chance of escape. She was roused by an exclamation from Duplessis, and her eyes followed his to the bed. A fearful change had come over the sick man. He was sitting upright in bed, his fingers clutching convulsively at the counterpane, and his eyes staring straight before him, while a cold clammy sweat bedewed his forehead. Frederica's arm was round him in an instant; his head came slowly round till his eyes met hers. There was something terrible in the intensity of their gaze. Inaudible words formed themselves on his lips. 'He is dying!' cried Frederica in a tone of anguish. 'Ring for help.'

Again his lips formed themselves to speak, and this time a faint murmur fell on Frederica's ear. She bent her head to listen. 'You will marry him, dear, will you not?' muttered the old man faintly, with that same terribly earnest look in his eyes.

Frederica's heart seemed to die within her. 'Yes—I will marry him,' she said in a low, clear voice that was strangely unlike her own. Duplessis, with his hand on the bell-rope, heard the words and turned, while a sudden gleam of triumph shot across his face; and next instant the warning summons rang through the house. An almost inaudible 'God bless you!' shaped itself on the old man's lips, and then the light suddenly left his eyes, and he fell back insensible on the pillows. Frederica's power of endurance was at an end. She turned from the bed. Duplessis saw the change in her face, and sprang to help her; but before he could reach her, she sank to the ground with a low cry, and remembered nothing more.

CHAPTER XXIV.—WHO WROTE THE LETTERS?

The country clocks were just striking midnight as Mr Duplessis walked up the pathway of his little garden, and paused for a moment before going indoors to listen to the faint musical chimes borne through the silence from some near-at-hand church; and to glance for the second time at certain moonlight effects of cunningly interwoven light and shade among the trunks and crooked branches of the gnarled old trees that skirted his little demesne; for Mr Duplessis flattered himself that he had the soul of an artist for such trifles. He had walked home from Belair through the frosty moonlight, with no company save his cigar and his own thoughts—had walked home alone and of choice, that he might be enabled, calmly and without interruption, to think over all that had happened to him on that eventful evening. He had triumphed at last; his long waiting had met with the reward he coveted most; Frederica Spence-

laugh had promised to become his wife. True, the promise had not been given by her as he would have liked it to be given; it had been dragged from her by main force, as it were; but he flattered himself that when once she were his own, she would speedily learn to be as loving and docile as any lord and master need desire. So there was triumph at his heart, and a bright smile of triumph on his handsome face, as he walked home along the lonely country roads, alternately smoking and humming scraps from Béranger.

Mr Duplessis let himself into the house by means of his latch-key, and went forward into the sitting-room, which was dimly lighted by a few embers in the grate. He was quickly followed by his housekeeper, sleepy and half-dazed, carrying a couple of lighted candles.

'You need not have sat up for me, Benson,' he said; 'I could have managed very well if you had left matches and a candle in the hall.'—Antoine was away for a brief holiday, having gone to visit a brother who had just opened a café in London, otherwise Benson would have been in bed two hours ago.

'Who brought this letter, and when did it come?' asked Mr Duplessis suddenly, as he took up a singular-looking document from the table.

'Letter, sir! What letter?' said the housekeeper. 'I never put any letter on the table, and not a soul has called here since you went out this evening.'

'Then how the deuce did the letter get here? It was certainly not on the table when I went out.'

Mrs Benson was quite unable to say how the letter had got there. She did not like to contradict her master, but she felt sure he must have put it there himself before going out, and have forgotten it.

Mr Duplessis, with the unopened letter in his hand, walked quickly across the room to the French window opposite the fireplace which gave access to the lawn. He opened it with a turn of the handle, and it could have been just as readily opened from the outside. 'This window ought certainly to be bolted at dusk,' he said rather sharply. 'As it is, thieves and vagabonds of every kind can come and go as easily as I can myself.'

Mrs Benson folded her arms meekly over her chest, but said never a word in reply: she felt the reproof to be a just one.

Mr Duplessis went back to the fire, and sinking into an easy-chair, placed his glass in his eye, and proceeded to examine the letter with a sort of half-contemptuous curiosity. The paper was coarse and dingy, and the direction was in a peculiar crabbed hand, which afforded no clue to the sex of the writer. It was folded in the old-fashioned style, without an envelope; 'And it is actually fastened with a wafer!' muttered Mr Duplessis to himself. 'Some begging-letter, I suppose, from a widow with sixteen young children; or from a poor but unfortunate tradesman, requesting the loan of a small sum to set him up in business again; to be paid back with interest at dooms-day. Bah! I'm sick of such appeals;' and with a filip of his thumb and finger, he burst open the letter.

Benson had been fidgeting about—bolting the shutters, and placing the candles nearer her master, and raking the few dying embers together; and was just turning to leave the room, when Mr Duplessis leaped from his chair with a wild, inarticulate cry, as though he had been shot, and then stood with one hand pressed to his head, staring at

the open letter with a face as colourless as that of the marble Aphrodite on the cabinet close by.

'Are you ill, sir? Can I do anything for you?' cried the terrified housekeeper, advancing a step or two.

His lips moved in reply, but no sound came from them; but she understood from the motion of his arm that he wished to be alone; so she went out trembling, and closed the door softly behind her; but went no further than the other end of the passage, and then stood listening for whatever might happen next. In a few minutes the bell rang. She went in timidly.

Mr Duplessis was seated in his easy-chair again; the colour had in some measure come back to his face, but he looked twenty years older than he had done only a few minutes before. 'This letter brings me very bad news, Benson,' he said, speaking in a low, forced voice, and without looking his housekeeper in the face. 'It tells me that my only brother is dead.'

'Indeed, sir! I am very sorry to hear that,' said Benson in a voice of deep concern, remembering, however, at the same time, that she had never heard Mr Duplessis speak of such a relative.

'So am I, Benson—very sorry indeed. There are certain business matters connected with this sad event which render it imperatively necessary that I should start for town by the first train. You will look after the lodge till Antoine returns; and should there be any inquiries for me, you may mention the mournful circumstance which has thus suddenly called me away, and say that I shall be back by Wednesday next at the latest. I find that a mail-train passes the nearest station at two o'clock, so that I have no time to lose. You will light the candles in my dressing-room at once, and then make me a cup of strong coffee; you may as well also put me up a sandwich or two as quickly as you can.'

'Shall you want the horse got out, sir, to take you to the station?'

'No; I shall have nothing to carry but my small travelling-bag; and the walk this fine night will refresh me.'

Half an hour later, Mr Duplessis bade his housekeeper a kindly farewell, and quitted Lilac Lodge, carrying his bag in his hand, and took the road leading to the nearest railway station; while Benson, sorely troubled and perplexed in her mind, fastened up the house, and went to bed.

In the dusk of the afternoon of the day following the departure of Mr Duplessis, Mrs Benson, having given the housemaid a holiday, sat leisurely enjoying her tea, the sole inmate of Lilac Lodge, when she was startled by a loud single knock at the front-door, and on proceeding to open it, found there two plainly-dressed men—certainly not gentlemen, probably two pettifoggish tradesmen who had called about a bill, she said to herself—one of whom inquired whether Mr Duplessis were at home.

'No, he ain't at home,' said the housekeeper irritably, for she was vexed at being disturbed over her first cup; 'and what's more, he won't be at home for another week. His brother is dead, and he had to set off by the mail for London last night. There!' and she would have shut the door in the faces of the men, had not a foot been quietly interposed to prevent her.

'Then, if the governor's not here,' said one of the strangers, 'you will perhaps have no objections to shew us over the house.'

'Me shew you over the house!' began Benson,

when one of the men bending forward, whispered a few words in her ear, on which she fell back with a scared face, and allowed them to enter; and having shut the door behind them, she went back to her tea in the kitchen; but her appetite was gone, and she sat listening and trembling, while the two strangers went about their perquisition up stairs and down.

'Rummy start, ain't it?' said one of the men to the other, as they came for the second time into the sitting-room, having discovered no trace of Mr Duplessis. 'I wonder whether somebody has given him the office, and he has hooked it, or whether this story about his brother being dead is true?'

'The woman says he went last night, and we heard nothing about the affair till this morning. How was he to suppose we should find it out to-day?'

'By jingo! What's this?' exclaimed the other man, whose sharp eyes had caught sight of a partially-burned paper in the grate; and next moment he was unfolding it, and smoothing it out with careful, dexterous fingers.

The paper was strong and coarse, and had been squeezed up so tightly that the flames had merely burned away the loose edges, leaving the contents nearly intact. Throwing on to the letter the concentrated light of his bull's-eye, the second man peered over his friend's shoulder, and the two read as follows:

'The dark secret which you thought you had hidden for ever, has come to light. To-morrow morning the police will be on your track. One who has been a blind instrument in the discovery of a fearful crime—one who would not willingly have your blood lie at his door—warns you. Flee while there is yet time. To-morrow it will be too late.'

Some other word had been written where the word *his* stood in the letter, and afterwards carefully erased.

'The bird has flown, and the game's up for the present,' said one of the men, when the document had been spelled carefully through.

'It was this bit of paper that started him,' said the other. 'The story about his brother is all gag. But don't it strike you as strange that the note I hold in my hand, and the one received by our superintendent this morning, are both in the same handwriting? There can't be any doubt about it; it's too remarkable a fist to be easily imitated. Rum, ain't it?—Now, you had better stop here a bit while I go up to the station, and hand in this note, and get fresh instructions; and I'll send down another man to relieve you as soon as possible.'

The case was as the two men had stated it. By the early post that morning, the Normanford superintendent of police had received an anonymous letter conveying certain information, the accuracy of which he felt himself bound at once to investigate. He put his men upon the track pointed out in the letter. Abel Garrod and his wife were the first persons questioned. They gave evidence as to the meeting of Mr Duplessis and the woman Marie; to the intimate relations apparently existing between the two; to the stay of the latter under Abel Garrod's roof for three days; and finally, to their departure together. Simultaneously with this inquiry, another was going forward at the *Silver Lion* at Fairwood; and here the police gathered another piece of confirmatory evidence not mentioned in the letter, in the production, by the landlady, of a handkerchief

marked with blood, and bearing the name of the missing woman, found under the seat of the gig the day after it had been hired by Mr Duplessis. The old collector at the toll-bar also underwent a strict examination; and then the two parties of police met by previous appointment at Martell's Leap, the neighbourhood of which spot their anonymous informant had directed them to search minutely, especially the beach immediately below, and the crevices and recesses in the face of the cliff.

Leaving his men still occupied with the search, the superintendent himself rode over to Sir Harry Craxford, the nearest magistrate; and on the strength of the evidence which he laid before him, obtained a warrant for the arrest of Henri Duplessis, which was at once placed in the hands of two efficient officers, but with what result, we have already seen. The search for the missing woman, unavailing on the first day, was resumed with renewed energy the following morning, but without further result than the discovery, on a ledge of rock about twenty feet above the beach, of a broken jet bracelet, which was at once identified by Jane Garrod as similar to one worn by Madame. This discovery went a long way towards confirming the general opinion, that the missing woman had been thrown over the cliff; and as it was found to have been high-water at 4 P.M. on the day of her disappearance, there was little doubt that, in such a case, her body had been washed away by the tide.

Of Duplessis himself, no tidings could be learned, neither on the railway nor elsewhere. Country constables and metropolitan detectives alike failed in their efforts to trace him. A minute description of his personal appearance was inserted in the *Police Gazette*, and there read by thousands of keen eyes, all thenceforth eagerly on the watch, in seaport town and country village, to single out a quarry which promised so much sport to his captors; but from the moment when the housekeeper, looking out after him into the moonlight, saw him disappear behind the screen of laurels which shut in the lawn, he seemed as utterly lost to human ken as though the earth had opened at his feet, and swallowed him up for ever. Of Antoine the imperturbable, when he returned home, which he did on the day following that of his master's departure, policeman could make nothing. The quiet insolence of his replies, when he was examined before Sir Harry Craxford, threw that worthy but irascible personage into such a violent rage as threatened at one time to bring on a fit of apoplexy; but as it could not be shewn that the valet was in any way mixed up with the affair which attached such dark suspicion to Duplessis, the magistrate was obliged to order him to be set at liberty; and the next night, Antoine disappeared as mysteriously as his master had done, and was seen no more at Lilac Lodge.

The mind of Mr Davis, however, the superintendent, still remained restless and ill at ease. That the two anonymous letters—the one addressed to himself, and the other addressed to Duplessis—had been written by the same person, was a fact scarcely open to dispute, when they came to be compared together. But who was the writer of them? This was a question which the superintendent found himself utterly unable to answer. All his cautious underhand inquiries could elicit no information on the point; and he was fain after a time to give the matter up, and class it among the other untravelling puzzles of his profession.

At Belair, the news of Mr Duplessis's sudden departure, and of the strange charge afterwards alleged against him, was received at first as something too incredible for belief. The man had been there so often, and was so intimately known, that the inmates of the Hall could hardly help feeling at first as if some shadow of disgrace attached to themselves. Lady Spencelaugh was sorry in her way, for Mr Duplessis had been one of her few favourites; but it was a sorrow that was very short-lived, and soon gave way to indignation at the thought that 'so vile a creature,' as she now termed the Canadian, had succeeded for so long a time in imposing on so important a personage as her Ladyship. By Frederica, the news was received with strangely mingled feelings, which she herself would have been powerless to analyse. In the first shock of her surprise and disbelief, she felt more warmly towards the Canadian than she had ever done before. Had she not promised to become his wife? and now that this horrible cloud of disgrace and misery was lowering over him, was not her proper place by his side? Yes; but how could she be by his side?—how comfort him by written or spoken word, now that he was gone no one knew whither? And when day passed after day, and still he came not to disprove the black charges brought against him; and when Frederica read in the local newspaper the fearful list of proofs which the exertions of the police had gathered up, one after another, her conviction of his innocence began to give place to doubt; and with this doubt came a rush of fearful joy, which she found it vain to try to stifle, at the thought, that if Duplessis were never to return, then she, Frederica Spencelaugh, would be once more a free woman. How warmly the thought nestled round her heart! It was like a hidden singing-bird that would not be chased away, or chidden into silence, but still sang sweetly on within some inmost bower.

The news of the charge against his friend Duplessis was sedulously kept from the ears of Sir Philip Spencelaugh. In the then feeble state of his health, such a shock might have proved fatal to the old man. It was intimated to him that the Canadian had been called away on private business of importance, which was likely to detain him for some time; and although he often wondered, in a feeble-minded way, why Duplessis neither came nor wrote, his memory was so far weakened that he often forgot the absence of his friend, and talked of him as though he were engaged to dine at Belair on the morrow.

FINIS.

FINIS—the fittest word to end

Life's book, so mystical and solemn;

The fiat of a Roman judge;

The last stone of the finished column.

Finis—our thrilling, parting word,

As standing by the grave we linger,

And hear the earth fall where the yew

Points downward with its sable finger.

Finis—the saddest word of all,

Irrevocable, changeless, certain;

The parting sigh beside the dead;

The prompter's word to drop the curtain.

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LITERARY PARTNERSHIPS.

MONEY is easily married to money; genius does not so readily amalgamate with genius; hence, partnerships are more rare in the literary than they are in the commercial world. French dramatists, it is true, hunt in couples as often as not; but their brethren here, by no means slack in adapting ideas from the French, have not (with one exception) cared to imitate them in this, although the example of the fathers of the English theatre is all in favour of applying the much-lauded principle of co-operation to the manufacture of plays.

Elizabethan managers, once a play was paid for, deemed themselves at liberty to do what they liked with their own, never scrupling to call in a popular playwright to alter another man's work; and, it must be owned, the greatest purveyors of dramatic poetry raised no objections to being so employed. Dramatists thus became accustomed to graft their own ideas upon other men's stocks, and, as a natural consequence, were not long in hitting upon the plan of writing plays in conjunction, for the more speedy replenishing of their ever-hungry purses. The system had the advantage—no slight one to such tavern-loving spirits—of affording no end of plausible excuses for making merry over the *Mermaid's* excellent sack. At their first meeting, they would hardly do more than agree upon a subject; the plot would be sketched out at a second; and the details of the different scenes would probably be settled at a third. Then the apportionment of the play among them would require discussion, and the discussion was no dry one, we may be sure; next would come meetings to compare progress, to make alterations and emendations; and when the play was completed, the event would of course be celebrated with a carouse. No wonder these partnerships became popular with the fraternity; sometimes they were limited to two members, more often they consisted of three or four, and occasionally as many as five or six united their forces. One result of this division of labour was, that an insignificant writer like Heywood was able to boast he

had assisted in the manufacture of more than two hundred pieces of one sort and another.

These dramatic partnerships were commonly but partnerships of a day. 'The rich conceptions of the twin-like brains' of Beaumont and Fletcher sprang from a more thorough and genuine union of congenial minds, a union remaining yet without a parallel in the history of literature. The two friends who really became one poet, had much, besides genius, in common. Both came of poetically given families, and if Francis Beaumont was the son of a judge, John Fletcher claimed a dignity of the church as his sire; both had received a university education, and both came to London with little save good-looks, good-breeding, and brains to fight the battle of life. The only difference between them was a difference of age, and their singular friendship is rendered none the less unique by the fact that, when it commenced, Beaumont had only just attained legal manhood, while Fletcher had reached the more sober age of thirty-one. Their minds and tastes, however, were in such accord that they carried their partnership into every relation of their lives, and shared everything it was possible to share. Nine years this marriage of true minds lasted, when it was dissolved by the death of Beaumont. During this period, the poet-partners produced seventeen of the fifty-three plays which make up the so-called *Works of Beaumont and Fletcher*. Considering that Beaumont was the younger of the twain, and could not have been concerned in more than a third of the dramas bearing his friend's name, it is hard to understand how his name came to have the priority of place. Contemporary critics gave him the credit of restraining the exuberant wit and fancy of Fletcher; but truly, such was the 'wondrous consimilarity of fancy,' as Aubrey calls it, between them, that it is utterly impossible to guess at the respective share of each poet in the plays bearing their joint-names, for there is nothing to distinguish them in any way from those written by Fletcher after he had lost his friend. Fletcher survived Beaumont ten years, and sometimes worked with other dramatists; one

of his *collaborateurs*, unlucky Massinger, sharing his unnoted grave—

Plays they did write together, were great friends,
And now one grave includes them in their ends.

He is said, too, to have had Shakspeare himself as an associate in the composition of *The Two Noble Kinsmen*, and the lost *History of Cardenio*; but it matters little, so far as Fletcher's fame is concerned. Nothing can disjoin the names of the poets who were one in brain, in heart, in soul; together they must be remembered; and if they are ever forgotten, Beaumont and Fletcher will be forgotten together.

The rhymed plays of the Davenants and Howards so offended the taste of the Duke of Buckingham, that he determined to try if their popularity was strong enough to resist the force of ridicule. Sprat, afterwards Bishop of Rochester, Martin Clifford, and Hudibras Butler enlisted in his service, and the confederates were soon ready to open the campaign. Plague and fire, however, interposed in behalf of the threatened dramatists, and for a while *The Rehearsal* was denied an opportunity of testing public opinion. When the opportunity came, the plays and playwrights against whom it was especially directed were well-nigh forgotten, and John Dryden was master of the situation. Under these circumstances, Buckingham remodelled *The Rehearsal* so as to bear upon the laureate's heroic plays, and fairly laughed them out of fashion. The duke and his coadjutors may claim the credit of having produced the first successful English burlesque, and, at the same time, the longest lived of its tribe. Actor after actor took up its hero, and Bayes was one of Garrick's favourite and most popular parts.

Colman and Garrick once clubbed together to produce a comedy; the result of the union was *The Clandestine Marriage*, one of the greatest successes achieved on our stage. The idea originated with Colman as he was looking at the first plate of Hogarth's *Marriage à la Mode*; but the editor of *Biographia Dramatica* makes him claim the authorship altogether, putting these words into his mouth: 'Garrick composed two acts, which he sent to me, desiring me to put them together, or do what I would with them. I did put them together, for I put them in the fire, and wrote the play myself.' On the other hand, Colman complained that his associate, accusing him of laying great stress upon having written Lord Ogleby purposely for him, remarked: 'Suppose it should come out that I wrote it?' It had been agreed between them that their partnership should be kept secret until the play was acted and published; but the tale-bearing of good-natured friends, and Garrick's resolution not to play in the comedy, nearly brought their comedy and their friendship to a premature end. Colman writes to Garrick: 'I understood it was to be a joint-work in the fullest sense of the word, and never imagined that either of us was to lay his finger on a particular scene and cry: *This is mine!* It is true, indeed, that by your suggestion Hogarth's proud lord was converted into Lord Ogleby, and that, as the play now stands, the levee-scene and the whole of the fifth act are yours; but on the conduct as well as dialogue of the fourth act, I think your favourite, Lord Ogleby, has some obligations to me.' In reply, the actor simply says he considers Colman's account 'somewhat erroneous;' and the original draft or

sketch of the plot made by Garrick goes far to justify his curt comment.

This draft is a curiosity. Garrick had intended to act the chief part himself, and he cast the comedy before he wrote it. (This may seem reversing the proper order of things, but we suspect quite as many plays have been cast before writing as ever were written before being cast.) And the actors' names alone appearing in the sketch has a somewhat comical effect, for example: 'Act i. Scene 1. Enter Bride and O'Brien, who are secretly married, complaining how unhappy she is, and how disagreeably situated on account of their concealing their marriage. In this scene must be artfully set forth the situation and business of the *dramatis personæ*. The audience must learn that Mrs Clive, the aunt, has two nieces, co-heiresses, and one of them is to be married to O'Brien, the son of Garrick, and nephew of Yates. They are met at the aunt's, I suppose, to see which of the young ladies will be most agreeable to the young man. [Query—whether there may not be a design to have a double match—the father with the aunt?] The youngest sister, Pope, and the aunt fall in love with him, and all pay their court to Garrick on account of his son, which he interprets as love to himself. Yates, Garrick's brother, who lives in the country—a rough, laughing, hearty fellow—is come to approve of one of the young ladies for his nephew, and to see the grand family business settled. Bride declares her distresses at seeing that her sister and aunt are in love with her husband, and that his father takes their different attachment to him for passion. She seems to think that nothing but an avowal of their marriage will set all to rights; but O'Brien gives reasons for still concealing it, and says that their future welfare depends upon keeping the secret.' In another scene, Garrick and his servant, King, are positive that all the ladies are setting caps at Garrick, who acts accordingly; and of another, between himself and Mrs Clive, the actor-author says: 'This will be a fine scene worked up, with their mutual delicacies, not to open their minds too abruptly, nor to shock each other.' The worthy pair finally resolve to indulge their own inclinations at the expense of everybody else, and 'Pope comes from behind some flowering shrubs where she has been listening, and has overheard these precious persons laying their schemes and opening their minds to each other, and seeing Yates come along, she is resolved to make more mischief;' and here Garrick's invention came to a stand for a time apparently, for here ends his rough sketch of the comedy, destined to make the reputation of another actor, instead of adding one more to Garrick's long list of histrionic triumphs.

The present generation of dramatists scarcely seem to believe in union being strength, despite the good-fortune attending *Masks and Faces* and *Plot and Passion*, two products of a partnership between Messrs Tom Taylor and Charles Reade. Extravaganza writers have, indeed, occasionally worked in concert, and we have some remembrance of one burlesque boasting no less than half-a-dozen parents; sundry short-lived farces, too, owe their origin to more than one pen; but with these exceptions, the above-mentioned dramas fairly represent all the theatre has gained in our day by literary co-operation.

Pope's enemies, strong in numbers, if in nothing else, hesitated not to affirm that another name

ought to have appeared with his upon the title-page of the *Essay on Man*. Lord Bathurst (according to Dr Hugh Blair) declared that the *Essay* was really the work of Lord Bolingbroke, turned into verse by the poet, and averred that he had read the original manuscript, and was puzzled which to admire most, the elegance of Bolingbroke's prose, or the beauty of Pope's poetry. The former, it was said, openly laughed at his friend for adopting and advocating principles at variance with his known convictions. The evidence against Pope's claim to the sole authorship is, however, too slight and too suspicious for us to admit the *Essay on Man* among partnership productions. We might as justly accept the authority of the cribbed couplet:

Pope came off clean with Homer, but they say
Broome went before, and kindly swept the way.

All Broome did for the *Iliad* was to supply a portion of the notes; with the *Odyssey*, it was different. The first took the town by storm, and for a time the reading world was Homer mad. Pope wisely determined to take fortune at the flood, lost no time in making known his intention of providing the *Iliad* with a companion. His five years' drudgery over that work had, however, exhausted his translating ardour, and he looked about him for some means of lightening the wearisome task. Learning that Broome and Fenton had partly anticipated his design, Pope prevailed upon them to join him in the producing an English version of the *Odyssey*, thus securing himself from their rivalry, while he lessened his labours. When the public were informed that Mr Pope had undertaken the translation, they were also informed the subscription was not entirely for himself, but partly for two friends who had assisted him in the work. His 'mercenaries,' as Johnson rudely terms them, had a larger share in the performance than 'Mr Pope the undertaker' allowed the world to suspect. Broome, whose work required a troublesome amount of touching up, translated the second, sixth, eighth, eleventh, twelfth, sixteenth, eighteenth, and twenty-third books, besides supplying all the notes. Fenton wrote the first, fourth, nineteenth, and twentieth books, doing his part so cleverly that few alterations were needed to render them fit to take their place beside Pope's own. Pope probably took this into account when he awarded him three hundred pounds for his four books, while paying Broome barely six hundred for his share. Pope himself netted nearly three thousand pounds by the venture.

Spite of this substantial return, the poet does not seem to have retained any pleasant recollection of the triple alliance. In the earlier editions of *The Dunciad*, he complained—

Hibernian politics, O Swift, thy doom;
And Pope's, translating three whole years with
Broome!

He ridiculed his quondam assistant as a proficient in the art of sinking, and classed him among 'parrots who repeat another's words in such a hoarse odd voice as makes them seem their own'—

By Pope's applause, Broome gained a critic's fame,
And by his envy lost the poet's name.

Broome declared he had committed no crime unless it was having said that Pope was no master of Greek; as if that was not quite sufficient to account for the satirist's resentment! Some years afterwards, Curll asked Broome to send him 'any letter

of Mr Pope's he might wish to publish.' Broome forwarded the publisher's application to Pope, and the former partners thereupon became once more friends.

A more congenial association was that formed by Swift, Gay, Arbuthnot, and Pope for the publication of certain odd scraps and trifling pieces they had 'casually got abroad.' Pope says of himself and his coadjutors of the *Miscellanies*: 'Methinks we look like friends side by side, serious and melancholy by turns, conversing interchangeably and walking down hand in hand, to posterity, in free, natural, and easy manner.' We fear posterity would have known little of the friends, if their fame rested on the *Miscellanies*; by which Pope pocketed L.125, while Gay and Arbuthnot received a modest L.50 apiece, and Swift was content with the barren honour of the connection, not getting a single penny for his share. Pope and Arbuthnot shared with Gay the responsibility of that terrible mistake, *Three Hours after Marriage*, a shocking bad comedy, out of the production of which sprang the inextinguishable warfare between Pope and Gibber. Scarcely more fortunate were the *Memoirs of Scriblerus*, the result of an alliance among Pope, Arbuthnot, Swift, Parnell, and Gay; which came to grief with its first volume. Warburton looked upon this as a disastrous event for literature; but Johnson, with justice, dismisses the unfinished work as one that has been little read, or, when read, has been forgotten, as no man could be wiser, better, or merrier by remembering it. Pope had a finger in Thomson's poetical pie, giving *The Seasons* the benefit of his experience and taste, and pruning and dressing *Agamemnon* before it was introduced to the public. He was suspected, too, of helping Gay over *The Beggar's Opera*, but denied the soft impeachment, although he admitted having given his friend a hint or two towards the perfecting of that famous musical comedy.

It was a happy hour that brought Addison and Steele together, and inspired them to form a partnership fraught with rich consequences to English literature. When the *Spectator* came to delight and improve society, it was something new to have humour without coarseness, satire without scurrility, wit without ill-nature; and great is the debt of gratitude owing to the twin revolutionists who did their spiriting so gently and so well. Rich as that first of periodicals is in charming essays, pre-eminent among its contents stand the pages devoted to good Sir Roger de Coverley and his surroundings. Somehow, we always associate Addison's name with that of the genial old knight, loving, as one of his editors says, to be deluded with the notion that the whole was the work of one mind; but to Steele must be awarded the credit of creating, not only Sir Roger himself, but Will Honeycomb, Captain Sentry, Sir Andrew Freeport and the immortal club; and some of the best and most Addisonian 'bits' were actually due to Steele's genius. The 'perverse widow,' too, belongs to Steele, although she might have been originated by either of the partners, for both had sighed and suffered long, victims to the bewitchments of those exceptions to every rule; Steele lost his enchantress; Addison, more unlucky, gained his, and lived to think, if he did not say, like Mr Weller senior: 'She was such an uncommon pleasant widder, it's a great pity she ever changed her condition; she don't act as a wife.' Addison killed Sir Roger when the *Spectator* drew near its end

and if Budgetell is to be believed, which we do not think he is, justified the act by declaring he did so to prevent any one else murdering his old friend. At anyrate, it is hardly fair to say: 'The outlines of Sir Roger de Coverley were imagined and partly traced by Steele; the colouring and more prominent lineaments elaborated by Joseph Addison; some of the background put in by Eustace Budgetell; and the portrait defaced by either Steele or Tickell with a deformity which Addison repudiated.' That Tickell had any share at all in the Coverley papers is more than doubtful, and Budgetell's part was a very limited one. All save two or three were written by Addison and Steele; and if the former wrote two papers to Steele's one, so many of the salient traits of the characters in this little drama sprang from Sir Richard's fertile fancy, that they may honestly divide the fame between them.

The last literary partnership we shall notice arose out of a fortuitous concurrence of circumstances, and like its appropriately-named product, may be said to be *Quite Alone*. This unlucky story, bearing the joint-names of Messrs Sala and Halliday, claims the first-named author as its real parent. Mr Sala had about half-written the novel when he started for America as war-correspondent of a daily paper, and nothing doubting his ability to complete it, handed the unfinished story to the editor of a popular periodical, who forthwith introduced *Quite Alone* to the public. Mr Sala, however, soon found he had underrated the difficulties in his way. To guard against postal uncertainties, he was compelled to use a manifold writer, which did not conduce to ease of composition, particularly when his powers of self-concentration were taxed by the hubbub of war and travel. 'In a new country, among strange scenes and strange people, hurrying from place to place, badgered, and baited, and hated, always abused, often in peril of life, and under all hazard compelled to send home every week from six to eight columns of matter to a London newspaper—in the midst of noise, confusion, smoke, cursing and swearing, battle, murder, and sudden death; what wonder that the unhappy novelist broke down? First, he lost the thread of his narrative, and next, utterly forgot the very names of the personages he had created—and when things came to this pass, there was nothing for it but to give in altogether. Meanwhile, his editor at home was driven to desperation by the mails bringing no 'copy,' and at length was obliged, in order to keep faith with his patrons, to prevail upon 'another hand to finish it;' and until Mr Sala returned from America, he had not the slightest knowledge as to the identity of his partner. We scarcely know who was most to be pitied—the baffled novelist, 'another hand,' or the bewildered editor. Critics, too, grumbled because they could not find fault with a plot for which no one was responsible—'If we object to the beginning, Mr Sala will say he meant to make it all right at the end; if we object to the end, the other hand will naturally say he was fettered by Mr Sala's beginning.' In fact, the beginning seems to have been ignored altogether. The introductory chapter describes the heroine as always alone; riding alone in the Park, dining alone at a Bond Street hotel, appearing at Greenwich, Ventnor, Richmond, Paris, 'always quite alone.' She is, in short, a perfect enigma; and to explain how and why she comes before the world as a sort of female Robinson Crusoe, is the

avowed purpose of the story. Mr Sala is evidently not quite satisfied with his uninvited coadjutor's explanation of this matter, and promises, if the fates and the public be propitious, to give us some day another edition, ending as he originally intended. It is a pity he should be balked in his desire. *Quite Alone* is a curiosity of literature as it is; it would be a still greater one as a novel with two endings.

MY HOLIDAY.

IN THREE CHAPTERS.—CHAPTER II.

YES—off for the Skerryvore, but only after the essential preliminary of spending a day at Oban in coaling. Oban, which may be taken to be a kind of metropolis of the Hebrides, is the place set apart for this important particular, and thither the *Pharos* wended its way from Islay and the Sound of Jura. All who are acquainted with the beautiful land-locked bay of Oban, will recollect seeing a strange black hulk composedly anchored near the island of Kerrera, opposite the town, and perhaps they may have wondered why that old and mastless vessel should not be removed and broken up as a useless speck on the scene. That dark mass, however, is not useless, nor is it without a history. It is what remains of the *Enterprise*, a strong-built wooden vessel, which took part in the ill-fated explorations of Sir John Franklin, and which, placed at the disposal of the Commissioners of Northern Lights, is employed by them as a repository for coal and miscellaneous stores. Nor is the mass dull and lifeless. It is inhabited by a keeper and his family, who, as things go, find themselves tolerably well off. The hulk, as a western dépôt is often visited for light-house purposes; the children of the keeper are rowed daily ashore to a school at Kerrera; and if the little dog which feels itself to be installed as a guardian of the old battered craft does not often get across the bay to Oban, it can at least reckon on now and then renewing acquaintance with Milo, when the *Pharos* steers alongside, and a broad gangway for wheel-barrow is temporarily established between the two vessels.

There was a day of this gangway intercommunication, during which loads of coal were wheeled by a band of grimy Calibans from the *Enterprise* to the *Pharos*, and the two dogs paid accustomed visits to each other, and in their own way talked over matters of canine interest. The Commissioners, in the meanwhile thrown off work, went on shore at Oban to look after letters and newspapers, and a number of them, by way of filling up the time, set off on a sauntering pedestrian excursion to Dunstaffnage; but I believe they never reached that historical ruin, for all were anxious to return to the ship in good time for the raising of the anchor, it having been determined that as soon as the coaling was over, the ship should make the best of its way for Tobermory in Mull for the night. With all on board, six o'clock saw the *Pharos* once more pursuing its way among the islands.

Early next morning, we were *en route* round the northern extremity of Mull, and with a slight bend southwards to have a glimpse of Staffa, the vessel held on almost straight west to Tyree, a long unpicturesque island, generally low and grassy, with a high rocky extremity presented to the full sweep of the Atlantic. In a small cove near this head-

land is the harbour of Hynish, at which, while the *Pharos* remains discreetly in the offing, we land to make our inquiries. Milo, of course, is not forgot; on the back of a sailor, who climbs up the ladder at the pier, he is placed amongst us on solid ground, and makes off over the adjoining knolls. The inner part of the small harbour consists of a wet-dock sufficient for the sailing schooner of fifty or sixty tons burden, which is employed in communicating with the Skerryvore light-house, eleven to twelve miles distant.

Hynish, altogether, is but an adjunct of Skerryvore. In the olden time, it may have been a clachan of the Highland type, but now it is nothing more than a settlement of families less or more under the auspices of the Commissioners of Northern Lights; and only after a little scrutiny do we see, on some distant braes, several poor-looking thatched huts spared from inevitable clearance. Like all the establishments for the residence of light-house keepers, that at Hynish is of a most substantial kind; it embraces residences for the families of four keepers, along with dwellings for the men who attend to the small sailing tender, and one or two houses for stores—a community larger than usual, and better off than that of most other places as regards a tolerably near neighbourhood to a church and school, and also medical attendance. Though fertile and mild in climate, Tyree seems to be destitute of trees. The Atlantic blasts would probably prevent their growth, but certainly they offer no check to the vegetables and flowering shrubs with which the walled gardens of the keepers are plentifully stocked.

Behind the settlement, on a conspicuous knoll overlooking the sea on the west, stands a tower of observation for holding intercourse by signal with the lone dwellers on the rock. In the upper floor of the building is placed a large telescope, pointed in the direction of Skerryvore, which some of our party declared they could see like a speck on the dim misty horizon; but this feat was beyond my power of vision. I could see nothing but the great broad ocean, with its long swelling waves, and the sea-birds which wheeled in graceful motion over the coast of the island. Little time was spent in these and other investigations. It was of the utmost importance to reach Skerryvore at low tide, in order to have the best chance of effecting a landing; the weather, though dull, was also still favourable, but both barometer and sympisometer hinted that there should be no undue delay in taking our departure. Off, accordingly, we went, the whole male population respectfully attending on the quay, and watching till the boat had placed us on board the *Pharos*, which instantly steamed away in the required south-western direction.

Of course, all were anxious to catch the first glimpse of Skerryvore, and in spite of cold and damp, took up positions on the bridge of the steamer, in company with Captain Graham, the commander, who directed attention to the point where the tall structure would be seen emerging from the bosom of the deep. And there, sure enough, at length it made its appearance, looming dimly through the dull haze, solitary amidst the world of waters. As the vessel approached this extraordinary work of art, the feeling of those who had not previously seen it was one of intense pleasure and satisfaction. There are sights of such impressive grandeur as cannot be forgotten, and the recollection of which forms one of the charms

of existence. Among these I have reckoned the falls of Niagara, the ruins of the Colosseum, and the interior of St Peter's, and now am able to add the Skerryvore light-house. Its isolation is paralleled at the Bell-Rock and Eddystone, and one or two other places. So far, there is nothing singular. What enchains the mind of the spectator is the remarkable dimensions and matchless beauty of design of the Skerryvore—its elegant curvilinear taper, from the broad and firm base to the summit and its great height of a hundred and fifty feet to the top of the lantern, which is double the altitude of the Eddystone, and a third higher than the Bell Rock. There is, however, more to surprise us in the perfection with which the whole is finished, as well as in the depth of thought required in its execution. I believe there is only one loftier light-house in the world. This is the *Tour de Cordouan*, situated on a reef of rock at the mouth of the river Garonne, which is a pile rich in architectural details, rising tier above tier to a height of a hundred and ninety-seven feet. Perhaps, after all, the true explanation of the overpowering effect in the Skerryvore is derived from the exceeding simplicity of the structure; for it seems to combine what mechanical science signifies to be the strongest material, form, and construction, along with what aesthetics would say is most thoroughly simple and tasteful. But it is only on close examination that we learn fully to appreciate the genius of the constructor.

The *Pharos* having dropped anchor, the party by means of two boats, were rowed to a narrow inlet or gully in the straggling heap of rocks, which at the low state of the tide shewed a variety of protuberances, on the highest and broadest of which the light-house was planted. Our appearance had brought out the three keepers in their uniforms, and, ready to lend assistance, they helped us to step ashore without difficulty. A pathway of ribbed iron, riveted to the rock and painted red, enabled us at once to wade forward to the foot of the tower under the dog-way, which faces the east. Here, looking around, there was apparently at least an acre of rocks, detached masses visible above the water, with a limited smooth space for walking about on all sides of the building. Dry, and free from marine plants, the higher part of the ledge was at the time about fifteen to eighteen feet above the sea-level; and I learned that, except during heavy storms, the rock adjoining the light-house, and certain outlying patches, are never entirely covered. The whole of the ledge, consisting chiefly of a kind of gneiss ploughed into gullies in which boulders are kept ever rolling about, but a portion of a long stretch of hard rocks here and there shewing their dangerous presence by the lashing and fretting of the sea, and on which wrecks were of frequent occurrence previous to the completion of the light-house.

As early as 1804, Mr Robert Stevenson paid a visit to the Skerryvore reef, the terror of homeward-bound mariners, and again he made a more special investigation of the rock in 1814, in company with a party of Northern Commissioners on their annual tour of inspection. On this occasion Walter Scott accompanied the Commissioners in their sailing yacht, and, in his own easy and humorous way, has given the following account of the visit in his diary:

‘Having crept upon deck about four in the

morning, I find we are beating to windward off the island of Tyree, with the determination on the part of Mr Stevenson, that his constituents should visit a reef of rocks called *Skerry Vhor*, where he thought it would be essential to have a light-house. Loud remonstrances on the part of the Commissioners, who one and all declare they will subscribe to his opinion, whatever it may be, rather than continue the infernal buffeting. Quiet perseverance on the part of Mr S., and great kicking, bouncing, and squabbling upon that of the yacht, who seems to like the idea of *Skerry Vhor* as little as the Commissioners. At length, by dint of exertion, came in sight of this long ridge of rocks (chiefly under water), on which the tide breaks in tremendous style. There appear a few low broad rocks at one end of the reef, which is about a mile in length. These are never entirely under water, though the surf dashes over them. To go through all the forms, Hamilton, Duff, and I resolve to land upon these bare rocks in company with Mr Stevenson. Pull through a very heavy swell with great difficulty, and approach a tremendous surf dashing over black pointed rocks. Our rowers, however, get the boat into a quiet creek between two rocks, where we contrive to land well wetted. I saw nothing remarkable in my way excepting several seals, which we might have shot, but, in the doubtful circumstances of the landing, we did not care to bring guns. We took possession of the rock in the name of the Commissioners, and generously bestowed our own great names on its crags and creeks. The rock was carefully measured by Mr S. It will be a most desolate position for a light-house—the Bell-Rock and Eddystone a joke to it, for the nearest land is the wild island of Tyree. So much for the *Skerry Vhor*!

Twenty years elapsed after this memorable visit before the Commissioners ordered surveys and plans; and not until 1838 were operations for the establishment of a light-house commenced by Mr Alan Stevenson, to whom is due the glory of planning and perfecting the undertaking. The works were carried on at three places—at Mull, where the stone, a pale reddish granite, was quarried; at Hynish, where all the slabs were shaped and arranged to fit their respective positions; and finally, on the rock. It is scarcely possible to imagine the amount of anxiety and bodily toil endured by the constructor in these varied proceedings. One of the lively episodes in the history of the building was the destruction, by a storm, of a temporary wooden barrack planted on the rock for the use of the operatives. Only by an indomitable degree of courage was the light-house at length completed, after six years of exertion. It says not a little for Mr Stevenson's nicety of calculation, that although the stones had to be prepared at Hynish, they did not, on being set in their several courses, vary the sixteenth of an inch, while the building did not exceed half an inch in height over the intended dimension. Nor is it a matter less worthy of note, that throughout the whole of the hazardous undertaking not a single life was lost by accident.

On the 1st of February 1844, the *Skerryvore Light* for the first time sent its brilliant rays over the surrounding seas, and human skill may be said to have achieved a new triumph. What was the entire cost of this wonderful work of art, including the establishment and harbour at Hynish? It was

£83,000—not a great sum, all things considered. It is a circumstance to be gratefully borne in mind, that the late Duke of Argyll permitted the stone to be taken free of charge from his quarries. A very few figures give one a notion of the ponderous character of the light-house. With a foundation sunk fifteen inches in the rock, the base of the edifice is forty-two feet in diameter, and is solid for the first twenty-six feet—to which point the mass of masonry weighs two thousand tons. Above this level, the walls are fully nine and a half feet thick, gradually reduced to two feet, and leaving an interior space of twelve feet in diameter. By an adjustment of weight in reference to the height of the building, the centre of gravity is kept comparatively low; and with the additional means which are employed to joint and cement the stones firmly in connection with each other, the whole becomes a species of monolith, which, seemingly, not all the pressure of the sea in its wildest mood is able to disturb.

Let us ascend to the interior. Climbing hand-over-hand up a weather-stained brass ladder attached to the side of the tower, we one by one reach the doorway in the enormously thick wall, and find ourselves in what may be styled the ground-floor of the building. Stone is above, below, and around us, for neither deal flooring nor ceiling enters into the composition. A step ladder, bent to the interior curve, enables us, by clutching to a brass rail, to reach the next story above; and so on through ten stories we reach the top. In the construction of the stone floor of each story in succession there is much to admire. It consists of an arch, but not of the ordinary kind. From the walls around flat stones are projected and jointed into one central stone, the whole forming a compact mass, level on the top for the floor, and slightly curved on the under side for the ceiling of the story below. These flat stone arches, in which gaps are left for the ladders, are probably of value as regards strengthening the general fabric. The lower stories are used for stores of oil, coal, fresh-water, provisions, and other articles. In one of them were a carpenter's bench and tools. Above are the sitting and sleeping rooms lighted by windows, and fitted up with furnishings of oak. Everything was comfortable and even tasteful; but not more so than was proper for the residence of three men cut off for weeks from intercourse with the outer world. On a window-sole stood a geranium in flower, doubtless an importation from the gardens at Hynish. The highest floor of all, as in the other light-houses under the Commissioners, is provided with a table and chair, with writing materials, along with a book for inscribing the names of visitors; we also find a shelf with books and periodicals to wile away the hours during watch, and a framed list of the exact time for lighting up and extinguishing the lamp daily over the whole year. On this last-mentioned particular, the system prevalent at the Scottish light-houses deserves special notice. Instead of lighting up at sunset, and extinguishing at sunrise, as is the practice, I believe, in England and elsewhere, the plan consists in making allowance for the long periods of twilight in northern latitudes, more especially in the summer months, when, although the sun is below the horizon, there is in reality good daylight. Tables are calculated accordingly, from actual observation in the different localities. By adopting this plan of lighting, the Northern

Commissioners effect a saving in oil of not less than £1600 a year.

Here, as elsewhere, the arrangement for the keepers is to watch four hours alternately, and on no account whatever is one to leave until another takes his place. The watcher can readily communicate with the apartment of the sleeper who is to succeed, by blowing through a small tube in the wall, which produces the sound of a bell. Sitting on duty in this upper apartment, the keeper has overhead the great blaze of light effected by the central lamp, which, according to the dioptric method, shines through annular lenses; beside him, in the centre of the apartment, is the mechanism, in the form of clock-work, by which the frame of lenses revolves, and causes an alteration of darkness and a bright blaze of light every minute. By a narrow ladder we ascended to the iron gangway around the apparatus of lenses, and had the process of lighting explained. The light, when at the moment of greatest brilliance, can be seen at a distance of eighteen miles on the sea-level. Its appearance is a warning to avoid the foul ground in the neighbourhood, of which Admiralty charts give the fullest intimation. From the floor occupied by the man on duty, there is an outlet by a door to the exterior balcony, on which is placed a bell to be struck as a fog-signal. We examined the bell. By an adaptation of the clock-work, it can be made to sound at regular intervals, but it is doubtful if these signals of danger can be heard at any great distance. My own experience of a fog, on one occasion in crossing the Channel to Calais, where a bell was kept tolling, leads to the supposition that bells can be heard but a short way off during a thick palpable fog, and are of little practical avail.

As the weather had partially cleared, we had a pretty extensive view over the waste of waters from the balcony. The only visible land was that of Tyree at Hynish, with its signal-tower. I was interested in knowing the method of intercourse by signals. Every morning between nine and ten o'clock, a ball is to be hoisted at the light-house to signify that all is well at the Skerryvore. Should this signal fail to be given, a ball is raised at Hynish to inquire if anything is wrong. Should no reply be made by the hoisting of the ball, the schooner, hurried from its wet-dock, is put to sea, and steers for the light-house. Three men are constantly on the rock, where each remains six weeks, and then has a fortnight on shore; the shift, which is made at low water of spring tides, occurs for each in succession, and is managed without difficulty by means of the fourth or spare keeper at Hynish, who takes his regular turn of duty. According to these arrangements, the keepers of the Skerryvore are about nine months on the rock, and about three months with their families every year. But this regularity may be deranged by the weather. One of the keepers told me that last winter he was confined to the rock for thirteen weeks, in consequence of the troubled state of the sea preventing personal communication with the shore. I inquired how high the waves washed up the sides of the tower during the most severe storms, and was told that they sometimes rose as high as the first window, or about sixty feet above the level of the rocks; yet, that even in these frightful tumults of winds and waves, the building never shook, and no apprehension of danger was entertained.

When the weather is fine, the keepers are not by any means confined to the building. They may straggle about among the gullies, enjoy the fresh air, and amuse themselves by angling for the smaller kinds of white-fish; any catch of this sort imparting a little relish to the monotony of the daily fare. The visits of seals, which are occasionally seen frisking in the surf, also furnish some amusement, and one can fancy that, to a student of natural history, life at the Skerryvore might furnish some useful memoranda. The keepers, as previously mentioned, do not complain of solitude, the obligations of professional duty, and the periodical return to their families at Hynish, where in fine weather they occupy themselves with their gardens, help materially to banish the sense of loneliness. Besides, as we observed from the visitors' book, yachting-parties sometimes land on the rock, and ascend to the top of the light-house, perhaps leaving behind them the acceptable gift of a few newspapers, to shew what is going on in the outer world. The Commissioners do not object to the visits of respectable parties to this or any other light-house under their charge, for they believe that such visits, when properly conducted, may be in various ways beneficial.

We spent an hour on the rock; more time could have been agreeably occupied, but the Commissioners of Northern Lights act as men of business, and have little to charge themselves with in the way of procrastination. There was other work to be done before night. We had to reach a bay behind Barra Head, the bold southern promontory of that long series of islands and rocks which stretches northwards and terminate in the Butt of Lewis. The *Pharos*, with all safely on board, is therefore to be supposed once more pushing onward in its course. My last look of this giant of the ocean embraced the three keepers standing and gaze on an elevated peak of the rock, but the rising mist and increasing distance soon shut them from our view; and Skerryvore remained only as one of the pleasing remembrances of my excursion.

BROUGHT TO LIGHT.

CHAPTER XXV.—JERRY'S NEW TOY.

As the reader will have already surmised, the rescuer of John English was none other than the chemist's sister. John had not unfrequently left his lodgings for two or three days at a time without giving Mrs Jakeway any previous intimation of his intentions; and in the present instance, the worthy soul was entirely unsuspecting that an mishap had befallen the young photographer. Hannah was the first to take the alarm. Her brother had left home with the avowed intention of being away for a week at the least; but late on the fourth night after his departure, Hannah was surprised by his unexpected return; and her suspicions that he had some black business in hand were first aroused by the injunction which he laid upon her, not to speak of his return to any one, as his stay would only extend over a couple of hours, after which he would again take his departure as quietly as he had come. Presently, Hannah was startled by a peculiar scratching outside the window; but Brackenridge seemed to understand what it meant, and going to the door, admitted Jerry Winch; and Hannah was at once ordered off to bed. Hannah

kissed her brother, and went up stairs, but only to steal down again five minutes later, with attenuated skirts, and without her shoes. The voices inside the sitting-room sounded low and muffled through the closed door, and the listening woman could only make out a word now and then; but what she did hear was sufficient to send her back up-stairs with a scared face, when the noise of chairs being moved inside the room warned her that it was time to go.

Early next forenoon, without saying a word to any one, Hannah Brackenridge set out for the little sea-side village of Merton, which lies about two miles north of Finger Bay. Hannah had some friends here in the persons of an old farmer and his wife, whom she was in the habit of visiting two or three times each year; and here also lived an old admirer of hers, Mark Purvis by name, whose love she had cruelly slighted. But Mark's memory still dwelt kindly on the pale-faced Hannah, a fact which was well known to her; and it was to Mark that she now looked for assistance in carrying out her scheme. On reaching Merton, she found that Mark had gone out for the day, and would not be home till a late hour; but whatever the hour might be, she must wait and see him. She left the old farmer and his wife, who knew nothing of her real errand, at her usual hour for returning home; and then walking out for a couple of miles along the road by which she knew that Mark must reach Merton, she waited at a little tavern, hour after hour, listening for the sound of his horse's hoofs. It was past ten o'clock before he came; and in half an hour from that time Hannah was rowing across to Inchmallow in her lover's boat. She had resolutely refused either to let Mark accompany her, or to tell him whither she was going; only he was to meet her at a certain time at a certain spot, and take the boat back to Merton. Hannah's father had been keeper of one of the northern light-houses, and the girl was thoroughly at home in the management of a boat. How she succeeded in rescuing John English from the fate which at one time seemed so imminent, we have already seen.

John hired a chaise, and reached home the following afternoon, frightening Mrs Jakeway exceedingly with the sight of his worn white face. He kept his promise to his mysterious preserver; and was impervious to all Mrs Jakeway's hints and half-questions as to where he had been, and what had happened to him, to change him so wofully in so short a time. All he could be induced to say was, that he had been taken suddenly ill during the time he was away, but that he was better now. Naturally enough, he was greatly perplexed in his own mind as to the identity of his rescuer: that he owed his life to the chemist's sister was a fact of which he had not the remotest suspicion.

Brackenridge coming home at the end of eight days from his first departure, and being informed by his sister that Mr English had been severely ill, hurried at once into Cliff Cottage, without waiting to take off his travelling-things, to offer his condolences. He was surprised—he was astounded—he didn't know whether he was standing on his head or his heels, when John told him what had befallen himself at Inchmallow. The whole thing was almost too incredible for belief, said the chemist. Jerry Winch had been employed for years to take parties to the island, and had been a favourite with everybody. What had put the idea into his foolish head to play off such a dangerous

trick on Mr English, was utterly beyond his, Brackenridge's, power even faintly to imagine; but one thing he would take care of, that Jerry should never in future be allowed to officiate as guide to the island. But what did Mr English intend to do in the matter? Did he intend to institute proceedings against the simpleton?—No? Well, that was noble, that was generous; and he must be allowed to say that it was wise also. Jerry's friends must be careful that no similar responsibility should ever be allowed to rest on him in future. But how did Mr English succeed in escaping from the island? That was a point which he, Brackenridge, was much interested in ascertaining.

But John, bearing in mind the promise he had given, positively declined to enlighten the chemist on that point; and Brackenridge was obliged to return home with his curiosity unsatisfied. He was gloomy and preoccupied all evening; and about eleven o'clock he set out for the *Hand and Dagger*, entering it by a back-way which he made use of when he did not wish to be seen by the ordinary customers of the hotel; and Mrs Winch and he had a long interview together in the private room of the landlady. The method of John English's escape from the island lay heavily on the minds of both of them: it was unknown, and must therefore, they felt, be to some extent dangerous to their peculiar interests. The chemist's diabolical plan had miscarried, though how or why, neither the landlady nor her companion could so much as guess. The promised three hundred pounds were still as far as ever from the fingers that itched to grasp them; and the widow was still as determined as ever that her wedding-day should be postponed till the obstacle which stood so persistently in the path of Lady Spenceclough and herself should be finally disposed of. Once more Brackenridge exerted all his persuasive powers in an effort to induce the widow to reveal to him the nature of the secret which bound her so firmly to the interests of the mistress of Belair; and once more all his cajoleries proved in vain, and he had to return home baffled and enraged, and only withheld from throwing up the whole business by the golden lure which shone so temptingly before his mind's eye.

Jerry Winch had been missing from his usual haunts for several days, and many people wondered what had become of the obliging simpleton; but Jerry was in hiding, and no one in the little town, save his mother and Brackenridge, knew the place of his retreat, which was at a little farmhouse about a dozen miles from Normanford, kept by a cousin of Mrs Winch. On the forenoon of the day following that of his interview with the landlady, Brackenridge borrowed a horse and gig belonging to one of his friends, and set off to see Jerry. The lad was out, a servant told him, when he reached the house, adding that Jerry would most likely be found at the clearing in the fir plantation; and there Brackenridge did find him, stealing on him unawares, and watching him in silence for several minutes before making his presence known. Jerry was singularly employed. At one end of a small clearing in the gloomy plantation, he had fixed up two forked sticks about five feet in height, with a third stick fastened across them. To this cross-bar a piece of string was knotted, the other end of which was firmly tied to the leg of a miserable sparrow. Jerry, standing a few paces away with a loaded pistol in his hand, waited till the bird, tired with its ineffectual efforts

to escape, perched on the cross-bar, and the moment that it did so, he took aim and fired. If unsuccessful in hitting it, he waited patiently till the fluttering creature perched once more, and then fired again; and so on, till he either succeeded in killing it, or else cut the string with his bullet, and so allowed it to escape. On a branch close by hung a wicker-cage containing a dozen or more sparrows, all destined for a similar fate. As often as Jerry succeeded in killing a bird, he burst into a wild fit of laughter, that bent him double, and shook him violently, as though he were being clutched at by invisible demoniac fingers.

'He seems made on purpose to do the Fiend's own bidding,' muttered Brackenridge to himself as he stepped into the opening.—'Well, Jerry, my man,' he said aloud, 'how are you to-day? That's a pretty plaything you have got there'—pointing to the pistol.

'Yes,' said the lad with a grave nod of the head; 'it's Jerry's new toy. Rare fun to shoot sparrows! Poor beggars! how they try to get away, don't they?'

'But how came you to obtain such a toy?'

'It was in Milcham's window for sale for a long time, and Jerry never saw it without longing to have it. So he saved up all his shillings and sixpences till he had got enough money to buy it, and then he gave old drunken Steve Benson a shilling to go and get it for him. Hoo, hoo, hoo! Rare fun to shoot sparrows! Watch and see how nicely Jerry can knock one off its perch.'

'Not now, thank you, Jerry—some day when I have more time. I want to talk to you about something else to-day. By the by, how is Pipanta?'

'Alas! the lovely Pipanta is dead,' said Jerry in a tone of anguish as his arms fell dejectedly by his side, and the tears came into his large blue eyes.

'Dead!' exclaimed the chemist in a sympathetic voice. 'When did she die?'

'This day-week,' said the lad sadly. 'And Jerry buried her at midnight, when the moon was at full, under the Witches' Oak on Pensdale Moor. Oh! my lovely Pipanta! Never will thy master see thee more; never more will thy beautiful head nestle in his bosom; never more, ah me! wilt thou dance to thy lord's music. Jerry has lost his darling for ever!'

'Died this day-week, did she?' said Brackenridge musingly. 'Let me consider. Why, that was the very day that Katafango escaped from Inchmallow!'

'Escaped! Has the great magician escaped?' exclaimed the terrified Jerry. 'Then he will kill poor Jerry, or perhaps cast a spell over him, and turn him into a snake or a toad. Put some of the white powder into his drink!'

The chemist smiled, and stroked the lad's hair. 'Jerry has no cause to be afraid,' he said; 'the charm which his friend gave him will keep him safe against the arts of all the magicians in the world. No, no, my poor lad; Katafango can do no harm to you; but had he not escaped, Pipanta would not have died; but now he will take her soul, and put it into the body of a toad, and so imprison it for ever. And the turn of Mogaddo will come next.'

'No, no,' screamed the boy; 'Mogaddo shall not die!' Then in an intense whisper, and with his lips close to the chemist's ear, he said: 'Let Jerry kill Katafango!'

'Tut, tut! my dear boy, what are you talking

about?' said the chemist pleasantly. 'But put that pretty toy in your pocket, and link your arm in mine, and let us walk together to the top of the hill, and consider what means we shall adopt to save the life of your pet, Mogaddo.'

Two days later, the county carrier, returning home from Fairwood market in the dusk of the winter afternoon, found the bleeding and insensible body of a man lying in the road; and being a strong fellow, he contrived to lift it into his cart and so drove with it to the nearest house, which, as it happened, was that of the station-master of Kingthorpe Station. And so, without any exercise of their own will in the matter, John English and Jane Garrod were at last brought face to face, and another link in the chain was complete.

CHAPTER XXVI.—JOHN AND HIS NURSE.

John English lifted his languid eyelids, and gazed feebly around. He was in a strange room, and there was a strange face at his bedside—a strange face, but not an unkind one. 'Where am I? and who are you?' he asked in a weak voice.

'You are in the house of Abel Garrod, the station-master at Kingthorpe; and I am Abel Garrod's wife.'

'How did I come here? and what has happened to me?'

'You are not to talk—the doctor has forbidden it. But I will answer your questions, just to satisfy your mind; and then you must try to go to sleep, and I will tell you everything when you are stronger. You were found on the road yesterday afternoon, about a mile from here, and brought to this house. You had been shot through the shoulder, and had lost a great deal of blood. The ball has been extracted; but the wound is a dangerous one, and you will be confined to your bed for some time to come. One question I should like you to answer me: Did you see the man who shot you, or have you any idea who he was?'

'Let me think,' said John. Then after a pause: 'I remember everything now. I had set off to go up to Belair with a portfolio of photographs; and had just left the meadows for the high-road, and was passing the clump of larches, when I heard a rustling behind me, and next moment a shot, and then I felt that I was hit. I turned, and saw the dusky outline of a figure hurrying stealthily through the brushwood, and made an attempt to pursue it; but in a moment or two, the ground seemed to reel under my feet, and then all was darkness. Why I was shot, or by whom I was shot, I know no more than you do.'

'Not another word,' said Jane Garrod. 'You have talked far more already than you have strength for.'

'My portfolio—has it been found?' said John anxiously, without noticing Jane's injunction.

'It was picked up near you, and lies on that table.'

'Then pray oblige me by having it sent up to Miss Spencelaugh at Belair, with a message explaining that in consequence of an accident I am unable to take it myself.'

'But you—it is not possible that you know Miss Spencelaugh!' said Jane with a strange look on her face.

'I certainly have the honour of being acquainted with Miss Spencelaugh,' said John with a smile of almost womanly sweetness. 'Does that fact seem

very strange to you?" Then his eyes lighted suddenly, and he added: 'You also know her; I can see it by your face. Tell me'— But his new-found strength seemed all at once to desert him, and with a little sigh, his head drooped on the pillow, and Jane saw that he had fainted.

Jane blamed herself severely for having thus allowed her patient to overtax his strength; and for the next two or three days she strictly enforced the most absolute silence. John tried several times to draw her into conversation, but Jane always refused to answer him, and left the room if he persisted in questioning her; so that he was fain, after a time, to wait with what patience he might till the doctor should give him leave to talk. His wound was an ugly one, and his recovery was proportionately slow and tedious; still, there were many languid hours—hours when his wound ceased for a time to pain him—when it seemed very pleasant to lie there in that snug, cheerful little room, where everything was so exquisitely clean; to lie there between the lavender-scented sheets, and gaze through the window across the snowy fields to where a great hill shut in the prospect a mile or two away; with a nearer view of the spire of Kingsthorpe church standing clearly out above the tree-tops; and quite in the foreground, of the pointed roof and red twisted chimneys of Woodfield Grange. The peace and quiet that brooded over everything harmonised well with his weakness of body and languor of mind. He was content to lie by for a little while in this quiet haven, and let the world, with all its cares and turmoil, roll unheeded away—content to lie there and think of Frederica. Lying thus day after day, his eyes found many pleasant things to dwell upon. There was a bunch of snow-drops growing in a flower-pot against the window, every blossom of which was known to him; then, outside the window, came robins and sparrows, and other birds, attracted thither by the crumbs scattered every day by Jane; which pecked at the casement with their tiny beaks when the crumbs were all gone, and peered curiously in at quiet John, as though they were anxious about the state of his health. Then, in the wintry afternoon, a squadron of marauding rooks would lazily wing their way homeward towards Woodfield Grange, under the leadership of some wary old bird, shewing blackly out against the bright western sky; and would not finally settle into their nests till after much airy disputation among themselves, and many ceremonious leave-takings for the night between friends and neighbours. Then that bit of western sky, with the white, hushed landscape below it, framed by the diamond-paned casement, on frosty afternoons, when the sinking sun gleamed through the rising mists like a fiery eye, was of itself beautiful to look upon.

Coming back inside the room, John's eyes always lingered on the homely face of his kind nurse. How noiseless, how assiduous, how attentive to his slightest wish she was! What had he, a complete stranger to her, done to deserve such kindness? 'How can I ever repay you?' John would sometimes feebly murmur as his eyes followed her about the room.

'By doing as you are told,' Jane would reply; 'and by not talking till the doctor gives you leave.'

Waking up suddenly one evening from a deep, refreshing sleep, John saw his nurse standing by his bedside, gazing into his face with strangely earnest

eyes; and the same moment a sudden light broke on him. Jane was the first to speak: 'The doctor says that you may talk for five minutes to-day.'

Without heeding her remark, John said: 'You are the woman whom I saw one evening, a couple of months ago, in the waiting-room of the Kingsthorpe station. You, too, saw me, and seemed to recognise me, and the recognition startled you. I heard you mutter something about having "come back from the dead," and then you hurried away. Why did you act thus, and whom did you take me to be?'

Jane had pushed back the candle while he was speaking, so that her face was now in shadow, and John could not see its workings. After a moment's silence, as if to collect herself, she said: 'Before I answer your question, you must allow me to ask you another. How did you come by that strange blue figure which is marked on the upper part of your left arm?'

'Do you mean the coiled snake with the lotos-flower in its mouth, which is tattooed on the part you mention?'

'The same.'

'Oh, that has been there longer than I can remember; and, for anything I can tell to the contrary, may have been there when I was born.'

'You will pardon me asking you the question, will you not,' said Jane, 'but is John English your real name?'

'For all practical purposes, it is,' answered John. 'And a good, useful name I've found it. But why these strange questions? Again I ask you—whom do you take me to be?'

'I cannot take you for any other than the gentleman you represent yourself to be,' said Jane. 'What strikes me in your appearance, and did the first time I saw you, is the extraordinary likeness you bear to some one whom I knew many, many years ago.'

'Who was that person?' said John.

'Some day, I will tell you; at present, I cannot.'

'But why did you ask me about the mark on my arm?' said John.

'That is another question which I do not feel at liberty to answer, till I know more of your history.'

'More mysteries!' said John wearily! Then he added impulsively: 'I like you. You are a good woman. I feel that I can trust you; and some day, when I shall be stronger, I will tell you the story of my life. For your great kindness to a poor, helpless wretch in his hour of extremity, I know that I can never sufficiently repay you.'

'Time is up,' said Jane abruptly. 'You must talk no more to-day.'

'Tell me,' said John, 'did you send the portfolio up to Belair, as I requested?'

'I did; but Miss Spencelaugh has been from home for a week past, and does not return till this evening.'

'Then you know Miss Spencelaugh?' said John eagerly. 'I was sure you did.'

'These arms nursed her when she was a helpless baby,' said Jane proudly. 'It was I who brought her home from India after her poor mamma's death; and I lived with her at Belair, tending her, and waiting on her, till my Lady persuaded Sir Philip to get a governess for her, and then I was wanted no more.'

'Then there is one more tie between us than I

thought of,' said John; 'for I too'— He stopped abruptly, and all the little blood that was left in his body seemed to mount into his face.

'My poor boy, do you think I am blind?' said Jane with a smile, as she stroked his hair softly. 'I am going up to Belair in the morning, and I won't fail to tell Miss Frederica how it happened that you were not able to take up the portfolio yourself. But not another word now—not another word.'

'And why should it not be?' said Jane to herself, as she stood with her apron thrown over her head, gazing out into the frosty twilight, waiting for her husband. 'Why should they not come together, if he be — But I dare not speak the name even to myself. And yet, things do sometimes happen in this dull world more wonderful than one reads about in story-books. But I am deceiving myself: such a thing as this could never happen. And yet the likeness—the likeness!'

Jane Garrod went up to Belair the following morning, and had a long interview with Frederica; but what passed between the two in nowise concerns us at present. On the afternoon of the same day, a groom made his appearance at the station, with a present of grapes and hothouse flowers for Mr English; and next morning, Frederica herself rode over, and halted at the door for two minutes; and John English, from his little room, could hear her clear, silvery voice as she talked to Jane Garrod, and the impatient pawing of Zuleika.

From that time, fruit and flowers for the invalid were sent almost daily from Belair; and two or three times each week, Frederica herself might be seen at the little station-house. She never dismounted, and John never saw her, for the window of his room looked out in the opposite direction; but he could hear the music of her voice; and after she was gone, Jane Garrod always came up-stairs, and told him as much of the conversation that had passed between herself and Frederica as it concerned him to hear. What happiness for him to think that it was sweet concern for his health that drew the mistress of his heart so often to that lowly roof! He never paused to ask himself whether his infatuation was leading him; for him, the present was all in all. So that time of recovery from his hurt was for John English one of the pleasantest of his life; a happy, restful interregnum from all the turmoil and petty cares of everyday existence. His recovery was slow, but sure. It was tacitly understood between Jane Garrod and himself that he should tell her the story of his life as soon as his strength would allow of the exertion. Each felt that the other had something to reveal; each of them held, as it were, a fragment of a key; would the two fragments, when welded together, prove strong enough to unlock the heart of the mystery?

At length the day came when the doctor gave John permission to venture down-stairs, and Jane made quite a little jubilee of the event. Abel Garrod left the house as soon as tea was over, to attend to his trains.

'Twilight is the best time for story-telling,' said John, as he stretched his great length of limb along the little sofa in front of the fire; 'and I could hardly have a better time than the present for telling mine. Will you kindly reach me that cigar-case?—Thanks. *Nous revenons toujours à nos premiers amours*; which means that, after an

abstinence of six weeks, a Havana is a very pleasant thing.'

He lit his cigar, and fell back into his old lounging posture on the sofa; and then was silent for a minute or two, gathering up his thoughts.

It was nearly dark outside by this time; far and near, the wintry landscape lay crisply white; but within the uncurtained room, the dancing firelight gleamed fitfully; and the shadows playing a timorous game at hide-and-seek among themselves, stole coily out of the corners, hustling one over another, only to disappear, next moment, as the ruddy blaze rose and fell, bringing into momentary relief the great black beard and gaunt face of the young photographer, and the brooding, earnest features of his auditor; and anon leaving little else visible than the glowing tip of John's cigar. And thus it was that John told the story of his life.

THE TRIUMPH OF THE UNICORN.

I HAD always congratulated myself that I had passed through those stages of life—namely, childhood and boyhood—which are most exposed to the attacks of the disease called Mnemonics, without even a fit of *Memoria Technica*. One of my most familiar school-friends used some mysterious System, whereby he gathered dates as from a tree, and historical facts arranged themselves in pigeon-holes of his mind ready for instant use—he used to boast that he could lay his head upon anything he wanted in that way at a moment's notice—but he only made one endeavour to proselytise me. He tried to persuade me that the idea of a Unicorn drinking Small-beer at once suggested to him the names of the Minor Prophets. But I soon taught him (in exchange for his information) that I was not going to be made a fool of by a smaller boy than myself. I gave him a black eye, and broke the bridge of his nose; after which, we were firmer friends than ever, only, by tacit consent, the subject of Mnemonics was tabooed between us. It was understood that he stuck to his absurd theory about the Unicorn, but henceforth he kept it to himself. I did not set any very high store upon information, whether sacred or profane, at that period of life: all knowledge seemed, in my school-boy jargon, more or less 'bosh'; and to acquire it by such artificial absurdities as my friend had suggested, seemed, indeed, as the heralds have it, to be 'putting metal upon metal.' I was already made to learn a great deal more than I wished, and I shrunk from the notion of any voluntary labour in addition, as the Aas shrinks from the uplifted stick.

At the University, Mnemonics (the very word itself, difficult to spell, and doubtful to pronounce, is repulsive) cropped up again in various ridiculous forms. In the senate-house, during the Little Go examination, I remember sitting next to a young gentleman, who kept murmuring to himself: 'Ping—rum—fib—two—tam—li—bung,' as though it were an Incantation; albeit he was certainly no Conjuror. He assured me that these mystic syllables contained all the Elements of Morality.

'Very good,' returned I sardonically; 'then there should be no such thing as Vice.'

Upon the other side of me sat a nefarious student, stealthily referring to his watch-case, in which were inscribed the dates of every extraordinary occurrence from the Deluge to the Reform Bill; and I did not know which to despise most, the Fool or the Knave.

Once, while an undergraduate, I had Mnemonics 'brought home' (as we say of crimes) to myself in a very unpleasant, because costly manner. When alone in my lodgings one morning, studying hard at an extempore speech for the debate that night at the *Union*, I was called upon by two severe and elderly widow-ladies. Naturally shy, and wholly unaccustomed to the incursion of females, their very appearance struck panic to my soul.

What intelligence was left to me, however, at once suggested that their intention was plunder. Their ascetic appearance, their sombre garments, were, I was certain, only a cloak for that charity which never fails at our venerable university: the demand for a subscription to some object of interest—of interest to the applicant. I had already paid my poll-tax* (I was not reading for honours) to the painted window in Ely Cathedral, a work of art that had been going on since the beginning of the century, and the 'calls' for which quite sufficiently account for the fact of Cantabs being opposed to the Tractarian or church-decoration party. My present visitors gave me the idea that they were actuated by missionary enterprise: I listened for the word Quashibungo, and wondered whether five shillings would be too small a sum to be forwarded into the interior of Africa. I did their sagacity an injustice. The two ladies had called solely and wholly upon their own account. They were the indigent relicts (so I understood them to state) of a distinguished Fellow of my own college, who had given his mind to the composition of one of the most remarkable works in the English language, and had perished in the attempt. The last page had been dictated with his last breath. The Printing Press (that inestimable blessing to a free country) had, however, disseminated the boon thus bequeathed to his fellow-creatures to the extent of a hundred and fifty copies. One hundred copies were still remaining unsold. (Here they each produced a dozen little books from some mysterious pouch.) How many would I wish to take at seven-and-sixpence per copy? A reduction of sixpence apiece would be made in case of my taking a quantity: say eight pounds for the twenty-four.

I had a trusty female attendant who would have done battle with these respectable harpies, if I could only have summoned her; but one of the Relicts had, with fiendish prevision, posted herself in force between me and the bell: cut off from my supports, and exposed to a raking fire of terrible glances, I could only inquire, with a wretched affectation of interest, to what subject this posthumous work of their late husband was devoted.

'Mnemonics,' was their sepulchral joint-reply.

* A poll degree is an ordinary degree, so called (perhaps) because it can almost be passed by a poll-parrot.

'One copy,' exclaimed I, mustering all the firmness of which I was capable. 'I will take one copy, to oblige you, ladies; but I do not approve of the system.'

'He does not approve of the System,' observed one to the other, in tones tremulous with pity. 'He will only take one copy.'

I did not trust myself to speak, but tendered half-a-sovereign between my finger and thumb. Widow No. 1 pecked it up, as a canary pecks at groundsel.

'I have no change,' said she tentatively. 'You are doing a good work, remember.'

I felt that they were doing me; but I said nothing.

'Keep the half-crown, and give him another copy,' suggested Widow No. 2.

'No,' said I with resolution; 'one copy is enough: more than enough.'

'Then we will owe him half-a-crown,' observed No. 2.

'We shall not forget: we are just, although you are not generous,' added the other with a pitying smile. Not only, let us hope, by reason of their great advantages with respect to the Art of Memory, they did not forget; though I, for my part, should have been glad to be set free for so small a ransom as half-a-sovereign. I took up the invaluable work, for which I had exchanged that little coin, and opened it at random.

'Thus,' I read, 'the Minor Prophets will at once recur to you in their proper order, through the association of ideas induced by the picture of the Unicorn drinking Small-beer'—I rushed to the window, but too late to shoot the rubbish upon the heads of my betrayers: it was summer-time, but I lit the ornamental shavings in the grate, and made a funeral-pyre for the odious volume.

The next occasion of my meeting with Mnemonics was, to my great surprise and disapprobation, in that otherwise sensible periodical, *Chambers's Journal*. In No. 75 of the New Series, I came upon a paper called *The Art of Memory*, the perusal of which affected me with Vertigo. I did not understand half-a-dozen consecutive lines of it; but what did strike me very forcibly, was the recommendation it contained that a student of the art should carry about in his head a furnished room, the floor, the ceiling, and walls of which were to be divided into fifty squares; and he was always to stand with his back to the fireplace. This once attained, he might even commit to memory *How the Waters came down at Lodore*, without transposing a single epithet. Like the boy who learned his alphabet with such difficulty (but I little thought *how like* the boy), I deemed it was scarcely worth while 'to go through so much to gain so little;' I almost resolved—to give an idea of the lengths to which my prejudice was at that time capable of carrying me—to give up reading *Chambers's Journal*.

The last time, previous to conversion, that I found myself face to face with this Chimeria, was at the Polytechnic. The sombre Lecture-rooms of that respectable Establishment do not often return the echoes of my footsteps; but I occasionally go there previous to poetical composition, in order to reawaken the memories of my youth: 'To hang over the ancient glass-blower,' whom I once thought an artist from fairyland; to receive from the electric-battery the 'wild pulsation' that I felt in early years, and which still has power to move me—and with some rapidity; to contemplate

the diving-bell and its occupants, but not to enter it, for it *must* come to grief some day, after so long a lease of impunity; to watch the diver (where do the governors of the institution procure those amphibious ministers to the public pleasure?—or is the office an hereditary one?) groping for halftone in the crystal depths—a sublime (though daring) image of Covetousness defying Eternity.* Now and then, when wishing to supply my imagination with sombre tints, I venture into a lecture-room: thus it happened that the other day I found myself, by the merest chance, a spectator of an exhibition of Mnemonics. Upon discovering the kind of science to which I was about to be subjected, I turned to make my escape; but reflecting that I was come to renew my youth, and that I should be certain to meet with my old friend the Unicorn drinking his Small-beer, and suggesting the Minor Prophets, I resumed my seat. To this apparently slight circumstance must be attributed my happy conversion.

If ever there was a Sadducee of the Sadducees in that mnemonical lecturer's lecture-room, it was I. I listened, but with a sceptic's smile. I heard him say that the small boys upon the platform had been only a little while under his teaching, and that if I came next week I should probably find an entirely new set; any other boy of the present audience, or adult, whether male or female, could be taught, he said, in a few lessons the same wondrous feats. 'Could I be taught?' inquired I satirically. [The audience at once took me for a Confederate.]

'Certainly,' said he, if I would favour him with a call at his private residence.

But first for the feats. Upon a large board, the lecturer set down in chalk; at the suggestion of members of the company, a vast number of figures, in sets of three. Perhaps there were thirty such sets (if there had been three hundred, the thing, as I now know, could have been done as easily), and therefore ninety figures. So soon as they were written down, the board was turned away from the boys, and they repeated all the figures in their proper order; then backwards; then diagonally—it was impossible to puzzle them. No natural memory with which man has ever been endowed—not Avicenna's, not Scaliger's, not Klopstock's—could have accomplished such a task. Then the lecturer wrote down single words—again supplied by the audience—in strings, without the least connection with each other (be sure I gave him some difficult ones), and the board having, as before, been turned away from the boys, they repeated them in their due order without a mistake; then backwards; then eighth word, fifteenth word, twenty-seventh word, &c. according to the number called out by any of the company. An enormous sheet of canvas, covered with hundreds of dates, was next unfolded, and these were all repeated in the same marvellous manner, and as fast as the magician's wand could move in all directions at our call. There were a number of other wondrous feats performed; but let the above suffice. The beholders looked upon the affair from different points of view: an intelligent old gentleman upon my left bade me observe the phrenological development of the small pupils' heads: 'They have all

"Number," sir, very prominent; my neighbour on the other side remarked (in a strong Milesian accent) that these efforts of memory were all performed by *slight of hand*.

I could not help smiling at these attempts at elucidation; but I was by no means a convert yet.

'If you can teach me to do these things,' said I to the lecturer, to speak with whom I remained after the astonished company had adjourned to some other scene of science, 'I'll forgive you.'—I meant that I would forgive him for having puzzled me so.

'Sir,' said he smiling, 'if you will come to my house, I will engage, in a very few lessons, to enable you to do all that you have seen to-day.'

'What! learn this rhapsody by heart?' (I held a copy of the most difficult piece of unconnected prose in my hand which it is possible to imagine, but which the boys had just repeated word for word.) 'Why, I never could learn even the *As in presenti*!'

'Nevertheless, sir, you shall learn this, if you please to do so.'

'And those dates?' urged I. 'I never could retain but one date—that of the Conquest, which I have now the pleasure of communicating to you—1066.

In years one thousand and sixty-six, since
Christ in Bethlehem's manger lay;

that's thanks to *Valpy's Chronology*.'

The lecturer surveyed me with sublime pity, such as a Regius Professor of Greek might bestow upon a young gentleman who boasted of his acquaintance with the conjugation of *tuptō*. 'Dates,' said he, 'shall be as plentiful with you as blackberries. But do not imagine, my dear sir, that "the System" (he always spoke of his own plan of Mnemonics by that august and mysterious title) is a mere cramming apparatus. It teaches you to think as well as to remember.' He could not fail to see, by the terrible expression of my countenance, that he had here made a little mistake. The idea of my coming to the Polytechnic to be taught to think! But we parted very amicably, and I agreed to become one of his private pupils.

'Remember,' said he, quoting from his own lecture, '*Observe, reflect, link thought with thought, and think of the impressions*. My address is, Great Charlotte Street, Bloomsbury, No. 1500. Great Charlotte, a plump female; charlatan, what you mistook me for. Bloomsbury, which at once suggests her beauty: 1500 (neglect the noughts) reminds you of her youth; she is of the same age as Wilkin's Dinah. There, now, you'll never forget my street and my number;' and I never shall.

I attended at this gentleman's house upon the following Tuesday. Before introducing me to his class, he obtained my promise not to teach 'the System' to anybody else. I gave it him very willingly, for it did not seem to me likely that I should be in a position to damage his interests in that way. His classes consist of ladies and gentlemen, with a few children. The object of most of these persons, as in my own case, is merely the improvement of their memories; but not a few of ample means and good position, but whose education happens to have been neglected, come to be instructed in private in the very rudiments of information. The Magician can teach the multiplication table to any one short of a born idiot in a few minutes, and

* I am aware that this conception will have to be worked out, before it is made intelligible to the General Public: but the idea is copyright.

that in such a way that it is never forgotten. His plan combines quickness and durability in a most uncommon degree. For all 'cram' purposes—for getting up *any kind* of knowledge at short notice—it is indeed incomparable. I am, as I expected to be, the dunce of the company, the least satisfactory of his pupils; and yet, after my three lessons of one hour each, I feel myself quite capable of becoming a teacher of Mnemonics—although not of breaking my word. [The moral faculties are not injured by the process.] I am in possession of all the dates of the accessions of our monarchs, the arrangement and names of the phrenological organs, &c.; in short, of every sort of information to which I have chosen to turn my mind since its recent education. If I wish to remember the date of my wife's birthday, or the order of the hieroglyphics upon a Chinese tea-chest, those objects are secured by the same machinery. I may here remark, as some set-off against this humiliating confession, that *Memoria Technica* alone, without 'the System,' would be next to useless; my opinion of the Unicorn and his ridiculous liquor *per se* remains unchanged, but with his Driver (the Teacher), he becomes really a serviceable animal. There is almost no end to the uses to which he may be put; he is quiet to ride, or drive, or go in harness. For the classification of ideas, the order of 'heads' in a sermon, or of 'points' in a speech, he may be relied upon never to break down. He seems to be a particular favourite with the clergy, and all the good people who admire preaching. The former come to the Magician to learn how to deliver sermons, the latter how to retain them when delivered.

It is very characteristic of a section of this class of persons that they object to the Unicorn, as a means of spiritual progress, because he is not a scriptural animal: he is mentioned, they of course allow, in the Sacred Volume, but not in sufficiently eulogistic terms. They insist upon using a camel in his place, and do so. If they wished it, it would be just as easy for the Magician to supply them with a camelopard; but for *them* it is by no means so easy. They are martyrs to principle or prejudice—which you will—and absolutely take double trouble. For my part, I stick to the Unicorn.

I hope nobody will be foolish enough to suppose that this paper is written as a puff of any particular teacher of Mnemonics. I am certainly bound to speak well of the bridge that has carried me over the river of Lethe—the gentleman who, in three lessons of an hour each, has taught me How to Remember. But I dare say that there are other 'systems' beside his own which have their value, only they must be taught, like his, by word of mouth. All books upon this subject—including, to some extent, I must admit, even those of the lecturer in question—were little better than unintelligible jargon, when read by my old lights; I understand them *now*, but I don't think any uninitiated person does. The zeal of the proselyte, you see, does not carry me beyond reasonable limits; but I think I owed the *amende honorable* to the science of Mnemonics, and I have not hesitated to pay it. I don't like owning myself in the wrong at all better than my neighbours, but in the present case it seems to me that, not only Gratitude demands the confession, but the well-being of a large class of my fellow-creatures. I cannot imagine any person whom 'the System'

would not benefit, while to some—especially the Careless—it would be scarcely less than the acquisition of another sense. A month ago, I was not only an Unbeliever in Mnemonics, but an Arch-heretic; I am now one of the band of the faithful. I have spoken much evil of the Unicorn, but there is, I confess, no beast of (mental) burden to compare with him; I have scornfully alluded to his humble beverage, and lo! I have found it more adapted to the intellectual development than treble X.

THE MONTH.

SCIENCE AND ARTS.

DR DEWAR of Kirkcaldy has published a pamphlet *On the Application of Sulphurous Acid Gas to the Prevention, Limitation, and Cure of Contagious Diseases*, in which he records his experience of the use of this gas as a remedy for the kine-pest. As some readers will remember, the pest was very destructive in Fifeshire; but Dr Dewar states that in all cases where the gas was used, the disease was arrested. Parasitic germs, whether animal or vegetable, floating in the air, or clinging to the walls of buildings, are destroyed by it; hence it is especially serviceable in a time of contagious disease like that through which we have just passed.

Dr Dewar's prescription is: 'A chaffer two-thirds full of red cinders, a crucible inserted therein, and a piece of sulphur stick.' The sulphur begins to fume, and if let to burn for twenty minutes, will purify a shed containing six cattle; and if it (the shed) be properly ventilated, neither men nor kine will have any difficulty in breathing therein.

This treatment led to results of unexpected importance. Dr Dewar's cows were fumigated four times a day for four months, and he as well as some of his neighbours discovered, that the animals enjoyed the treatment, so much so, that it has been continued irrespective of the disease; and they consider it as demonstrated, that exposure to the fumes of sulphur (sulphurous acid gas) is highly beneficial to cattle at any time, by reason of its recognised tonic attributes, and its disinfecting properties. It appears also to be a specific against other diseases to which cattle, and horses as well, are liable.

But the most striking result remains to be noticed. The men who attended to the fumigations ceased to be troubled with chilblains and chapped hands; a groom far gone with consumption, and who had more than once been reported as dead, having made an effort to superintend a course of fumigations, found himself surprisingly relieved within one week: within two months, he gained two stones in weight, and was fit for any ordinary stable-work. Similar beneficial results have been produced in other persons of each sex, afflicted with chronic phthisis, and diphtheria has been stayed. 'These interesting facts,' remarks Dr Dewar, 'as to the use of sulphurous acid gas, in connection with diseases of the chest, are not adduced as by any means conclusive evidence of sanitary value; but the unlooked-for issue of the

experiment, in so far as it has in no instance been attended by otherwise than beneficial results, surely warrants further and wider investigation.' To this we add, that the subject has been taken in hand by Dr Halliday Douglas of Edinburgh, to be tested by further experiment; and that we shall gladly assist in making the doctor's conclusions known when he publishes his report.

It seems proper to add here, that in the experiments made in different parts of England to disinfect cattle and their lairs, it was found that carbolic acid was preferable to sulphur. The antiseptic properties of this acid have long been known: it is the active agent in pitch and tar; and fresh meat soaked in it will keep for months in a condition fit to be eaten.

The Commissioners appointed to inquire into the nature and origin of the kine-pest, have published their first, second, and third Reports in three blue-books, full of important information on all subjects connected with the progress of the pest, and the means taken for checking it. Their record of intelligent inquiry and painstaking experiment is such, that even in their present form they may be regarded as text-books of unusual value. Our government has often been reproached with indifference to the claims of science; but that reproof will not apply in the present case, for no expense has been spared to publish the Reports in the most serviceable form. The third Report contains forty large coloured plates, representing all the stages of the disease in different parts of the animals: not pleasant to look at, but very instructive. Two of the plates shew the effect of inoculation with the disease on Mr Hancock's hand; and the appearance of swelling, inflammation, and offensive soreness is such, that to have submitted to the inoculation must have been a species of martyrdom for the cause of science. Besides these plates, there are uncoloured ones, shewing the results of microscopic examination of the diseased tissues; and a map in which the spread of the disease over the kingdom, from county to county, is marked by red dots. By looking at this, it is seen at once which counties were most affected, and which escaped.

Professor Challis of Cambridge has published a series of articles on the *Fundamental Ideas of Matter and Force in Theoretical Physics*—a subject far from popular, but which we notice on account of the author's closing argument, which admits of general application. 'There is,' he says, 'at the present time no greater scientific need than to ascertain what is the true method of philosophy. It seems to be admitted on all sides that the experimental demonstration of facts and laws, although a necessary part of philosophy, does not constitute the whole of it. The efforts that are continually made, both by experimenters and theoretical calculators, to give reasons for the results of experiments, is a kind of evidence that theory is felt to be necessary for completing scientific knowledge. But it must be confessed that the prevailing theoretical speculations present a wonderful diversity of views and hypotheses, and seem to be guided by no definite rules or principles, the

faculty of imagination having a large share in framing them.' There are many writers of so-called scientific papers and treatises, who are fond of complaining that they are martyrs of science, who might profit by laying to heart the foregoing remarks from one of our most painstaking and cautious thinkers.

M. Alexis Perrey of Dijon, who has for many years made a special study of earthquakes, and prepared voluminous tables of such as have taken place, comes to the conclusion that they are periodical, and that there is a relation between the frequency of earthquakes and the rotation of the moon. 'Is this relation,' he asks, 'one of cause and effect?' and he answers the question affirmatively. The moon, he argues, attracts the central nucleus of the globe: the nucleus is thus drawn towards the moon, and presses against the inside of the outer crust of the earth. This crust does not yield readily to the pressure; sometimes it gives way, and breaks, or, in other words, an earthquake occurs; and, seeing that the attraction is greatest when the sun and moon are in opposition, there will be more earthquakes at the syzygies than at the quadratures. And regard being had to the earth's orbital motion, 'they are more frequent at the winter solstice than at the summer;' that is, when the earth is nearest to the sun. Perhaps Mr Robert Mallet and other natural philosophers will have something to say upon this theory.

Those who wish to know something of the history of dogs, should read a paper which M. Quatrefages, the well-known naturalist, has presented to the French Academy of Sciences, on the origin of the canine race. Among his facts, he states, that the Chinese have accurate information as to the time when the dog was first introduced into their country: it was in the year 1122 B. C., or nearly 3000 years ago. According to M. Quatrefages, the earliest dogs were a breed from a tamed jackal; but if, as he endeavours to shew, the jackal be really a dog run wild, what was the origin of the tame jackal from which his Chinese dogs originated?

In a lecture *On the Metamorphoses of Insects*, delivered at the Royal Institution, Sir John Lubbock, after giving some remarkably interesting examples of the changes that take place in insects, brought forward a series of conclusions, among which are—that the presence of metamorphoses in insects depends, in great measure at least, upon the early state in which they quit the egg—that metamorphoses are of two kinds: developmental and adaptational—that the apparent abruptness of the changes which they undergo arises in great measure from the hardness of their skin, which permits no gradual alteration of form, and which is itself rendered necessary, in order to afford sufficient support to the muscles—that the form of the larva of each species depends in great measure on the conditions in which it lives.

Besides these, Sir J. Lubbock states certain conclusions respecting dimorphism and alternation of generations, sketches what he calls the 'life history' of some species of insects, and shews how much there is to interest an observer in the way in which insects provide for the wants of their young. This is the more remarkable, as the habits of the mature insect are very different from those of its progeny. Thus, the butterfly which lives on honey, and did live on leaves, lays her eggs on a twig. She seems to feel that honey will not suit

her young, and that the leaves will wither and fall before another spring comes round. The gnat, which lives in the air, and feeds on blood, lays her eggs on the surface of water; and the sugar-loving house-fly knows that very different food is necessary for her young.

Generally, continues the lecturer, the larvae forage for themselves; but in some cases the mother supplies the young with food. The solitary wasp builds a cell, and fills it with other insects. If, however, she imprisoned them while alive, their struggles would infallibly destroy her egg; if she killed them, they would soon decay; and the young larva, when hatched, would find, instead of a store of wholesome food, a mere mass of corruption. To avoid these two evils, the wasp stings her victim in such a manner as to pierce the centre of the nervous system, and the poison has the quality of paralysing the victim without killing it. Thus deprived of all power of movement, but still alive, it remains some weeks motionless, and yet fresh. But perhaps the ants are the most remarkable of all. They tend their young, they build houses, they make wars, they keep slaves, they have domestic animals, and it is even said that in some cases they cultivate the ground.

Naturalists in general, and entomologists in particular, who dread an exhaustion of their studies, will be encouraged by what Sir John Lubbock says regarding the habits of insects—that 'there is in that subject still a wide field for patient and conscientious labour; the observations already made having been far from exhausting the mine, though amply sufficient to prove the richness of the ore.'

It may be accepted as a hopeful sign that the Manchester Chamber of Commerce appointed a Committee to consider the subject of mildewed calico, about which such grievous complaints came from India. We say hopeful, because the origin of the mildew has been imputed to fraudulent practices on the part of the calico manufacturers, and it is well that an inquiry should take place in the locality implicated. The Committee have drawn up a Report, in which they go carefully into the whole question, and though they do not exonerate all manufacturers from blame, or the charge of dishonesty, those open to the charge are but few. On the other hand, they find that throughout the trade generally, sufficient care has not been taken to prepare the calico with proper starch, or 'dressing,' as it is commonly called. If this be of inferior quality, mildew becomes the natural consequence. The Committee cannot find that stowage in iron ships, or the use of Surat cotton, tends to produce mildew, and they recommend as an effectual remedy resumption of the use of a well-compounded flour or starch size, which they believe to be a protection to the woven fibre. One part of their Report will interest naturalists—namely, where they state 'their conviction that mildew plants colonise certain decaying matters, each species living and propagating on its appropriate pabulum.' To which they add: 'We are not without hope that ere long such knowledge will be gained by a continued search among the mildewed pieces returned to this country, that special mildew growths will be traced to distinct defects of size (dressing), and that parasites which affect cloth will be no less marked out than the parasites which affect animal life.'

DIFFERENT POINTS OF VIEW.

Saith the white owl to the martin folk,
In the belfry tower so grim and gray :
'Why do they deafen us with these bells?
Is any one dead or born to-day?'

A martin peeped over the rim of its nest,
And answered crossly : 'Why, ain't you heard
That an heir is come to the great estate?—
'I haven't,' the owl said, 'pon my word.'

'Are men born so, with that white cockade?'
Said the little field-mouse to the old brown rat.
'Why, you silly child,' the sage replied,
'This is the bridegroom—they know him by that.'

Saith the snail so snug in his dappled shell,
Slowly stretching one cautious horn,
As the beetle was hurrying by so brisk,
Much to his Snailship's inward scorn :

'Why does that creature ride by so fast?
Has a fire broke out, to the east or west?—
'Your Grace, he rides to the wedding-feast.'—
'Let the madman go. What I want's rest.'

The swallows around the woodman skimmed,
Poising and turning on flashing wing;
One said : 'How liveth this lump of earth?
In the air, he can neither soar nor spring !'

'Over the meadows we sweep and dart,
Down with the flowers, or up in the skies;
While these poor lumberers toil and slave,
Half-starved, for how can they catch their flies?'

Quoth the dry-rot worm to his artisans
In the carpenter's shop, as they bored away :
'Hark to the sound of the saw and file!
What are these creatures at work at—say !'

From his covered passage a worm looked out,
And eyed the beings so busy o'erhead :
'I scarcely know, my Lord; but I think
They're making a box to bury their dead !'

Says a butterfly with his wings of blue
All in a flutter of careless joy,
As he talks to a dragon-fly over a flower :
'Ours is a life, sir, with no alloy.'

'What are those black things, row and row,
Winding along by the new-mown hay?'
'That is a funeral,' says the fly :
'The carpenter buries his son to-day.'

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AN OCEAN WAIF.

IN NINE CHAPTERS.—CHAPTER I.

JOHN CROSS, sir, late able seaman of the clipper-ship *Southern Star*, trading to Sydney, and carrying passengers—only a rough sailor, as has been through many a storm at sea, but weathered them all to sit here, sir, and let you take all the yarn down, just as it all happened, word for word, and if you like, I'll kiss the book afore starting.

We had a good run out, and had got all our cargo ashore, as we lay alongside o' the wharfs in Sydney harbour, high out of the water, when the *Burrahurry*, as sailed the same day as us from Liverpool, stood into the port. There we lay, only think, within two days of Christmas, and the sun ready to make the tallow boil as lay in the casks—hundreds and hundreds of 'em, waiting there for shipment, and not smelling none too nice neither. There was the pitch oozing out of the seams; and so sure as you put your hand down anywhere, tight it stuck, or else you smashed it off in a hurry to save it from being blistered.

We'd cleared out, and was going to begin taking in next day; and some o' the chaps was ashore, when my mate, Tom Black—not the mate o' the ship, you know, but my mate as was good friends with me—stood aside me; and we was leaning over the bulwarks, spitting down at the flies, for want of something better to do, being a hot, lazy sort of afternoon, when Tom says: 'I shall be thund'ring glad when we gets off again, for I don't like this place a bit. 'Tain't nat'ral. Everything's on back'ards.'

'How's that?' I says.

'Why, here's Christmas; and instead of its being a sensible good snow-storm, or a stinging sharp frost, as would make a bit of fire comfortable, why I don't believe a bit of fresh meat would keep a day.'

'All right,' I says; 'what next?'

'What next?' he says—'why, everything. You don't see many of 'em, sartainly, but just look at the natives, all black, like so many niggers, when

they ought to be white. Then the animals all lay eggs, and the birds can't fly, and the leaves is turned edgeways, and, altogether, you goes by the rules of contrary. It's all upside down.'

'Well, of course it is,' I says; 'ain't we at the t'other side of the world?'

'Not a bit of it,' says Tom; 'we're here.'

'Well, but you know what I mean,' I says; and then we should have gone on ever so long, only there was a gentleman on the wharf, down below, with a couple o' young ladies as looked like his daughters, and he seemed peeping about as if he wanted to come aboard.

'Captain on board, my man?' he says.

'No, sir,' I says, touching my hat. 'Mate is, sir.'

And then he led one o' the young ladies up the hatches as was laid across to the wharf; and the other was afraid to follow, so I swings myself off, and on to the wharf, and then holds out my hand to steady her and lead her aboard; and she smiled at me as if she knew it would be all right, and laid her pretty little yellow kid-glove in my great tarry fist, and I had her safe aboard in no time, when she looked up at me, and said: 'Thank you, sailor,' in such a sweet way, that it was like music; and just then, I saw that I'd left the marks of my fist on her delicate little gloved hand, and I felt that savage and vexed as I stood there rubbing my hand down my trousers, I hardly knew what to do. I felt as silly as a great gal, and she saw it, and looked at her glove, and made a pretty little face at it, and then laughed and nodded at me; and if I didn't feel—being an ignorant sort of fellow—just as if I should have liked to have been her dog, or to have lain down for her to wipe her shoes upon me.

'Mr Smith ain't aboard,' says Tom to me in a whisper—'shovin' his elber right into my ribs, as if daylight through would do me good—he's gone ashore.'

'Where shall we find the mate?' says the gentleman just then; and a fine fierce old chap he looked, almost as brown as Tom, with sharp eyes, hook nose, and a great white beard, half covering his face; while as to the two young ladies as

seemed to be his daughters, they looked to me more like angels than anything else. So 'Where shall we find the mate?' says the gentleman; and in my stupid, blundering way, I was obliged to tell him as I'd made a mistake.

'Ah! never mind, my man,' he says; 'I have taken a passage home to the old country in your ship, and my daughters thought they would like to look round.—You and that other man are a couple of the sailors, eh?' he says, in a short, sharp way.

'Yes, sir,' I says, touching my hat again, for he spoke just like a captain.

'Glad of it,' he says; 'there's a honest look about you British tars. There, you can drink the young ladies' health when you go ashore!' and he gave me a shilling. 'Now, I suppose you'll take us home safe?'

'That we will,' I says, 'sir; for a better ship never sailed;' and what with talking in such company, and what with being called honest-looking, and a British tar, I felt quite red in the face.

'Bravo!' says the gentleman, clapping me on the shoulder; 'I like a man to be proud of his ship.'

Then I saw both the young ladies smile, and I thought it was at me, and that made me feel more blundering than ever; so that when I took them and shewed them all over the ship, and the cabin, and all the different parts, and told them what a quick run we had made, I'm afraid I did it very clumsily; but they all thanked me; and when the gentleman took one young lady by the hand, and led her ashore—the one he brought aboard, with long, dark hair—the other one, as had bright, golden-yellow curls flowing like all down her back, she gave me her hand again, just as if it was quite natural, and tripped over the hatchway to the wharf, while I held it all the while tightly clinging to mine, and then again she said: 'Thank you, sailor!' and I stood looking after them, for they were gone; and somehow as I stood there, it seemed as if something had come over the day, and it looked dull; while I could feel the pressure of that little hand still on mine, and there was another shilling there—that shilling as is sewed up in a little leather purse, and hangs round my neck, and as I hope it'll hang when I'm sewn up in my hammock, and the twenty-four pound shot takes me to the bottom.

CHAPTER II.

'Cheerly men, ho, yo-ho!' and up came another; and then down it went into the deep hold, where some of our chaps rolled 'em along into their places, cask after cask of tallow; and warm work it was on that hot January day. But we were at work with a will, and soon made the good ship sink a bit in the water.

'Cheerly men, ho, yo-ho!' we sung out, working away in the bright clear sunshine, and with a will, too, for some of us were thinking hard and fast of 'home, sweet home!' Sydney's all very well, but 'taint much account, after all. It seems to me a noisy, bouncy sort of place—like a big bully-boy

trying to shew how grand it is, when it ain't got no bottom to it. 'Taint old, and solid, and strong. I dessay it will be some day; but, to my way of thinking, that ain't come yet, though, after all, it don't much matter to me. I'm only saying it as a sort of excuse for talking about wanting to come home again, when so many people is in such a hurry to get out there.

We got our tallow on board, packed and jammed and stammed, so that I don't care how the ship lurched—there wouldn't be no shifting down in the hold; for our first-mate, Mr Smith—Hammer and Tongs, we used to call him—was a first-class sailor, and would have everything done well, and keep us at it, over and over again, till it was done. Of course, the chaps didn't like him none the better for it; but he was a good mate, for all that.

Then there was different odd lots for lading, besides wool, and a rare lot of copper—plenty of weight in a precious little room—different to the wool, you know, which was all t' other way. And talk about packing—I know as nobody would have believed to have seen all the stuff lying on the wharf, as we could have stowed it all away out of sight. But, howsumever, there it all was, packed away tight; and we were beginning to want a job, when, one day, the captain came aboard, and began talking to Mr Smith about getting a place ready for I don't know how many thousand ounces of gold as we were to take back.

'Hear that, Tom?' I says.

'What?' says he.

'Why, we're a-going to shy the tallow overboard, and fill up with gold.'

'Gammon!' he says; but, the next morning, down comes the gold with a convoy o' police round the trucks; and then we had to carry aboard a lot of little wood-chests marked, and painted, and bound with iron. Gallus heavy they were, too, and I don't know how much they was worth apiece; but when they was packed down in the little cabin cleared out for 'em, they didn't seem to take up much room; and one didn't feel a bit dazzled or struck.

'Why, it don't seem much to make a fuss about,' I says to Tom.

'You're right, old boy,' he says; 'and yet those two chaps is a-going to stay aboard to guard it till we sail.'

'Well, I s'pose it's all right,' I says; 'but there ain't much to shew, if it is a rich cargo. I'd sooner go in for the tallow.'

We was pretty busy now getting in our fresh meat and vegetables, and taking in our water, and one thing and another; and a fine game we had one day, while one of the passengers was aboard. He was down on the lower-deck, swelling about, and trying to get to see and hear all he could—a bounceable chap, with a big black beard, one of a party of six going back with us: they'd been partners up at the diggings, and were going to bring their gold aboard; and a precious fuss they made with the captain and mate about being safe, and proper protection, and so on. They'd been backwards and forwards, all of 'em, several times, and I heard the captain say: 'Tell you what, Smith, I've half a mind not to take 'em. I can let their berths directly; and I'm afraid they'll throw us overboard at the last, afore they pay the full passage-money.'

Next day, though, I heard it was all right; and the berths were all taken; and this chap, Hicks

he called himself, was peeping about aboard, and asking the mate about our chaps, whether he thought this man honest, and that t'other one fit to trust, and all on in that way, till I could see with half an eye as old Hammer and Tongs felt savage enough to kick him overboard.

Well, we was lowering down a water-cask, and this chap stood close to the mate as was giving the orders; when somehow or another the tackle slipped, and the cask came down on its head by the run; the head flew out, and the mate and this gold-digger, Hicks, got it beautiful. I'm blest if ever I see anything to equal it. Talk about a shower-bath! My! it was glorious. You should have seen that chap stamp, and splash, and kick about, and to hear him storm and swear, looking as he did like a drowned rat; while old Smith, who had it wuss if anything, sat on a chest and laughed till he was a'most choked; and we had to hit him on the back, being a stout chap, to bring him to again.

'Pon my soul, Mr Hicks,' he says, 'I beg your pardon, but you've a'most been the death o' me.'

He didn't say nothing; but he shewed his teeth like a savage dog, and I've often thought since he seemed to say: 'And I'll quite be the death of you one day.'

But he didn't speak a word, but went off and into his cabin, and sent one of the sailors ashore with a message; and one of his mates came from the hotel they stopped at, and brought him some dry clothes; but he didn't come hanging about us any more.

'Here, shove that cask in the corner there,' says the mate as soon as our gentleman had gone. 'Head down, you lubbers, to keep it clean. Shove the bits inside, and the carpenter shall put it right when we're well aloft.'

Next night they was all six aboard, with the captain; and they had a table and chairs out on the poop, and sat smoking and drinking the captain's pale ale. They talked very big about what they'd made, and what an encumbrance it was, and how glad they should be to have it safe aboard.

I happened to be sitting mending and splicing a bit by a lantern, so I heard a good deal of the conversation.

'You see it's safe, I think, now, for they have it in the strong room at the hotel; but if you'll take it into your charge to-morrow, captain, we should be glad to have it off our minds.'

This was the one called Hicks as spoke, and then another chimes in, and he says: 'But the captain must be answerable.'

'O yes; of course,' says Hicks. 'But curse it, Phillips, if you ain't the worst of us all. You'll have the yellow fever, if you don't soon get rid of your share.'

'I wonder you didn't turn it into notes,' says the captain. 'There they are, snug in your pocket-book, and nobody a bit the wiser.'

'What's the good of shying a hundred pounds away?' says another of 'em. 'Why, we can make that, and more too, in the old country.'

'What's it in?' says the captain.

'Three cases—government pattern,' says Hicks; 'all regular and in style; and without being too funky, captain, I'm blest if it ain't like a nightmare allus on us. We've had more than one fight for it, and one chap had four inches of that in his ribs for trying to meddle with what warn't his own; and then he pulled out a nasty awkward-

looking knife, as I could see the gleam of as he gave it a bit of a flourish.

'I made a noise with that, too,' says another, pulling out a revolver; and then it came out as they were all armed.

'And I tell you what it is, captain,' says Hicks; 'we'd one and all shed every drop of blood in our veins before we'd be choused out of it now, after the years of toil and danger we've had.'

'All right, gentlemen, all right,' says the captain. 'I don't wonder at what you say; but my crew to a man are English—none of your beggarly coolies or Lascars; so I think you'll be pretty safe. Winds and water permitting, I'll see you safe into Liverpool Docks; and if I don't, it won't be my fault.'

Then they sat drinking another bottle or two of ale, and went ashore.

That night as I lay close aside of Tom Black, it was that hot that we could neither of us sleep, for not a breath of air came between our hammocks. I got talking about the gold, and about these swell chaps as was coming aboard, and I says: 'Tell you what, old boy, if I'd got a chest o' gold, I don't think I should go crying out: "Look ye here!" even if I had a six-shooter to take care of it with. I'd mark it as lead or copper, or something of that sort.'

'Gammon,' says Tom. 'Who goes travelling with a chest of lead or copper? That wouldn't be no good.'

'Well, then, I'd shove it in a coffin, and pretend it was a corpus,' I says.

'Yes,' says Tom; 'and ten to one, if it was rough weather, some o' the chaps would say Jonah was aboard, and shove the coffin out of one o' the lee-ports on a dark night. How then, old hoss?'

Well, I hadn't got nothing to say to that; and as I hadn't got any gold of my own to bother about, I turns over, and goes to sleep, and dreams about seeing angels in a sunshiny land, and they'd all got long golden hair, and black velvet hats with white feathers, and wore yellow kid gloves.

CHAPTER III.

They say it does rain over there sometimes; and when it does come down, it's wash away; but there never came any rain in my time; and of all the hot, dusty, dry places I ever did see, that there Sydney's about the worst. We were pretty well ready for sea now, and a sight more snug than when we were coming out; for cargo and traps had come in comfortable-like, some at a time, and not bull-roosh all together. That very next day comes our six passengers, with a deal of fuss, and a truck, and a couple of policemen to bring their three little chests on board; for all their luggage, which wasn't much, came on day before. It did seem such a hullabaloo to make about three little boxes, that as we took 'em aboard, some of us couldn't help having a little bit of chaff about it among ourselves; and precious savage those six passengers looked about it, I can tell you. You see, they weren't gentlemen; but the sorter chaps as I set down in my mind to go on the spree when they got home, and spend all they'd got in a couple o' months; and so I told Tom Black.

Well, once the treasure was all aboard, we did not see much of our six gentlemen till the day of sailing. We had Major Horton's luggage on board—for that was the name of the gentleman as had

the two daughters; and just at the last, when we were getting up the anchor, after lying away from the wharf a couple of days, Major Horton came off with the ladies in the same boat with our captain; and when he saw who were going to be passengers as well, I don't think he much liked it; but he didn't say anything; and as he and his daughters had a cabin to themselves, and a servant-lad too, why, it did not much matter to them. I managed to get to the gangway, and was going to help the same young lady aboard as she was being slung up; but the black-bearded chap, Hicks, starts forward, shoves me on one side, and takes off his hat, and holds out his hand. But I warn't sorry to see her just lightly lay her hand on his arm for a moment, then bow stiffly, and take her father's arm, quite turning her back on my gentleman; and then giving me a smile and a nod, just to thank me all the same—though I didn't help her.

You see when that Hicks shoved me back, it was as if some one had rubbed all one's fur up wrong way, while, when I got that smile and nod, it was like a hand smoothing me down again; but I must say as I should have liked to pitch that chap over the bulwarks.

I'd no time to see more then, for old Hammer and Tongs was letting go at us all like blazes. He did swear that day, and no mistake; for he was one o' them old-style sailors as couldn't get on without. I don't believe he meant any harm; but Lord bless you, how he would go on! It was like a thunder-storm—thunder and lightning—thunder and lightning, till the bit of work was done; and then he'd stand there rubbing the perspiration off his old bald head, and dabbing himself, and smiling, and—'Werry well done, my lads—werry well done indeed,' he'd say, and this day he turns round to Major Horton, as was standing close by:—

'Smart bit of seamanship,' he says, 'wasn't it, sir?'

'Well, really, I'm no judge,' says Major Horton; 'but I thought the men were getting wryng over it, by your being so angry.'

'Angry, sir!' says old Smith; 'angry! Lord bless you, I wasn't angry; I never see the lads do it better; and he looked so surprised and innocent that our captain couldn't help laughing.'

'It's a way of his, he's got, sir; that's all.'

'Ah!' says Major Horton, with his face a bit screwed up; 'then I hope he will not have that way of his on often when my daughters are on deck;' and then he walked aft.

Our captain cocked his eye, and grinned at old Smith; and the old chap screwed up that old figure-head of his just like a bit of carved mahogany; and then he blew out his cheeks, and stared at the captain, and he says: 'I must turn over a new leaf, mate. But, I say, that was rather hot, wasn't it?'

A fine fair breeze as ever blew homeward, and the good ship bent to it with every stitch set, and away we went through the blue water, sending it out behind us covered with white foam; and now for days past we had seen nothing but blue sky and blue sea.

I hadn't seen much of the ladies, only just when they took a walk on the deck with their father; for, after the first day or two, they never came on deck alone, on account of that Hicks, and the one as they called Phillips—a long, sandy-whiskered chap, but one as had a wonderful good opinion of himself, and along with this Hicks, tried it on

very strong to make himself agreeable to the ladies.

The young ladies did all that well-bred folks know so well how to manage—such as giving these chaps cold answers, and in all sorts o' ways shewing 'em as their company wasn't wanted; but it wasn't a bit of use, bless you, and they shewed themselves so forward at last that the ladies didn't shew at all, which made me feel a bit mad, for I felt to know why it was. Then my gentlemen must try it on with the father when he came on deck to smoke his cigar, for they were most always sitting somewhere about smoking and drinking bottled beer. Now they'd ask him to take a glass with them; another time to take a cigar; but as far as I saw, and Tom Black told me, he always as civilly as could be said 'No;' and shewed them that he belonged to a different class of ship, and wanted to keep himself to himself.

But that didn't suit our gentlemen, and this Phillips must be always borrowing a light of the major, and walking aside him along the deck, turning when he turned; and so thick-skinned he was that he could not, or would not, see how he was being snubbed; and more than once I've seen the gray-headed old gentleman go down into his cabin quite vexed and savage-like.

And yet he wasn't proud; for when Tom and I have had the watch of a night, he'd come and give us a cigar apiece, and stop for long enough talking; and the same with either of us when it was our spell at the wheel. As for him and old Smith, after that bit of a fly the first day, they were as thick as thick; and the old chap never did let out but once before the ladies, and then he brought himself up short with a spank in the mouth; and Tom said he went and begged pardon afterwards; but I don't quite believe that.

One lovely evening, when there was one of those glorious sunsets as turns everything, sea, sky, ship, and rigging, into gold, Miss Horton and Miss Madeline, which was her dark-haired sister, were both up on deck, for the unpleasant party was all below in the captain's cabin, and talking a good deal—so Tom said, for he was close aside the skylight—about where we were, and seeming to know a good deal about latitude, and longitude, and so on.

'They ain't half-bred sailors,' says Tom to me; 'but it strikes me, Jack, as they're a bad lot, and I don't like the look of 'em. The captain does, though, for they're awfully thick, and they've got the chart out there, and he's a'most tight; but he's shewing them exactly where we are.'

'What a pair of handsome gals those are, Tom?' I says, looking along the deck, for I was thinking of something else.

'Yes,' says Tom; 'and if I was their father, I shouldn't take it so coolly, if that hook-nosed chap Hicks, and that other long awry chap, was always follering them about.'

'Praps he don't know it!' says I.

'Think not?' says Tom.

'Praps they don't tell,' I says, 'so as to save a rumpus; for I don't think their old man would stand much nonsense. I'm blest if I should like to upset him.'

'Look at that, now,' says Tom.

But I was looking; and just then, the very two chaps as we'd mentioned came up on deck, and first thing they does was to put themselves so as to meet the ladies, and smile and bow.

I saw Miss Madeline press closer up to her sister,

and as they went by, they just slightly bowed, and then walked towards where Tom and I stood, so as to be pretty close; when they went and stood gazing out to sea.

Up comes my two gentlemen; and I could see them as they'd both had as much as they could carry; and one goes on one side o' the sisters, and the other the far side, and then they leaned round and looked right in their faces, and said something as made both start back and cross over to the other side—for another of the party stood lolling and smoking just by the cabin-stairs—ours being a flush-deck.

'Steady, mate,' says Tom, getting tight hold of my wrist, for I was going to do something—I don't quite know what; but I felt all red-hot like. 'Tain't your business, Jack Cross.'

Well, I didn't see that; for if it ain't a British sailor's duty to succour a maiden in distress, whose duty is it?—tell me that; but I stood quite still, hoping that the father would come up.

'And if he does pitch him overboard,' I says thinking out loud, 'why, 'ware sharks.'

'Just what I thought, Jack,' says Tom Black.

I could see as the poor girls looked frightened, and Miss Horton—Mary, as she told me her name was—dropped her handkerchief on the deck, but turned directly to pick it up; but Hicks was too sharp for her, and he got hold of it, kissed it, and began a-stuffing it in his wesket.

I saw Miss Mary flush up, and I've never seen any one look so handsome since; and her eyes seemed to flash, as she says: 'If you're a gentleman, sir, you will immediately restore that handkerchief.'

'My angel,' he says; 'never!—Now,' he says, taking hold of her hand, and drawing it through his arm, 'don't be so cross; let's have a walk, and talk it over.'

She did not speak, but struggled to get away; and then turned her head towards me, as if to ask for help, and our eyes met, though there was a good distance between us.

That was enough. I saw she was too brave to scream, though she was backing towards the cabin-stairs, while her sister tried to follow; but Phillips kept between 'em, and wouldn't let her pass. That was enough for me. I shook Tom off, and made a rush, and stopped short half-way, as Miss Mary made towards me, and I caught her in my arms, just as I saw Hicks go down like a bullock, and roll over, stunned and bleeding, on the white deck; while, directly after, Phillips caught a lift under the ear, as sent him staggering against the long-boat, when he tipped up, went in, and you saw his heels for a moment, and then he was gone.

Talk about a lion: why, the old gentleman's beard seemed quite to bristle, and he couldn't speak, but gave me a wag of the head to help Miss Mary down; and I tried to carry her for a few steps, but she asked me to set her down directly, and then she took my arm, and we followed the Major and Miss Madeline into the cabin; and I was coming away, when the old gentleman came up and shook me by both hands. 'I'll talk to you to-morrow,' he says. 'I thought I knew an honest face when I saw it.'

I backed out, awkward enough, and feeling somehow quite ashamed of what I had done; and the last thing as I saw there was Miss Madeline crying in her sister's arms. While, when I got back on deck, both of them gentlemen had made

themselves scarce; and the only thing to shew as there had been anything wrong, was some blood, as Tom Black was swabbing up, while old Smith was looking on as black as thunder.

GARRAWAY'S.

THE age we live in, whatever else it may please to call itself, is decidedly an age of Reconstruction. That is the order of the day across the Atlantic, and the sole excuse for the war of late desolating Europe. Here, in England, we are intent upon reconstructing at once our legislature, our navy, and our metropolis, and in each case the process seems to be a never-ending one. If the operation only prove as successful as it is tedious, the results will be wonderful indeed.

For ourselves, we own we are most concerned about the fate of our great city, so roughly handled by engineers and architects, bricklayers and navvies. When these merciless gentry are satiated, when they shall have done their best and worst, the object of their kind attentions may possibly be the handsomer for them, although we have our doubts. When that happy but far-distant time arrives, what with the Board of Works here, the Corporation there, and Railway and Limited Liability Companies everywhere, we fear there will not be a single vestige of old London left. The birthplaces of her famous sons, the homes hallowed by great names, the haunts of departed pleasure-seekers, the old taverns, consecrated by the 'quirks and happy hits' of men of letters, are disappearing one by one: all, all are going, the old familiar places!

One of the latest, but by no means one of the least notable victims of the present mania for 'improvements,' No. 3 Change Alley, known far and wide as 'Garraway's,' deserves something more than a curt newspaper paragraph upon its demise. It has been an institution of commercial London for many and many a year, and we would fain recall its history before it becomes but a memory and a name. The exact date of the opening of Garraway's is doubtful; it was certainly one of the first coffee-houses established in London, though in point of time it yields precedence to the establishments of Bowman, Jonathan Paynter, and Farr of Fleet Street. Somewhere about 1658, the founder of the house where merchants most did congregate, issued a broadside introducing tea to the notice of the English public; and if the said public were slow in appreciating this novel beverage, it was not the fault of Mr Garway. He lauded it to the skies as a sovereign remedy for all sorts of ailments, and almost capable of making men immortal. His curious puff is too long to be inserted here, but we must quote its potent reasons why those who were inclined to venture upon the experiment of drinking tea should patronise his enthusiastic advocate. Here they are: 'The said Thomas Garway did purchase a quantity thereof, and first publicly sold the said tea in leaf and drink, made according to the directions of the most knowing merchants and travellers into those eastern countries; and upon knowledge and experience of the said Garway's continued care and industry in obtaining the best teas, and making drink thereof, very many noble-men, physicians, merchants, and gentlemen of quality have ever since sent to him for the said leaf, and daily resort to his house in Exchange

Alley to drink the drink thereof. And to the end that all persons of eminency and quality, gentlemen and others, who have occasion for tea in leaf, may be supplied, these are to give notice that the said Thomas Garway hath tea to sell from sixteen shillings to fifty shillings the pound.'

Garway supplied his patrons with tea, coffee, chocolate, tobacco, and Turkish sherbets 'of lemons, roses, and violets perfumed.' He was evidently a most enterprising tradesman, and one of the earliest to see the advantages of advertising, for he was a pretty constant customer in that way of *The Mercurius Publicus* and *The Kingdom's Intelligencer*, those unpretending little progenitors of our modern newspapers. The best specimen of his news-letter announcements is one dated December 20, 1662, which appeared in the *Kingdom's Intelligencer*: 'At the coffee-house in Exchange Alley is sold by retail the right *Coffee Powder*, from 4s. to 6s. per pound, as in goodness: that powdered in a mortar, at 2s. 6d. per pound; also that termed the *East India Berry*, at 18d. per pound; and that termed the right *Turkie Berry*, well garbled, at 3s. per pound; the ungarbled for lesse, with directions *gratis* how to make and use the same; likewise, there you may have *Chocolatta*, the ordinary pound boxes at 2s. 6d.; the perfumed, from 4s. to 10s. per pound; and *Tea* according to its goodness; which, if any gentlemen shall write or send for, they shall be sure of the best, as they shall order, and to avoid deceit, warranted under the House seal—viz., *Morat ye Great*, &c. Further, all gentlemen that are, or will be, customers, are invited (the first day of the next new year) at the signe of the Great Turk, at the new coffee-house in Exchange Alley, where coffee will be on free cost, and so may be to the world's end.' What worthy Mr Garway meant by that last sentence, we do not attempt to guess. His allusion to the 'House seal' reminds us that the head of Sultan Amurath ornamented the tokens of the coffee-house, of which description of small change four varieties are known, all bearing the motto:

Morat ye Great, men did mee call;
Where eare I came, I conquered all.

Garway's advertising seems to have answered its purpose well, for a gentleman, who lost a letter-case, wrought in silk and silver, in 1662, and advertised his loss, requests the finder to take the letter-case to Mr Garway's coffee-house, without thinking it necessary to state where Mr Garway's coffee-house might be—pretty good evidence that the place was well known, at least.

In 1673, Ogilby held his 'Standing Book-lottery' at Garway's. His advertisement gives no details of this particular scheme, but we can judge of its nature from the prospectus of a similar speculation he embarked in a few years later. This informs us that the lottery was a five-shilling one, containing three thousand three hundred and sixty-eight prizes, at the rate of one prize to every four blanks. The highest prize was valued, by the projector, at fifty-one pounds, and consisted of one copy of every work in the lottery list, the 'every' being represented by an 'Imperial Bible, with chorographical and a hundred historical sculps.;' English versions of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, *Æsop's Fables*, *Virgil's Poema*, *A Description of China*, and an Account of His Majesty's Coronation and Entertainment on passing through the City of London. The lowest prize was supposed to be worth three

pounds; and Ogilby guaranteed to every purchaser of five tickets a prize of more value than his money, if all five tickets drew blanks; while subscribers of forty shillings received nine tickets, and in case of utter non-success, might take their choice of Homer, Virgil, or *Æsop*. The lottery at Garway's seems to have been a failure, since the speculator shifted his quarters in a short time, although he had announced that he should remain there till all the lots were drawn off.

In 1720, the South Sea Bubble crowded Change Alley from morning to night with strange visitants agape for golden showers, ladies even driving there in their chariots to gamble with the proceeds of their pawned jewels. As happens now and again, the rage for speculation seized upon all classes of society:

Statesmen and patriots plied alike the stocks,
Peereas and butler shared alike the box;
And judges jobbed, and bishops bit the town,
And mighty dukes packed cards for half-a-crown.

Swift, describing the Alley while the terrible game of speculation was being played there by a mad and motley crowd, says:

Subscribers here by thousands float,
And jostle one another down;
Each paddling in his leaky boat,
And here they fish for gold, and drown.

Now buried in the depths below,
Now mounted up to heaven again,
They reel and stagger to and fro,
At their wits' end, like drunken men.

Meantime, secure on Garway's cliffs,
A savage crew, by shipwrecks fed,
Lie waiting for the foundered skiffs,
And strip the bodies of the dead.

Doubtless, Garway's did not escape the general infection, or close its doors to the cannibals of the Alley; but when the Bubble burst, it returned to its normal state, which was eminently one of respectability. Defoe tells us that at this time it was the custom of the better sort of traders to meet in Change Alley about one o'clock, the dealers in stock congregating at Jonathan's, foreign 'banquiers' and ministers comparing notes at Robins', while Garway's was patronised by the wealthiest citizens and people of quality who happened to have business in the City. That Defoe's division of the customers of the Change Alley coffee-houses was pretty correct, is borne out by the fact of Dr Radcliffe, the famous physician, being a regular frequenter of Garway's. It was there he was told he had seen the last of the five thousand guineas he had invested in South Sea stock, and philosophically replied: 'Well, it is but going up five thousand pair of stairs more!' Another good story connects Radcliffe with our subject. Every one knows how Mr Robert Sawyer had himself called out of church in the middle of service, to impress folks with the notion that the services of 'Sawyer, late Nockemorf,' were in immense demand. But every one does not know that poor Bob was only an unlucky imitator of a more artful and daring dodger, who contrived to gain a good practice, and died with a handle to his name. Among the would-be rivals to the great Radcliffe, was a Dr Hannes, who set up a handsome carriage, in hopes of thereby attracting patients. Finding this of no avail, the doctor ordered his footman to

stop the carriages of gentlemen in the streets, and inquire for him, as if he wanted him in a great hurry. Following out these instructions, the footman put the question to every coach from Whitehall to the Royal Exchange; then running into Garraway's, made the same inquiry there. 'At last, Dr Radcliffe, who was usually planted at a table with several apothecaries and chirurgeons that flocked about him, cried out: "Dr Hannes is not here! Who wants him?" The fellow replied, Lord Such-a-one and Such-a-one. "No, no, my friend," said Radcliffe; "you are mistaken: the doctor wants those lords."

Besides its celebrity as a house of call for commercial men, Garraway's has long been noted for its auctions. The earliest notification of a sale at Garraway's we have been able to find is the following from *The Mercurius Publicus* for December 11, 1662: 'On Thursday the 8th of January next, by two of the clock, at the Coffee-house in Exchange Alley, near the Old Exchange, London, will be put to sale by inch of candle, one hundred and fifty bags of Spanish-cloth-wools in several small parcels allotted out, and are to be seen at the warehouses in John de Veer's yard in Seething Lane, on Wednesdaies, Thursdaies, and Fridaies in the afternoon.' Sales by inch of candle were then, and for many years after, as common (perhaps commoner) as sales by the hammer. The method of procedure was simple enough: an inch of wax-candle was lighted when the article was set up for sale, and as long as the candle burned, the biddings went on; when it went out, the sale was over, the last bidder taking the property. All descriptions of merchandise found their way to the mart in Change Alley, and it was especially favoured with the disposal of war-prizes. Such a sale was announced in 1748, the proceeds of the vigilance of the *Centurion*, which ship had brought into port some half-dozen French merchantmen; and the list of articles is a medley indeed; quantities of cambric, calico, linen, dimity, flannel, sewing-silk, and broad-cloth being mixed up with bonnets and hats, shoes and stockings, garters and handkerchiefs, embroidered waistcoats and canvas trousers. Then there are wigs and wig-bags, ribbons and gloves, saddles and sword-blades, playing-cards and brass candlesticks, wine and washballs, snuff-boxes and copper stewpans, hair-powder and horse-furniture, spice and tallow, coffee-mills and candles, casks of gunpowder, and '76 umbrells.' This miscellaneous lot was not destined to be sold at Garraway's. At one o'clock in the morning of the 25th of March, a fire broke out in an oyster-shed attached to the house of a Change Alley periwig-maker named Elderidge. The key of the fire-plug was unfortunately in the custody of the wigmaker (who perished with his family before any attempt to combat the flames could be made); great delay ensued in getting the engines to work, and spite of all efforts, the fire had pretty well its own way for ten hours. In this time it had made a clearance of seventy-four houses; a greater number of 'men of business and capacity' being involved in the calamity than had suffered by any similar catastrophe since the Great Fire itself.

Among the places destroyed or damaged were four taverns, eleven insurance offices, and the coffee-houses known as Tom's, Jonathan's, Elford's, Cole's; and their fellows, the Swordblade, Rainbow, Marine, Jamaica, Jerusalem, Pennsylvania, and Garraway's. This event created a great sensation. His Majesty's

Guards came down to keep order and protect the salvage, which had been carried to the Royal Exchange; a public subscription was got up for the sufferers, and houses placed at their disposal for two months; while in order to expedite the rebuilding of the neighbourhood, the Lord Mayor permitted the employment of non-freemen in the work. The general public fell foul of the water-companies, attributing a great deal of the mischief to a defective supply of water, which led to the publication of the following curious disclaimer: 'Whereas it has been reported that at the late dreadful fire in and about Exchange Alley, there was a want of water; this is to inform the public that three mains belonging to the New River Company, which are continually on, had their several plugs drawn, cocks turned, and holes bored on the said mains for extraordinary supply on the first notice, which was about two o'clock, and in such manner continued so long as wanted. But as Birch Lane, and the end of Lombard Street eastward, and George Yards were in want of water, it must not be imputed to the New River Company, as they had not one tenant in those places, and of course were not obliged to lay any pipes where they had no tenants.' Garraway's had succumbed altogether to the fire; but its proprietor, Joseph Willson, found temporary accommodation at a house facing the Swan and Hoop, in Lombard Street; and on the 19th of December had the pleasure of welcoming his customers to a new house on the old site; but his saleroom was not opened again until the beginning of the following year.

How it came to pass, we know not; but soon after this the quality of the frequenters of Garraway's appears to have deteriorated very much. While White's was patronised by gentlemen who played for thousand-pound rubbers, or made bets on the lie of the day, the wits of the time took their ease at the Bedford, Batson's was the 'seat of solemn stupidity,' where dispensers of life and death flocked together like birds of prey, and Garraway's became the haunt of Jewish stock-jobbers and lottery-brokers. There Macklin went to study Shylock from the life; and there the *Connoisseur*, prompted by a similar desire, bent his steps a few days before the drawing of the lottery in 1754. He professes to have been much diverted by what he saw: 'I not only could read hope, fear, and all the various passions excited by a love of gain, strongly pictured in the faces of those that came to buy, but I remarked with no less delight the many little artifices made use of to allure adventurers, as well as the visible alterations in the looks of the sellers, according as the demand for tickets gave occasion to raise or lower their price. So deeply were the countenances of these bubble-brokers impressed with an attention to the main chance, and their minds seemed so dead to all other sensations, that one might almost doubt, where money is out of the case, whether a Jew has eyes, hands, organs, dimensions, senses, affections, passions.'

The Garraway's of our time has held its own bravely, and enormous has been the consumption of sandwiches, muffins, and luncheon snacks, to say nothing of stout, pale ale, sherry, and punch, within its old precincts. A feeling of fellowship seems to have come over even the competitors in the saleroom; and a sale at Garraway's was unlike a sale anywhere else. 'It was really

a cheerful sight,' says the author of *London Scenes*, 'entering the low, wide-roofed room from the fog and cold of a November afternoon, to find all so genial; a capital sea-coal fire, red and blazing; a curious arrangement of dwarf spits, or rather polyform forks, all armed with muffins, twirling round and round most temptingly, and implying with dumb eloquence, *Come cat us*. Guests imbibing wine, sipping coffee, or munching toast, and casting at intervals a satisfied glance over the catalogues of the sales just due. The warmth and the good cheer have smoothed the wrinkles from every man's face; they are just in the humour to bid liberally. A bell rings, and they ascend the broad centre stair to the antiquated saleroom, containing a small rostrum for the seller, and a few commonly grained settles for the buyers. Everybody appeared to know everybody, and the auctioneer was so cordially greeted on ascending his rostrum, that you might have fancied the wood was to be had as a gift. Large and small lots were knocked down with startling celerity. The buyers formed quite a happy family, and the competition, when any arose touching some log with an unusually fine curl, was of the politest and blandest character.' Although these timber sales were a feature of Garraway's, its sales were not confined to that ponderous speciality. It was equally notable for its sales of life annuities and reversionary interests, and many a fair estate has been knocked down in the old rostrum in Change Alley.

The tap-tap of the auctioneer's hammer will not long be heard in the place so familiar to the sound; the last 'Going, going' will soon be said, and then Garraway's itself will have 'gone,' and with it, one more link connecting us with the past.

MY HOLIDAY.

IN THREE CHAPTERS.—CHAPTER III.

LEAVING Skerryvore wrapped in the rising mists, the *Pharos* went merrily on its way in a north-westerly direction for Barra-Head, on the small island of Bernera, which, from its great height, may in clear weather be seen from a considerable distance. In present circumstances, it did not become visible till we were within ten miles of its light-house, situated on the summit of the precipitous crag. The value of the Barra-Head light can be easily conjectured, for shipwreck on the cliffs beneath would be instantaneous destruction.

With the headland on our left, the *Pharos* rounded into a sheltered bay, where it dropped anchor for the night. Properly speaking, the bay was a channel between two islands, Bernera and Mingalay; but intersected as it is with huge rocks near its western extremity, it is impracticable for navigation. Both islands and some others are often collectively styled Barra, from the larger of the group, and hence the terminating point of the most southerly receives the designation Barra-Head. Our business was exclusively with this famed promontory, and to reach it, there was before us a pretty long walk up-hill. Overnight, it was resolved in full conclave that the walk should be performed next morning before breakfast, as there was a long day's work afterwards; but as this was deemed to be exacting in the way of duty—in fact, against all rule, and not to be construed into a precedent—cups of coffee were to be considerably served all round before starting. So fortified, the

Commissioners were next morning rowed ashore about seven o'clock, and made their landing on Bernera at an inlet in a long stretch of dry rocks, dotted over with quantities of fish in the process of being cured for export. With Milo as a sort of scout in advance, all sturdily betook themselves to the ascent. The road slanted upward across the open hillside, which was devoted chiefly to the pasturage of a few cattle and sheep. Here and there were small patches of barley and oats, enclosed with fences of turf; but so meagre were the crops, and so plentifully interspersed with tall dock-weeds, that there was promise of but an insignificant harvest. The tenants of these crofts, as far as I could see, were the dwellers in two or three thatched huts by the wayside. Nearly halfway up, I called attention to a phenomenon in these parts—a low building which appeared to be a mill of some kind, with a wheel at one end, movable by a rill of water from the grounds above.

After a stiff pull, we at length reach the light-house establishment, which, with its environing walls and gates, has somewhat the aspect of a fortification. The whole of the buildings are of a beautiful white granite, quarried in the island. As in similar cases, the transition from the rough state of things outside the establishment to the orderly arrangements within, was an abrupt step from mediæval to modern times. An interior paved court is environed by the houses of three keepers; and passing them, we reach the tower for the light, with its winding stair, which all immediately ascend, preceded by one of the keepers. What an outlook from the upper story down to the sea, which surges seven hundred feet below; and what myriads of sea-birds screaming and fluttering on ledges of this tremendous precipice! I have seen it stated that these cliffs excel in grandeur anything of the kind in the Hebrides, and can scarcely doubt that such is the case. On a projecting point immediately in front of the light-house, are the ruins of an old castle or keep, once the stronghold of some Hebridean chief. As usual, before departure, we visited the several houses of the keepers, and entered into a little friendly conversation on matters of domestic interest. In one of the dwellings, some information was picked up respecting the water-mill which had excited our curiosity. The mill is entirely the handiwork of an ingenious assistant light-house keeper (a Fife man), who diverted his leisure hours in its construction. He erected the building, covered it with a tarpauling roof, and fabricated the whole of the grinding apparatus. The most difficult part of the undertaking was accomplished by adapting an old cart-wheel. The idea of erecting a mill was suggested by the absence from the island of all means for grinding except by a primitive species of hand-querns. It turned out to be a grand conception this mill. Glad of the opportunity of so easily transforming their corn into meal, the crofters besought the privilege of using it, which was of course allowed; and as money happens to be a rare article in Bernera, the multure was arranged on the convenient footing of giving a lamb for a grist, be the quantity much or little.

Returning leisurely before the others, I had time to inspect the interior of the mill, which I found to be about eight feet square, and lighted only by the low doorway; adjoining is a kiln,

equally diminutive, made, as I was told, from a piece of old sheet-iron, and indispensable for drying the parcels of grain which are taken to this modest establishment to be ground. I afterwards took the liberty of visiting two thatched dwellings of the well-known Western Island type—poor lowly biggins, with no attempt at either neatness or cleanliness in their miserable surroundings. Let me just say a word or two about dwellings of this sort. A leading feature consists in a twisted orifice in the roof to let out the smoke as it ascends from the peat-fire in the middle of the clay-floor—the said twist being adjusted so as to keep the rain from falling directly down over the fire, which would not be pleasant. Two things are obviously disliked in this quarter of the world—chimneys and windows. The great enemy is cold, which would be radiated from windows of ordinary size; and with a chimney constructed in the wall of the house, the family could not sit round the fire. If the smoke does not shoot immediately upwards, so much the better; hovering overhead, it keeps the dwelling warm, and shrouds all in that fine indistinctness which affords play to the imagination. It is, however, not altogether for such reasons that the inmates of these cabins dislike slated roofs. Thatch offers a particular advantage. When sufficiently rotted with damp, and well saturated with soot, it forms an esteemed manure, and is carried away in back-loads to the arable plots in the vicinity; wherefore each house may be said to be a dunghheap in preparation, such as Mr Mechi, I venture to think, has not yet introduced into his marvellously economical systems of husbandry.

I had learned, from various knowing hints and looks of a Commissioner, that it was not advisable to enter any of the dwellings organised on these admired principles, but had no reason to regret having disregarded the well-meant intimations. In the first hut I entered there was an old woman barefooted, who could speak only a few words of English, but seemed anxious to be hospitable, and set a chair for me beside the peat-fire. Though small, smoky, and dingy, the cottage contained a loom in one corner, in which was a web of dark woollen cloth, which the woman made me understand was for the clothing of the family. In the other hut there were an old woman carding wool, and her daughter neatly dressed in tartan, who spoke English tolerably. Here, also, was a loom, at which the daughter wove the family woollen clothing; a circumstance shewing no little thrift and ingenuity. The husband and sons connected with these families, as I understood, occupy their time partly as fishermen, and at certain seasons take cargoes of cured fish in their open boats to Portrush, on the northern coast of Ireland, or sell them to Glasgow traders. What with the hill-pastures, the arable patches, and the sea, there was apparently no deficiency as regards means of living, and if existence in these smoky dens did not seem altogether enviable, I was constrained to remember that I had not long since visited dwellings in the closes of the Old Town of Edinburgh quite as dingy, and infinitely more revolting. In the last of my explorations, I had seen a dwelling in Toddrick's Wynd consisting of a single dungeon-looking apartment, without a window, in which ten persons of different sexes habitually lived, but one of whom, by a not unusual casualty, happened at the time to be in prison. After spectacles of this nature so near

home, and which the world takes very complacently, it would be ridiculous to bear hard on the domiciliary condition of these Bernera crofters.

All on board by half-past nine, and the *Pharos* once more under steam, taking its course along the east side of Barra, South Uist, Benbecula, North Uist, and a number of intermediate islands, and stopping for a short time midway to admit of a visit to the light-house of Ushenish. The programme indicated that the Commissioners were to visit the Monach light, on the western side of the islands, which the vessel was to reach through a navigable channel; but the weather proved too stormy for us to face the Atlantic, or to attempt a landing in that direction; the *Pharos* therefore pursued its way to Lochmaddy, a well-sheltered bay in North Uist, where it was to remain for the night. Cold and gusty as the day happened to be, most of the party kept the deck, and occasionally mounted to the bridge, with field-glass in hand, to catch glimpses of the rugged coast, which appeared a strange combination of rocks, low unpicturesque hills, and inlets of the sea. Some amusement was derived from the notion that part of this ungenial domain was the ancient patrimony of the M'Neills of Barra, who at one time assumed the airs of independent sovereignty, and, according to Carstairs's state-papers, had sent a letter offering aid to the Earl of Argyll. The best of the traditions regarding these self-sufficient old chieftains, is that of the daily proclamation, in Gaelic, from the top of their castle of Chisamil: 'Hear, O ye people! and listen, O ye nations! The great M'Neill of Barra having finished his dinner, all the princes of the earth are at liberty to dine!' Seen from the east side, Barra and the other islands we were passing did not seem qualified to furnish a dinner; but that there might be no mistake on this point, Captain Graham let us know that the belt of fertility stretched along the west side, and that there the sea-shores were remarkably rich in cockles and other varieties of mollusks; from which I would infer, that with a reasonable degree of diligence on the part of his caterer, the great M'Neill never wanted for a good dish of lobster at his famous entertainments. Be this as it might, there can be no doubt that the seas hereabouts are not a half nor a tenth part fished. I would almost go the length of saying, that members of the cod, ling, and sethe tribes jostle each other in their anxiety to be caught and eaten; when baited lines were thrown overboard while the vessel was at rest, hauls were rapidly made, of which cooked specimens duly made their appearance in the saloon.

The reverend minister of Barra, writing in 1840, tells us that the great majority of the inhabitants were Roman Catholics; and the same thing is said by the incumbent of South Uist respecting his parishioners; but as we go northwards, Protestantism gains as remarkable an ascendancy. This diversified religious condition of the Western Isles is exceedingly curious. It is historical. From the possessions of certain chiefs, the Reformation was somehow excluded, and three centuries have failed to make any great change in this respect. Not only in style of living, but in religious sentiment, people are here seen much as their predecessors were immediately after Columba, in the sixth century, propagated a knowledge of Christianity in these insular Caledonian regions. Any one having a fancy to see what Scotland generally was like a thousand years ago, may go to Barra—that is to

say, if he can manage to get to it. The extreme difficulty of visiting this and other outlying islands must have acted detrimentally on their interests. The mere trouble of getting from island to island across narrow sounds is annoying. Through these channels, the tides run with a violence that no ordinary boat can withstand. At low water, a number of the channels are dry, and at such times they become excellent fords for traffic by carts or otherwise, on which account the exact state of the tides is a matter of vital solicitude to the islanders. To wish a wayfarer 'a pleasant forl' is something more than an idle compliment; for if he misses the nick of time to make his passage, a delay of twelve hours in his journey may chance to be his fate. From perhaps this as well as other causes, post-letters take a desperately long time to make their way through this part of the Western Isles, which, but for the touching of one of Hutcheson's Glasgow steamers once a fortnight at Lochmaddy, would still be deprived of nearly all regular means of communication for goods or passengers.

Lochmaddy was to us a desirable haven, for the weather was hourly growing worse, and all were glad when, within the shelter of the bay, two anchors were dropped, to keep all secure till morning. As could be seen through our glasses, there was no town on the shore; only two or three buildings with slated roofs, one of which was said to be the house of the sheriff-substitute; and this resident magistrate, by way of compliment to the Commissioners, politely hoisted his flag as we next morning departed on our assigned course. This day, Saturday, August 4th, weather continues cold and boisterous; few keep the deck, but all, with two exceptions, of whom I am one, are able to go off in the boat to visit two light-houses. The last of these establishments was on the point of land on turning into Stornoway Bay; and getting this piece of duty over, the vessel was at its anchorage just in time to allow of dinner being served with some degree of comfort.

Stornoway, I should say, is a good place for finishing off a week's cruise. It offers a fair choice of churches for Sunday, and in this respect it was fully taken advantage of by our party, as well as by the ship's officers, for the weather had temporarily calmed, the sun shone, and a walk on dry land was a luxury which no one could despise. Built in a semicircle at the inner end of the bay, Stornoway appeared to be a rudimentary kind of Oban; but in place of the high, picturesque background of that pretty West Highland town, we have, as the only object of interest, the castellated mansion of Sir James Matheson, the munificent improver of the Lewis, and of this seaport in particular. Between ten and eleven o'clock, two boatfuls are set on shore at the slip of quay, and all make off for their respective places of public worship. About an hour too early for the one I am bound for, there is time to look about, and see what is going on. Shops all decently shut, and men and women pouring in streams from different quarters towards a central point, to which they are lugging along chairs or stools as seats for an open-air preaching. Dropping into the concourse, I am led to a grassy field with environing walls, having a wide gateway, at each side of which stands a man gathering halfpence in a dinner-plate. A tent is placed at one end of the area for the preacher, and stretching half-way across the enclosure is a table decorously covered for

dispensing the communion. The scene, with its great crowd of worshippers, was solemn, and more than usually interesting; but as the service was in Gaelic, I listened without edification, and did not remain longer than was necessary to satisfy a reasonable curiosity.

I saw little more of Stornoway. On returning to the ship after attending church, the effects of the last two or three chilly days, and perhaps some over-fatigue, rendered it advisable that I should betake myself to bed; and greatly to my regret, I was robbed of the opportunity of enjoying the kindly proffered hospitality of Stornoway Castle, and learning something coherent of those physical and social improvements on the Lewis which have far and wide spread the renown of Sir James Matheson. Well pleased I should have been had my brother Commissioners seen the desirableness of staying at Stornoway over Monday; but it was resolved otherwise, and in the face of a gale which rendered a visit to the light-house at the Butt of Lewis altogether impracticable, the *Pharos*, as if determined to get into a mischief, was again on its travels. To all appearance, the storm had been reserving itself till we got fairly outside, and then what an uproar of winds and waves! Nothing for it but to give up, *instantly*, the northerly direction to the Butt, and fly eastward across the Minch to some quiet bay on the coast of Sutherlandshire. Bad as things were, no one had the least fear of the *Pharos* coming to any disaster, for, strongly built, and broad in the beam, it swept on its course in gallant style, and about mid-day took us all safely into Lochinchard. Having properly punished our audacity, the weather, as if by magic, suddenly changed to the brightness of a tranquil summer day. Party go on shore to fish in a small river in the neighbourhood—two of the sheriffs, great in the angling art, bring back a grise and salmon-trout—I am again on my legs, and able to assist at dinner, at which there is not a little merriment over the day's adventures. A degree of novelty at table was the presence of a country doctor, whom the angling party had discovered on his journey to some distant scene of professional duty. This young gentleman let us have an idea of what was a Highland doctor's course of life. His range of practice was over sixty miles in different directions. Sometimes he was on horseback two days at a time, bivouacking at farmhouses and shielings by the way; and no sooner did he get home after these excursions, than he had to be off somewhere else. The narration of these circumstances reminded me of a saying of Mungo Park, that his toil and distraction during his first travels in Africa were nothing in comparison to what he endured in the ill-requited practice of a Scottish country surgeon.

A light-house keeper with his family from Pladda, had made his way as far as Stornoway, *en route* for Cape Wrath. Received on board the *Pharos*, he was landed with his wife, bairns, and boxes at Lochinchard, whence he was directed to proceed by a cart to the place of his destination. To the general surprise, the whole boat-load were brought back to the vessel. The people at the inn had a cart, which was at the man's service; but the only two horses in the establishment were lame, which was as bad as having no cart at all. Family once more stowed away somewhere on board till next morning, when, if storm do not reappear, they are to be taken on to Cape Wrath.

Fortunately, next morning the weather had taken itself up; by an early start, we were off the Cape by seven o'clock, and saw before us that grand sweep of rugged precipices which constitute the north-western extremity of the island of Great Britain. Here the knocked-about light-house keeper was landed, and installed at his post by the Commissioners; they bringing back with them a keeper who had been promoted to Skerryvore. So adroit are the arrangements of the service, that the ingoing of one family and the outgoing of another scarcely occupied an hour. An object of special care on the part of this new family, whom we were taking with us as far as Portree, was a hen with a brood of infantile chickens under her wings, the whole very nicely accommodated in a basket, and which, unconscious of the change, are now doubtless picking their way comfortably about at Hynish.

At Cape Wrath, the captain had his suspicions as to the weather. Things did not look well in the north-west; and when returning southward along the coast of the mainland, the storm resumed its fury. Driving onward before the misty blast, any attempt to land on the island of Rona, to inspect the light-house, was deemed hopeless; and the vessel did not stop in its course till it arrived in the evening at Portree, in Skye. Next day, the voyage was greatly more pleasant through the sinuous channel of Kyleakin—a name ever commemorative of Haco of Norway and his maritime exploits; after visiting the light-house at that picturesque strait, also one at Isle Oronsay, and another on the bold promontory of Ardnamurchan, night saw us back to our old anchorage at Tobermory.

I have little more to tell. Had I set myself to write a book, instead of a few off-hand sketches, how easy—and perhaps how agreeable—it would have been to scatter in a variety of statistical details and conversational anecdotes, along with a seasoning of territorial and family history! What could not one say about that marvellous change of ownership in the Highlands—the transference of vast estates from the Mackenzies, Mackays, Macleans, Macdonnells, and a dozen other Macs, with a few Campbells to boot, all high chiefs in their day, to the Mathesons, Baillics, Ellises, Bairs, Dalgleishes, Ramsays, and so on. And what strange tales about rise of rental in the hands of these men of the modern world! How could we also expatiate on the character of the natives on mainland and island; describing with what patience and good-behaviour these poor people have suffered vicissitudes such as few are well acquainted with. And then, how the pen would dilate on the wisdom of their un murmuring submission to lawful authority—how by such propriety of demeanour they have in reality conquered and absorbed the Sassenach, allured him to abide in their wild glens, made him a grateful landlord, furnished him with a following of gillies, put him in kilts, and actually taught him to be fond of the bagpipe, and to dance the Highland fling!

All that and much more must be left to some one with a little more time on his hand than I just now happen to have at my disposal. After visiting the light-house on the point of land near Tobermory, Thursday the last day of our trip was devoted to the light-houses of Lismore and Coran Ferry on Linnhe Loch, familiar to all tourists to Glencoe and the Caledonian Canal. At Oban, on

the morning of Friday the 10th of August, proceedings were brought to a close; and respectfully conveyed by boats to the quay, the Northern Commissioners dispersed on their respective routes homeward. So ends my Holiday.

BROUGHT TO LIGHT.

CHAPTER XXVII.—JOHN ENGLISH TELLS THE STORY OF HIS LIFE.

'ONCE upon a time,' began John, 'there was a young man who knew neither his name nor his age, nor where he was born.—But I had better drop the story-telling style, and say what I have got to say in my own fashion.—My earliest recollections, which are very faint, and very vague, carry me back, as in a dream, to a stately and beautiful home, where everybody is kind to me. I seem to see myself, a very wee fellow indeed, richly dressed, cantering on a pony down a long avenue of trees; and then I am inside a magnificent room, and a lady in rustling silk is beside me, who speaks to me in a soft silvery voice. I fancy she is trying to persuade me to take some physic; but I don't like her, in spite of her honeyed words; and then, all at once, I am in a dreadful room with barred windows, and great wooden, high-backed chairs, and a huge, funeral-looking bed, to which a faint odour of dead people seems to cling—a bed that becomes absolutely horrible as the afternoon deepens. Something whispers to me that behind that shroud-like drapery a skeleton is hidden, which will put forth its bony hand in the middle of the night, and clutch me by the hair; and the conviction at length works so powerfully upon me, that I rush to the door, and shriek aloud to be let out; but nobody heeds me, and I fancy that I go off into some kind of a fit, and am ill for many days afterwards.

'Next I am on the sea, and still ill, but in a different way, and am waited upon off and on by a lame ugly man and his shrewish-looking wife, who call themselves my uncle and aunt; but I repudiate the relationship in a childish, obstinate way that makes the lame man snarl and growl, and threaten with an oath to fling me overboard. We seem to be a long time on that dreary sea; but we land at last on a bustling wharf, where I feel more insignificant and miserable than before. Next come scenes, like portions of a moving panorama, in a strange country, as we move slowly forward to our new home, which is in a wretched little American country town. I will not inflict upon you any detail of the miserable life led by me during the next five or six years. The man with whom I lived, and whose name was Jeremiah Kreefe, was a surgeon by profession, and might no doubt have done well had he not been such a drunken, dissolute fellow. Me he ever seemed to hate, and his treatment of me corresponded with the intensity of his dislike. In his drunken fits, he made a point of thrashing me ferociously, with or without provocation, till, after a time, I grew too wary for him, and kept out of his reach till he was sober again. But even that did not always save me. That I was headstrong and obstinate, and had a wilful temper of my own, I do not doubt; but in any case, I cannot think that I deserved such cruel treatment at his hands. I have a grateful recollection of his wife having saved me from his clutches on two or three occasions; ordinarily, she was a coarse, sharp-

tempered woman enough, with a hand that seemed ever ready to give me a sly box on the ears. After a time, I was sent to school; and there another cane was at work, beating knowledge into me perforce, and a very painful process I found it to be.

'The hatred of Jeremiah Kreefe seemed to deepen as I grew older; indeed, the feeling was a mutual one. Sometimes, when he was in his cups, and so far gone as to be incapable of pursuit, I would take my revenge by jeering at him, and calling him names, and setting him at defiance generally. He would snarl and foam at the mouth like a caged hyena, and fling anything at my head that came readiest to his hand; while I performed a sort of impish war-dance round him, and snapped my fingers contemptuously in his face. Had I gone within reach of his muscular arm at such a time, I feel sure that he would have killed me outright. What seemed to annoy him more than anything else when he was sober was my stubborn refusal to address him as my "uncle." Nothing that he said or did could induce me to do this. I defied alike his threats and his promises: I did more than that—I told it up and down the little town that he was not my uncle; and when people asked me who my parents were, I said I didn't know, but that Dr Kreefe knew, and they had better ask him. And I believe—but how I came to know it, I cannot tell—that the minister and one or two other gentlemen did ask him certain questions, which he found it rather difficult to answer; and I think it likely that the devilish scheme which his evil brain presently hatched resulted from his alarm at being thus cross-questioned.

'Early one bitterly cold morning—as nearly as I can tell, I was about nine years old at the time—Kreefe rode up to the door, mounted on a strong gray horse; and I was told that he was going a long journey, and that I was to accompany him. He seized me roughly by the shoulder, and swung me up behind him, and passed a strong strap round both our waists, and told me to hold tight, if I didn't want to slip off and be smashed. Thus, at break of day, we rode together through the sleepy little town; and Kreefe's wife, standing in the doorway, looked after us with a white, frightened face. Once on the hard, rough, country roads, we rode more quickly—rode all through the short winter-day, stopping now and then for refreshments, or to bait our horse, and then forward again; till, as night came on, we left the last squatter's clearing behind us—as in a dream, I heard some one tell Kreefe this—and so came out on to a great rolling prairie, lighted up by the rays of the full moon. I had grown terribly weary long before this, and had fallen into a sort of half-sleep, without losing all consciousness of where I was, and was only saved from falling by the belt round my waist. A more angry jerk than usual roused me up occasionally, and it was at one of these times that I caught my first glimpse of the prairie. But I was too far gone to heed even that, and was soon lost in dreamland again. I have a sort of half-consciousness of hearing a number of strange voices, and of being lifted off the horse, and laid down on something soft near a huge fire; but I have no distinct recollection of anything more till I awoke some time the following morning, to find myself surrounded by strange faces, and to be told that I should never see my tyrant again.

'And I never did see Kreefe again—a loss which did not grieve me. I found myself a member of a squatter's family that was moving westward, to occupy a choice tract of land which had been won by one of the sons in a raffle. The father, the chief of this strange brood, was a rude, rough-and-tumble old fellow; by no means bad-hearted, in his own peculiar way, who had lived all his life on the outskirts of civilisation, and who was equally ready for a tussle with a grisly bear or a skirmish with the Indians. The sons were true chips of the old block—free, rollicking young giants while they were among friends, but merciless and cruel as death when their darker passions were roused. The mother was dead; two unmarried daughters, and the wife of the eldest son, comprised the fairer portion of the family—rough, ignorant, kind-hearted, passionate souls, who did their best to spoil the parentless lad thrown so strangely among them. I think there can be no doubt that Kreefe bribed the old squatter to take me with him into the wilderness, and so lose sight of an eyesore and danger for ever, and weaken still further the last frail thread which bound me in memory to a former happy life beyond the sea. The surgeon's name was never mentioned among us; I was quite willing to forget him; and the squatter had probably his own reasons for silence on the matter.

'Among this wild brood I lived, in everything like one of themselves, till I was eighteen years old. I learned how to use the axe, and clear the forest; how to ride, shoot, swim, and hunt; how to track my way across wilderness and prairie by signs known only to the red man and the hunter; and I grew up as tall, as strong, and almost as much a savage as the young giants, my foster-brothers. I lived a contented, careless, day-to-day sort of life; happy in the present, and indifferent alike to the future and the past—not that the past was forgotten, for my memory was tenacious, and carried with it many recollections of my earlier life; but I looked back upon that time with very languid interest, as though it had belonged to quite a different person from myself.

'In one respect, and in one only, was I treated in any way differently from the rest of the family. Twice every year, in the spring and the fall, the old man, accompanied by two of his three sons, all dressed in their gayest apparel, and riding their best horses, would set out for the nearest town, there to make certain indispensable household purchases; but I was never allowed to be of the party on such occasions. I think if the old man had taken me with him only once, I should have come back quite contented; but he would not do so, and I determined to outwit him the first opportunity. A chance offered itself at last. The old man was laid up with sickness, for the first time in his life, at the same time that the eldest son was confined to his house through an accident; and as the visit to the town could be no longer delayed, it was decided that the two youngest lads should go alone. Half an hour after their departure, I quietly saddled a horse, and started after them. I overtook them a few miles away, and we rode on gaily together, laughing to think how riled "Dad" would be when he heard of my escapade.

'While wandering about the town, all eyes and ears, I accidentally heard that the commandant of a government exploring expedition, who had halted there for a day with his camp, was in

want of a few good hunters to accompany him across the prairies. Here was an opening that suited well with my budding ambition, and thirst for a wider range of experience than would ever be mine while I stayed with the old squatter. I went, on the spur of the moment, and volunteered my services, and was at once accepted. I bade farewell to my foster-brothers, sent a kindly message to the old folk at home, and set out next morning with my new comrades, as blithe and bold as the best of them. Then followed two years of wild adventure, of which it is not needful that I should speak further at present; and then came a great change. One day, while wandering about at some distance from the camp in quest of game, I thought I heard the growling of a bear; and parting the brushwood cautiously, I advanced in the direction of the sound. The growls became louder and more menacing, and a few yards brought me to a small opening among the trees, in the centre of which a man in a hunter's dress was endeavouring to keep a huge bear at bay with the butt-end of his gun; but before I could interfere in any way, the monster, with a stroke of its paw, sent the gun spinning through the air, and next moment rushed open-mouthed on its assailant. That minute was the last of its life.

'The stranger whom I had so providentially rescued proved to be a wealthy English gentleman named Felix, who was travelling for pleasure, and from an innate love of adventure. He had been visiting among some tribes of friendly Indians, and his little encampment was only a mile or two away. Mr Felix was more than ordinarily grateful for the service I had done him. He took a great liking to me; and a few days later, he visited the commandant of the expedition, and, by means best known to himself, obtained my release, and carried me away with him; and from that day till he died I never left him. The squatter's name was Yarnold, and I had been known as Jack Yarnold; but when Mr Felix heard my history, he said: "You are no Yankee, but a genuine son of the old country; and till we find out your real name, you shall be called John English;" and that is how I came by the name I still bear. Even after so long a time, I had not quite forgotten the scraps of knowledge which had been flogged into me when a lad at school; I could still read and write, though those processes were both difficult and painful. But now that the opportunity was offered me, I set to work with all the energy of which I was capable to remedy the neglect of years, and to fill up the gap which lay between myself and men of even ordinary education, of the presence of which I became painfully conscious from the moment we left the wilderness behind us, and came into the busy haunts of men. A few months later, we sailed for Europe. We spent a winter in Italy, and then went to France. A year in Paris sufficed to give me a tolerable acquaintance with the French language. It was the intention of Mr Felix to have gone thence to London; but a pulmonary complaint, to which he had been more or less subject since his youth, set in with increased violence, and he was ordered back to Italy without delay; but it was too late, and six months after that, my kind patron was no more. His death was the greatest loss my life has ever known. I was not forgotten in his will.

'Mr Felix and I, among other things, had dabbled as amateurs in photography; and when, after his death, I cast about for some means of

earning a living, I determined to adopt seriously as my profession what I had hitherto followed merely for pleasure. I obtained an introduction to a well-known Parisian firm, and the examples of work which I submitted for their inspection were considered so satisfactory that an engagement was at once offered me; and the following two years were spent by me chiefly in Rome and Florence, photographing the most celebrated architectural features of both cities. At the end of that time, I accepted a more lucrative engagement for a London house, which brought me to this country for the first time since I was taken away as a child: and here I am.'

The little cuckoo-clock in the corner struck five as John English ceased speaking. Jane Garrod, with her apron thrown over her head, sat gazing silently into the glowing embers. It was quite dark outside by this time, but the room itself was filled with a sort of ruddy gloaming from the decaying fire—a warm colouring that brought into strong relief the pale handsome face of the wounded man, and the worn, sharply-cut features of the station-master's wife. John, looking out into the darkness, saw the express-train, with its blood-red, Cyclopean eye, burst suddenly out of the tunnel; and watched it as it came swiftly on, breathing flame and smoke, and marking its progress with free largess of fiery cinders. Its wild defiant shriek seemed to break up Jane's reverie.

'You have not told me all,' she said, turning on John abruptly.

'What have I left unsaid?'

'You have not told me anything that has happened to you since you came to Normanford. You have not told me how it is that you know Miss Spencelaugh so well; nor why an active, busy, young gentleman like you has lingered so long in such a little out-of-the-way spot as this.'

'I will tell you everything,' said John. So he began and told her all that had happened to him since his arrival in Monkshire—all save his love for Frederica; but there was no need for him to speak of that; it was a story known to Jane Garrod without the telling. He told her of his recognition of the portrait of Jeremiah Kreefe, and of Mrs Winch's strange behaviour; he told her of the note intended for Lady Spencelaugh, sent to Cliff Cottage in mistake, and of his sudden dismissal from Belair the day following the landlady's return home; he told her all that he had gathered from Mr Edwin, and of Mrs Winch's prevarication under his cross-questioning. 'And now that you know everything,' he finished by saying, 'you, in your turn, must tell me why you were so startled by seeing me that night at the station. I have waited patiently to learn this for what has seemed to me a very long time. I can wait no longer.'

'I was startled by the strong likeness I saw in you to some person whom I knew many, many years ago,' said Jane.

'Now that you know me better, do you still see that likeness as strongly as ever?'

'I do—I do.'

'Who was that person whom I resemble so strongly?'

Jane Garrod did not speak, but burst into tears, and fell on her knees by the side of John, and kissed his hand, and called him 'her darling, her own dear boy.'

Amazed, and almost ready to think that she had gone crazed, John stood up, and taking Jane gently

by the arms, raised her from the ground. Her straining eyes scanned his features eagerly. 'That face, and the mark on his arm,' she muttered, 'were enough to tell me who he was, without anything more.'

'Who am I, then?' asked John breathlessly. 'You kill me by keeping me in this suspense!'

'You are,' she said—and then she stopped, for just at that moment she heard her husband's beg-pardon cough, and heavy footstep on the gravel outside. John seized her by the gown. 'In Heaven's name, speak! Who am I?' he said. She turned, and putting her head close to his, whispered a sentence in his ear which sent all the blood to his heart, and left him for a short time without power either to speak or move. Next minute, Abel Garrod, stalwart, ruddy, entered the room, bringing with him a waft of keen wintry air, and the dying fire leaped up for an instant, as if to welcome him.

CHAPTER XXVIII.—AT PEVSEY BAY.

Jane Garrod went up to Belair the day after that on which John English had told her the story of his life; she went up specially to see Miss Spencelaugh; but on reaching the Hall, she found that Frederica had been summoned away by telegraph a few hours before, to visit an old school-friend who was lying dangerously ill; and as Sir Philip was so far recovered that no immediate danger was apprehended, she had obeyed the summons without delay. Jane Garrod went back home intensely disappointed.

Three days later, John's doctor said: 'We are getting on nicely, but slowly. We want change of air; a more bracing climate. We want ozone. We must go to the sea-side for a few weeks. Say to Pevsey Bay. Only twenty miles away. Warm, but invigorating. I will give you a prescription to take with you, and will run over to see you once a week, for the present.'

So John English went to Pevsey Bay, and took up his quarters at Hammock's Boarding-house, where Jane Garrod had engaged rooms for him. Jane herself, after staying with him for a couple of days, and seeing that his comforts were properly attended to, was obliged to leave him, and go back to her home-duties; but made a point of going over by rail twice a week to see how he was progressing. Both by her and John, Miss Spencelaugh's return was impatiently awaited.

Pevsey Bay, even during the height of its little 'season,' was not a very lively place; but as it generally contrived to feather its nest pretty comfortably during the summer and autumn, it was wisely content to hibernate through the cold dead months that came after. John was literally the only visitor in the little place, and it was only natural that Mrs Hammock should waken up gleefully from her state of wintry emptiness to welcome this stray bird of passage, and exert herself to retain him in a way that she would have scorned to do during the busy season, when she and Hammock were obliged to sleep in a damp pantry, so overcrowded were they with visitors; and their eldest boy had to be stowed away on a snug shelf in the coal-cellar.

But it mattered nothing to John English whether Pevsey Bay were lively or dull; he had enough to occupy his mind just then in brooding over Jane Garrod's strange revelation. Jane and he had many

conversations together on the all-important topic, after that memorable afternoon on which the station-master's wife had whispered a certain brief sentence in his ear. The incomplete story of each—for Jane also had a story to tell, which we shall hear in its proper place—when added one to the other, formed a whole, which yet had several serious gaps in it; but now that the story, so strangely pieced together, came to be analysed and commented upon again and again, little bits, previously unthought of or forgotten, were added one by one; each one tending to elucidate some point that had seemed obscure before, or to bring into stronger relief some fact hitherto only partially known. Still, they both decided that no active steps could be taken till Miss Spencelaugh should return home; the interests involved were so many and so serious, and the baronet's health was so feeble, that the heiress of Belair naturally came into their minds as the one who must be first consulted; besides which, there was a family secret in the case, which it would not do to reveal to strangers until further counsel should have been sought and given.

John gathered strength daily; but with returning health came a desire to be up and doing; the state of inaction to which he was condemned galled his ardent spirit like a chain. He could not bend his mind just yet to reading or study; and to beguile some of the hours that flagged so wearily in the stagnation of the little town, he drew up a *précis* or abstract of his case, for the information of Miss Spencelaugh; beginning with the earliest facts of his personal history that were either remembered by himself or had been made known to him by others, and so setting down one fact after another, in order of time, till he had brought his statement up almost to the date of his writing. He re-wrote and remodelled his first rough draft four times before he was satisfied with his work; and next time Jane visited him, the important document was placed in her hands for delivery to Frederica, so soon as the latter should return. The next wet day sent John to his desk again. Nearly a week had passed since he had finished his statement, and in reading over his copy of it this morning, it struck him, after so long an absence, with an air of strangeness, and he saw far more clearly than he had ever done before, how weak his case was, in a legal point of view; how many important links were still wanting to it; and how easily, for want of such links, any clever practitioner would tear it to rags in a court of law. Considering these things seriously, John English came to a sudden resolution—he had always been impulsive and headstrong—which he determined to put into practice without further delay.

Later on, the same day, he walked up to the station, to make some inquiries respecting the trains. He was just leaving the office, when the bell rung for the arrival of the down express, and—with the indolent curiosity of a convalescent who has no better employment for his time than that of looker-on—he lingered to watch it. Now, Pevsey Bay is a junction-station, and passengers for Normanford, Kingthorpe, and other neighbouring hamlets, have here to change carriages, and not unfrequently to play at patience for an odd hour or two, pending the arrival of the branch-train. Among the passengers who alighted at Pevsey Bay Station, on this particular afternoon, was one whom John English's keen glance at once

singled out from the crowd, and from that moment he had eyes for none other.

'It is the lady of my dreams!' he murmured to himself. 'What happy chance has brought her hither?'

His heart beat so painfully for a minute or two that he could not move; and before he was able to stir a step, Frederica's gaze, drawn by Love's cunning magnetism, was fixed on his white intense face and hungry eyes—rested there an instant with a sort of doubting, pained surprise, only to melt next moment into a look of glad recognition. They both blushed as they drew near each other, but for a little while neither of them could speak, for Frederica's eyes were full of tears by this time; and John, after the fashion of little boys when they go into strange company, seemed suddenly to have lost his tongue. But their hands met in a long silent pressure, that told more than many words could have done.

'Why don't you offer me your arm, sir?' said Frederica with an April smile. 'For I mean to monopolise you till the next train comes up. Can't you guess why? I want to hear all about your strange adventure on Inchmallow, and about the recent attempt on your life. Merely a woman's odious curiosity—nothing more.'

'But you are getting better—I can see that,' said Frederica, when John had done what he could to satisfy her curiosity; 'and I hope to see you soon at Belair. I got the portfolio of photographs you so kindly sent me; and I have more commissions for you than I can remember just now, so you must make haste and get well, or I shall have to give them to some one else. Does not my threat frighten you?'

John declared that he was not in the least frightened; and then he added that he should have much pleasure in waiting on Miss Spence-laugh so soon as his health should be sufficiently restored to enable him to attend to business; but he said nothing about the resolution he had arrived at only that morning, neither did he make any mention of the manuscript which he had intrusted into Jane Garrod's hands for delivery to Miss Spence-laugh. After that, the conversation seemed to languish a little, but I don't think that either of them felt inclined on that account to say to the other, 'How dull you are;' for Cupid is never more dangerous, never more bent on tying a true-lovers' knot, than no mortal fingers can unloose, than when he has least to say for himself.

By and by came Frederica's train; farewells were spoken; and John English walked back to his lodgings more confirmed than before to carry out his morning's resolution.

Hammock's Boarding-house was managed by Mrs Hammock, who, in common with others of her tribe at Pevsey Bay, would have contrived to do very comfortably at the expense of the migratory horde who flocked thither during the 'season,' had not her laudable efforts been utterly frustrated by an idle, incorrigible dog of a husband, who demanded to be kept 'like a gentleman' out of the proceeds of the establishment. Mr Ferdinand C. Hammock—tall, sandy, with high cheek-bones, a ragged moustache, and a quasi-military swagger, the son of a bankrupt riding-school master—neither could nor would work; he never had worked, and it was not likely that, at his time of life, he was going to degrade himself by doing anything towards earning his

own living. So Mrs H. struggled, and slaved, and scraped at home, while my lord swaggered about the little place as though he were the sole proprietor of it; and had good clothes and good dinners; and looked down contemptuously on his wife's lodgers, and on his wife too, if the truth must be told; and was never without a crown-piece in his pocket wherewith to make merry of an evening at the *Golden Anchor*. But this pleasant state of affairs had consequences, one of which was that the rent had perforce been allowed to fall into arrears, so that three half-years were due at the time John English took up his quarters in the establishment. Mr Dilwood, the landlord, was a forbearing man; but patience has its limits, and of late he had been pressing Mrs Hammock rather hardly to clear off some portion at least of what was owing. But that hard-working person's little hoard had melted through the fingers of her improvident husband till but very few golden pieces were left, hardly sufficient, in fact, to meet the small, unavoidable expenses arising from day to day during the months that yet remained before the first summer visitor would make his appearance. As for paying the rent—the prospect was an utterly hopeless one; and Mrs Hammock had finally been obliged to intimate to her husband that it was Mr Dilwood's intention to put a man in possession, and that bankruptcy stared them in the face. So Hammock went moodily about the little town, brooding over the dark prospect before him, and pulling his ragged moustache more than ever, and only brightening up into a forced merriment when he found himself among a knot of congenial souls in the bar-parlour of the *Golden Anchor*.

John English's departure from the little station-house at Kingsthorpe had been witnessed by unseen eyes; and twenty-four hours had not passed after his arrival at Pevsey Bay, before Brackenridge, under the friendly shade of evening, was quietly reconnoitring the new territory. A few cautious inquiries at shops in the immediate neighbourhood of Hammock's, followed his survey of the premises, and then he went home by the last train in high spirits.

One consequence of the chemist's visit to the little watering-place took the shape of a lawyer's letter, received by Mrs Hammock the following day, in which she was told that unless twelve out of the eighteen months' rent due should be paid within three weeks, further proceedings would at once be taken. The secret of this was that Mr Dilwood was an old acquaintance of Brackenridge, and under some small obligation to him, and a word from the chemist was sufficient to induce him to 'put on the screw,' as the latter termed it, in the form of an attorney's letter. Next day, at dusk, Brackenridge strolled into the little watering-place; and later on, when the usual circle met at the *Golden Anchor*, there he was, an affable stranger, ready to stand treat for anybody, and greatly interested in all the news of the place. He seemed to take quite a liking to the raffish, shabby-genteel Hammock; and after a time, when the company had thinned somewhat, he contrived to seat himself next to him. Hammock's moodiness had melted by this time before the genial influence of the compounds purveyed at the *Golden Anchor*, and the chemist found him quite ready to drink any quantity of brandy-and-water at any one else's expense, and to declaim loquaciously on everything connected with

Pevsey Bay, his own private affairs excepted. But it was to his own private affairs that the chemist wished to bring him; seeing, therefore, how he shied at the subject whenever it was introduced, even in the most delicate way, Brackenridge decided that a rougher method of treatment must at once be brought to bear; so, at the close of the evening, they went out together, arm-in-arm, and, smoking their cigars, wandered down to the jetty to have a last whiff together before parting. Now was Brackenridge's opportunity. 'Rather dull here in winter, eh?' said the chemist.

'Awfully slow work,' said Hammock sententially.

'Let me see. I think I have been told that you keep a boarding-house, or something of that kind. Is it so?'

'Why—yes—that house on the Parade there. My wife manages the business. One must live, you know, eh?'

'Just so; as well make a living that way as any other. Rents rather high in these parts, I suppose?'

'Why—hum—yes, rather high for houses in good positions.'

'Ah, well, the profits you make during the season will easily stand it. Come, now, you contrive to net something handsome every year, don't you?'

'People don't do that sort of thing for nothing; it ain't likely. But really, we are getting to talk about matters that'—

'Then, if the profits are so large,' said the chemist, interrupting his new friend, 'how does it happen, Mr Hammock, that you are eighteen months in arrear with your rent?'

Hammock's cigar dropped from between his lips, and he fell back a step or two in sheer amazement.

'How the devil'—he began, and then he stopped.

'Mr Dilwood is a friend of mine,' said Brackenridge quietly; 'he mentioned to me the other day, as a matter of business, that he was about to sell you up, and that he had already got another tenant in view of your house. Such little accidents will happen now and then, you know.'

Hammock was wiping his hot palms nervously with his handkerchief. The idea of his approximate ruin had never been brought so vividly before him, and his craven heart shuddered at the prospect. He at length broke the silence with a volley of frightful oaths, to which the chemist listened with exemplary patience. When he had done, Brackenridge said quietly: 'A bad mess, certainly, for any fellow to be in. But there seems to me one way by which you may squeeze out of it.'

'Curse you! what are you driving at?' said the other sullenly.

'Listen to me attentively,' resumed the chemist. 'There is a gentleman staying at your house just now, Mr John English by name;' and then he took Hammock by the button, and drew him closer, and whispered earnestly in his ear for ten minutes, at the end of which time the two men walked back arm-in-arm towards the town. At the corner of the Parade, they stopped to bid each other good-night. 'Now, you thoroughly understand what I want?' said the chemist interrogatively. 'You will send me a daily report of your lodger's doings—how he spends his time, who comes to see him, and where he goes when he walks out; but, above all, you will arrange that all letters written by him shall pass through my hands before being posted.'

'I understand,' said Hammock sulkily. 'The post-office is right at the other end of the town, and my lad Jack always takes Mr English's letters for him. Jack will do anything for a cigar, and never peach after. The young rascal is only eleven, and he has learned to smoke already.'

'Do what I ask you to do,' said Brackenridge, 'and I will engage that Dilwood shall never trouble you again about the back-rent.'

Jane Garrod, on her next visit to Pevsey Bay, was thunderstruck to find that John English had left his lodgings on the previous day, and gone away, no one knew whither. Had he left no letter, no message for her? she anxiously asked. Neither one nor the other. Mr English had written a letter, Jack said, which he, Jack, had taken to the post-office; but it was addressed to some gent in London; and Jack having volunteered this information, turned round and winked to himself, and muttered 'Walker!'—Mr English had paid his bill, and had left by the 2.40 P.M. train, added Hammock, and had booked himself through to London. Beyond that, they knew nothing as to the intentions or movements of their late lodger. Jane, wondering more than ever, and suspecting some treachery, went herself to the station, and there ascertained that Hammock's statement was true. After this, there was nothing left for her but to go back home. Surely John would write in a day or two; and with this scrap of hope she was fain to comfort herself, in the midst of her surprise at his unaccountable disappearance.

TO-MORROW.

We can't recall the vanished past,
Nor on the future reckon;
The light-winged hours, flying past,
Us to embrace them beckon.

No more let Folly shroud thine eyes;
Live while 'tis called To-day;
What if yon setting sun should rise
To warm thy lifeless clay!

Life is not given: 'tis but lent;
And thousands yet would borrow.
For past, for present, time mispent,
A day of grace to-morrow.

Oh, day of hope! oh, day of fear!
Foreboding joy or sorrow;
That comest not, though ever near,
To-morrow! still To-morrow!

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THE DIFFICULT QUESTION.

A DEAL of thought it did give me, to be sure! Took me better than forty year a-thinkin' about, did that 'ere marryin'; the pint never off my mind, I may say, day nor night. That surprise you, do it? Well, now, I'll tell 'ee how 't were. I been allays, ye see, pooty well to do in the world. I no sooner were growed up, than I might 'ave took a wife, if so be I could 'a made my mind up. But then, the kind o' female I'd choose—ah, that were the rub! Sort o' naturally—for I can't never remember the time when I hadn't got so far—I says to myself: 'Now, Jones, whatever you got to do, or whatever you ain't got to do for your fellow-creatures, the holy estate of matrimony you 'rn bound for to enter.' Sort o' naturally, I tell 'ee, I come so far as that in the question; and, though you may think 'tain't no great way over the difficulty, depend upon it, 'tis a deal further than many a man ever do get. Ah, yes; there's many a one, specially them as is well to do in the world, as don't never make up his mind so far as that. Many a man, if he was to set himself to work, like I did, a-thinkin' over the peccoliarities of 'em as you in generally calls the fair sex, why, he'd get so scared, bless you, he'd as lief be blown from the cannon's mouth as he'd entertain the very idea of intrustin' his fate to any of 'em; and I've had that told me as a certain fact over and over again, when I've just been a-givin' a little picter of my 'opes and fears to a select party of friends, over our pipes. I ain't drawin' upon my imagination now; I merely alloods to what I knows to be the standin' sentiments of lots o' fellows—ay, and very good fellows, too—though I allays did consider 'em to blame in not havin' ventilated this subjeck, as it ought to be ventilated within their own minds. And for why didn't they? 'Cause they couldn't stand it? No; they hadn't got the courage!

Many's the time Jem Bounceby says to me: 'You mean to wind up this 'ere conversation, Mr Jones, by tellin' us you're a-lookin' out for a wife; then I say you must be a man of uncom-

mon nerve to hold to that line of march, with such a insight of the female character as you seem to possess.' 'Yes, Jem,' says I, 'that resolution allays has been mine; and mind you, Jem,' says I, 'you got the very same thing to do yourself, whether you got the nerve to look at the subjeck aforehand, or not: whatever is the difficulty, you 'rn bound to conquer't.' For I allays did maintain that a fellow comes into the world a-purpose for to marry, and that ground I do maintain still. Only I held tenacious that, the field bein' so wide, a man's dooty was to look on all sides afore he leaped; still, I never did question as how he'd got, sooner or later, to make that leap. Never. I see my way clear enough so far. No waverin' in me as to what you might call the outside of the question. No. I looks upon unmarried men as sort o' vagabones, a-driftin' up and down the world, nobody know how, nor wherefore; and fellows as 'got no moorin's, ye see, why, they can't be no credit to themselves, nor yet to nobody else. And they has to pay the piper nicely, too; for see the thousands o' things as can't never be done without female 'ands, and unless you comes to terms of the special sort with one of 'em, why, you never gets nothin' but taken in and done for, from the first hours o' your life to the last. Truth is, howsoever, there's so many dangers in choosin' a wife, and so many difficulties in doin' without one, that I believe, in general, a man just shuts his eyes to both sides o' the question, and don't care to count the cost until some day or another he's caught. And once it come to a man being caught, 'tain't no use a-argufying with 'im, this way nor that. Not a bit of it; they're mostly all go ahead under those sarcumstances. Bless your heart! and then 'tis wonderful to see how easy some on 'em is caught! Some by a pooty face, and some by a pooty foot; some by a bit o' money, and some by a bit o' flattery. Says I to myself: Never get caught! you lose your balance that way. Never let your head be so turned by neither the doin's nor yet the belongin's of a female, as that you must become sort o' conscious as how you ain't no longer master o' the sitiuation. Mark my

words: once a fellow knocks under to that extent, he never know what sort of a dance she'll lead him to the rest of his days. Properly speakin', 'tis the female as ought to be caught; and a female of the right sort once fairly caught—well, I've seen 'em slave for their 'usbands, and pinch and screw for 'em, and be better nor another right hand to 'em; so that, indeed, I've thought, in such cases, 'twas she as deserved to be called the better 'alf of the two. But then, thinks I, the perliminary proceedin' is, you got to ask yourself, is this 'ere female the one as is likely to make the best 'alf o' me? And let me tell 'ee, 'tain't the easiest thing in the world to find out the answer to that 'ere question afore you makes up your mind whether you'd wish to catch her fancy, or not. No, indeed. And if so be you happens to take the fancy of ony o' the ladies while you're only just a studyin' their characters, readin' 'em off, like; not 'avin' the point cleared up in your own mind as to whether this partickler one'll suit 'ee, or not: well, sometimes that turns out terrible awkward. I've known many a fellow get into a fix that way. Ah! yes; there's very good fellows in the world, to my certain knowledge, as 'ave been married more nor 'arf against their will. There is females equal to that! Well, says I to myself: Mind I'll 'ave my own way, at all events. No noose shall be slipped over my head whether I likes it, or whether I don't. If I takes the nuptial tie as a hornymint, that's one thing. But no female shall get possession o' my hand, by no artifices, of no sort nor kind. When I thinks proper to bestow it, then all as I can say is, let her be sufficiently proud of it. But 'tis hard lines sometimes. What between not lettin' one o' 'em turn your head, and not lettin' another o' 'em snap up your hand, a man need to look sharp after hisself in the world. So there, I've told 'ee a few o' the things as a man what's a-lookin' out for a wife got to watch not to do.

And now you wants to know what I consider he 'ave got to do in the beginnin' o' the business. Well, whenever I come across a pleasant face, says I to myself, let's see now what sort of a tongue she got—what sort of a temper. And I soon found out there's a many females with pootiest o' faces as won't bear that sort o' investigation. And also there is females as don't shew their tempers off-hand like, but 'll take 'ee a goodish time a-findin' 'em out; the more reason you'll find never to regret havin' took your time. Then, I've also observed there often is a developement in the female temper, as take place, or it don't take place, accordin' to opportunities. They ain't allays born with a temper, no; nor nobody 'ud give 'em credit for 'avin' one, not until they gets the upper hand of a 'usband. Sometimes a female as 'ave been, all her life, drove here and drove there, so that you 'ud think she seem to 'ave been pooty well tamed down, why, bless you, some o' that sort 'll turn out harder than the hardest o' masters. Oh, there's no end o' ways a woman mayn't tease the life out of a man, if so be she got the inclination. Then

I've seen girls as 'ud allays seem so kind and so pleasant to ye; but, bless you, they 'ud be just as cheery and as chatty with a dozen fellows to-morrow, if you was in your coffin. And so I went on, a-seein' things I didn't like in one character, and things I didn't like in another; and really, many a time I says to myself: What a plague I should think it to be married to this 'ere girl, or to that 'ere girl, though I will admit they've got pooty faces. There—it 'ud take me a month to tell 'ee half my studies o' womenkind. Fact was, many a long year I never see one as I cared onythin' about, not in the marryin' way; lots of very good sort o' women I knowed, perwided with 'usbands; but as to the single ones, the more I studied over 'em, the further I were from caring for ony o' 'em. Still, says I, one got to learn what to avoid, as well as what to choose, and of course my luck 'll turn some day.

But now let me tell 'ee, a-studyin' the sex in general, you may take too wide a field, and find it don't pay; whiles, likely enough, a different sort o' observation do answer better in the long-run. You 'aven't got the world to choose from; though one time perhaps you might 'ave thought you 'ad. No: just you bear in mind you only got a few pieces as you can play anyhow; and afore you knows it, maybe your game's up. Well, now, I see your a-gettin' anxious to know, was I never near being captivated? I'm comin' to that presently. I goes on a long time, a-keepin' up my 'opes, and a-keepin' open my eyes (though people might not 'ave thought that I did so); and so, at last—well, there were one as I see, a real nice girl—the first minute I see her I think so, and to the last minute o' my life I allays shall think so—a real nice girl 'twere; well, I keeps my eye upon her a-goin' on for three year. Her never knowed it, bless her! No; I didn't go that way to work; but I watches how she behaves herself, and I reads her off in my own mind day after day; and often I finds myself a-sayin' to myself: 'Yes; she 'll do; a right good un she is.' Well, just as I begin to see my way clear to tell her that much (but yet I hadn't never so much as opened my lips on the subject to her), there comes along a fellow as hadn't knowed her not so many months as I 'd been years a-keepin' my eye upon her, and he were just one o' the sort as does that kind o' thing off so quick. There! I see him make love to her, and her take it all so pooty; and I, just keepin' quiet, to see how the thing 'ud go with her—and if he didn't take and marry her afore my eyes, whiles I couldn't scarcely 'ave believed it! No; her did not jilt me; not a bit of it. Her never knowed that I were a-thinkin' about her—not in the marryin' way. Her allays give me as kind a word as I give her, and her hadn't no right to do no more. I never said nothin' to her about marryin', nor yet courtin', nor she couldn't a guessed as I were fond of her. No; I'll allays justify her—I will. And I do say a nicer girl and a better girl I never wish to see. But 'twere too late when I knowed I 'd never see another I 'd like half so well. So, then, I begins to think what's the use o' plannin' and schemin' about a prize in a lottery. Them as makes the leap with their eyes shut sometimes has just as good-luck as them as spends better than forty year a-thinkin' over it. So, here goes!—Well, many a man haven't done no better for hisself than I 'ave. My wife keeps a tidy hearth, and she is a woman as 'ud sooner save money than spend it. So, ye see,

I've come to my moorin's. And yet sometimes I says to myself: Is this the very thing as I come into the world a purpose for to do?

BALLOONING, AS IT IS HOPED TO BE.

MR HATTON TURNOR has published a volume so bulky, so handsome, so costly, on the subject of *aërostation*, that one marvels where he will find purchasers for it. Mr Mudie certainly will not take a hundred thousand copies of *Astra Castra*; nor do we suppose the members of the new *Aëronautic Society* likely to make a deep impression on the printer's labours. But these are matters which we may leave to the author and the publishers. The book itself, *Experiments and Adventures in the Atmosphere*, is certainly a remarkable one. It is an exhaustive collection of everything that has been done in ballooning—all the successes, all the failures, all the novelties, all the hopes: not digested in such a way as to give it the merit of a history, but rather a series of annals, a chronological arrangement of facts bearing in any way on the subject.

We cannot help calling to mind one series of volumes which has kept alive the subject more continuously perhaps than any other in existence. This is the *Mechanics' Magazine*. Nine years before *Chambers's Journal* and the *Penny Magazine* came into the world, certain literary twins made their appearance—the above-named periodical and the *Mirror*, each giving a small octavo sheet for twopence. The *Mirror* died of exhaustion some years back; the *Mechanics' Magazine* still lives, and has grown majestically both in size and price. In looking over the eighty or ninety half-yearly volumes of this repository of scientific and mechanical odds and ends, we cannot but be struck with the eagerness with which *aëronauts* have poured out their thoughts and speculations into its pages. Starting from the very outset in 1823, a correspondent, S. M., told how we might shield a balloon from the danger of bursting, by a hoop of whalebone. Then E. W. taught how, by having a small balloon with an air-condensing syringe attached to the larger balloon, the *aëronaut* might raise or lower his machine at pleasure. But T. B. and J. F. at once claimed the honour of having previously made such a suggestion, one of them having shewn it 'at the *Two Brewers in Brick Lane*.' Next we were told of a terrible Turk, Selim Ogal, who had made a very large balloon, with which he hoped to reach nearer to the regions of the Prophet than ever Mussulman had attained before. A modern '*Dædalus*' pointed out the peculiar shape of the little parachutes which syngenious plants employ to convey their seeds to a distance; and suggested that *aëronauts* should take a lesson from these humble but beautiful products of the vegetable kingdom. G. proposed a balloon for Parry and Franklin to employ, in wafting them over the obstinate ice-fields which refused a passage to their ships. W. S. told *aëronauts* how they might determine the height to which they had ascended, by letting fall detonating balls, and counting the number of seconds which elapsed before the explosion was heard. Then W. C. shewed by a wood-cut the shape of his proposed flying-machine, a kind of double wind-mill, founded on a theory touching the flying of insects rather than birds. J. B. disputed some of W. C.'s calculations. W. B. taught *aëronauts* how they might increase the safety of their descent by

attaching their grappling-ropes to a ring round the balloon rather than to the car. After this, G. C. A. broached a theory about descending by the aid of a small auxiliary balloon filled with condensed air or gas. S. R. developed an elaborate 'system of flying,' called the *airiner*, with wings, kites, and levers all in their glory; but P. T. W. ridiculed the *airiner*, as a contrivance that could only 'minister to amusement and furnish exercise to the young.' Next came R. B.'s '*Tractable Balloon*;' and J. K.'s '*Flying-machine* moved by steam.' The latter was so liberal in his views, that he offered to sell for fifteen hundred pounds one-fourth of all the benefits that might accrue from his invention—an offer which an ungrateful world did not appreciate. Then we find A. M., who proposed a '*Royal Condor Company*;' and J. W., who sought to gather a lesson in flying from the flight of the carrion crow; and G. G., who having, as he conceived, shewn how to govern a balloon in its ascent and descent, now poured out his wisdom upon modes of steering.

Next there are particulars of the '*European Aëronautic Society*,' founded to establish trips from London to Paris, to Berlin, to Madrid, to anywhere and everywhere; a monstrous machine called the '*Eagle*' was really built, and was really exhibited at Kennington; but instead of being lost in the clouds, it was lost one unfortunate day in the Sheriff's Court. R. M. then proposed a small *Aëronautic Club*, the members of which would take it in turn to have balloon pleasure-trips. T. S. M., after racking his brain about flying-machines, complained how unfeelingly the world treats inventors and men of genius. Next came out the prospectus for an '*Aëronautic Association*, for applying *aërostatics* to the purposes of geographical survey,' to begin with the deserts of Africa; but there were to be four thousand shares of two pounds each, half to be paid on application, and the public somehow forgot to apply. W. B. announced that he had a splendid invention that would solve the problem of flying; but when J. L. asked for an explanation of it, W. B. declined until he could make a profitable market of it. G. C. came forward with a complicated assemblage of cylinders, globes, umbrellas, kites, sails, and fans, wherewith to solve the problem of flying. *Pneumadoipteros* gave mysterious hints of a machine which he would make public as soon as it had returned him a good income; and another inventor, whose apparatus could be 'propelled and guided through the air with as much facility as boats upon the surface of the Thames,' nevertheless deemed it 'not consistent with his personal interests to enter into details at that time.'

All these crotchets we find in one periodical between 1823 and 1838; and this will give the reader a taste of what the twenty-eight subsequent years have produced. Every accident which occurred in ballooning, such as that which befell Mr Cocking in 1837, was followed by a flood of suggestions for new forms of machine or modes of management. And this activity was not less in France than in England. In the former country, where centralised forms of government are familiar to the people, most of the *aërostatic* inventors have bent their anxious eyes towards the centre of power, in order to obtain state patronage.

There certainly is something to say, however little, in favour of the aid to science rendered by ballooning. The art of flying was always a favourite speculation, before anything in the shape of a

balloon was constructed; for, irrespective of the proud pleasure of doing something which no one had done before, there was a vague belief in the mind of each inventor that real usefulness would result from the achievement. Those who raised themselves to a great height by smoke or fire, occupy a place in many a fable. Abaris, Dædalus, the pigeon of Archytas, the oracle of Hierapolis, the British king Bladud, all live in story in connection with such supposed deeds. Roger Bacon declared his belief in a flying-machine, though he knew of no one who had seen one. Van Helmont proved very eloquently, to his own satisfaction, that men could fly. Bishop Wilkins, Baptista Porta, Schott, Cardan, Fabri, all maintained the possibility of flying. The Jesuit, Francis Lana, asserted the same thing, but denounced the attempt on the theological ground, that the Almighty would never allow an invention to succeed by means of which civil government could so easily be disturbed. Kircher, Regiomontanus, and other semi-scientific men, speculated on the same idea. When the Montgolfiers, in 1782, really raised a paper balloon to a great height in the atmosphere by heating and expanding the air within it, the flying theory went into retirement for a time; and Joseph Montgolfier cautiously put forth a hint, that possibly the balloon, in an improved form, 'might be employed for victualling a besieged town, for raising wrecked vessels, perhaps even for voyages, and certainly, in particular cases, for observations of various kinds; for reconnoitring the position of an army, or the course of vessels, at twenty-five or even thirty leagues' distance.' The first men who really left the earth in a balloon, unattached by a rope of any kind to the ground, were M. Pilâtre de Rozier and the Marquis d'Arlandes, in 1783. The subsequent aerial voyages of Montgolfier, Rozier, Robert, Charles, Zambecari, Blanchard, Morveau, Bertrand, Lunardi, Jefferies, Romani, Money, Garnerin, Brioschi, Andreani, and others, familiarised the public with the pleasures and dangers of hydrogen balloons. Gay-Lussac and Biot, in 1804, were the sort of men to make scientific use of their aerial voyages; but the condition of meteorology at the time was scarcely such as to afford them the means. Then followed half a century or so of exhibition-ballooning, venturesome ascents by men (and women), who were paid for their services and dangers by the owners of public gardens and the like; varied by repulsive attempts to make aeronauts of horses and cattle—even 'Europa and the bull.' The British Association has, however, shewn a willingness to encourage reasonable ballooning, provided the aeronauts undertake the collection of meteorological facts when high up in the atmosphere. Mr Green made useful observations of this kind in 1843; Mr Rish made five ascents in 1847 and the two following years, and communicated some useful scientific facts to the Association. Mr Glaisher, by far the most successful aeronaut in the cause of science, now communicates regularly to the journals the results of his many journeys—over twenty in number. Every one of them has been productive of valuable observations relating to atmospheric phenomena, electric and magnetic, hygrometric and thermometric, photometric and actinic. In the Report of the Balloon Committee of the British Association read at Birmingham last autumn, Mr Glaisher narrated what had been effected, with the aid of annual grants from that body, 'to examine the electrical conditions of the air at great heights;

to verify the law of the decrease of temperature as found from summer-day observations, already made, with day observations at other seasons of the year, but principally in the winter and adjacent months; to make, as far as possible, magnetic experiments, spectroscopic observations, and records of facts relating to aerial currents, solar radiation at different heights, and moisture; and, finally, to make arrangements for observations at night.' To carry out this last-named purpose, Mr Glaisher caused two excellent safety-lamps to be made for him, that would give light enough to read off observations without endangering the balloon or its appendages. One night-ascent has been made in this way; and scientific men look forward with much interest to a continuation of them; for we are profoundly ignorant of what is going on in the higher regions of the atmosphere during the night. As the night-ascents are more valuable than the day, so are the winter-ascents than those made in summer—because they are more likely to fill up a scientific gap. The fruitful results are already making themselves apparent. Professor Phillips, in his address at the Birmingham Meeting, said: 'Mr Glaisher and Mr Coxwell, during many balloon-ascents to the zone of life-destroying cold, far above our mountain-tops, have obtained remarkable data, in all seasons of the year, and through a vast range of vertical heights. The result is to shew much more rapid decrease near the earth, much slower decrease at greater elevations,' than had before been theoretically supposed.

Ballooning to aid in war is insisted on by many persons as among the good things to come—if there are any good things in war. During the French Revolution, when the republican forces were engaged against so many continental armies, an aeronautic school was established at Meudon, from which four balloon corps were despatched to four great armies, one to each. At the battle of Fleurus, in 1794, Colonel Couette went up in a balloon to a height of several thousand feet, remained fixed there by a rope, watched the movements of the Austrian army, and gave signals to General Jourdan, which greatly assisted him in the manœuvres of the day. In the great recent struggle in America, Low's balloon staff was attached as part of McClellan's army. On March 27, 1862, Professor Steiner, Captain Burford, and Captain Maynardier, ascended in a balloon outside Charleston, and ascertained that shells had been thrown by the Federals at too great a range to be sufficiently effective against the Confederate batteries. For twenty years past, Mr Coxwell has been endeavouring to indoctrinate military men in the importance of warlike ballooning; and his ascents at Aldershot and Woolwich have not been without some influence in the matter. The ascent need not be to any very great height; at an altitude of 500 feet, the eye takes in a range of twenty miles radius, or forty diameter, if the air be clear.

We are becoming aeronautical in more ways than one. On the 12th of January last, a meeting was held at the Duke of Argyll's residence at Campden Hill, to found an 'Aeronautical Society of Great Britain.' The noble host himself was chosen chairman; his brother-in-law, the Duke of Sutherland, vice-chairman; Lord R. Grosvenor, another vice-chairman; and Mr Glaisher, treasurer. In his address on the occasion, Mr Glaisher said: 'The first appearance of the balloon as a means of

ascending into the upper regions of the atmosphere has been almost within the recollection of men now living; but with the exception of some of the early experiments, it has scarcely occupied the attention of scientific men; nor has the subject of aërostation been properly recognised as a distinct branch of science. The main reason for this may have been that, from the very commencement, balloons have been, with but few exceptions, employed merely for exhibition, or for the purpose of public entertainment. The first wonder having ceased, sundry performances have been resorted to in order to pander to the public taste for the grotesque and the hazardous; which have tended so far to degrade the subject that it has been, till very recently, looked upon with contempt by scientific men in general. Here the Aëronautical Society was fitted to render good service. 'A chief branch of inquiry by the Society would be the department relating to the mechanical expedients and inventions for facilitating aerial navigation, and obtaining or aiding a change of locality at the will of the aeronaut. Nearly all contrivances for this purpose have hitherto failed, or have only been successful to a very limited extent. The chief cause of these failures has been the utter absence of a correct theory of the action of surfaces at different velocities upon elastic and yielding media, and the requirements needed to obtain a power for a lever upon an unstable fulcrum. When we consider that the act of flying is not a vital condition, but purely a mechanical action, and that the animal creation furnishes us with models of every size and form, both simple and compound wings—from the minutest microscopic insect, to the bird that soars for hours above the highest mountain-range—it seems remarkable that no correct demonstration has ever been given of the combined principles upon which flight is performed, or of the absolute force required to maintain that flight. In the absence of an established principle, much time and money have been wasted in attempts to adapt aerial propellers; and it will be the office of the Society to bring forward any information or successful experiment illustrative of a theory.'

And so the Society was established. The Commissioners of Patents have presented copies of all the specifications for patents in aërostation from 1617 to the present time; and application has been made for a room at the South Kensington Museum for receiving the Society's models.

AN OCEAN WAIF.

IN NINE CHAPTERS.—CHAPTER IV.

THERE was a pretty sharp row about that evening's upset, and I believe the captain apologised to Major Horton about it. I don't think the old soldier thought any the less of the captain on account of it, for they kept very good friends; but I never, during the next four days, once saw the ladies on deck alone; while, as for Hicks and his party—well, I have seen a few ill looks pass in my time, but I never did see anything quite to equal some of them as were sent from that party after the gray-bearded old major.

We were a crew of eighteen men—all told—four of 'em being fresh hands, shipped at Sydney; and on the fourth night after the upset, it being our watch, Tom and me leaned over the bulwarks together, talking quite low, for Hicks's party had a

table and chairs close by, and were sitting smoking and drinking.

'Jack,' says Tom to me all at once, for he was a deep, quiet chap, always thinking, and putting this and that together—'Jack,' he says, 'there's something up.'

'All right,' I says; 'what is it?'

'Them four chaps as shipped at Sydney.'

'Well, what about 'em? They're regular swabs, anyhow.'

'They're a bad lot,' says Tom; and then Hicks's party got up, and came sauntering along towards us.

'I watches my chance,' says Tom in the same tone; 'and the next time as he come under, down goes the harpoon, and I hit him slap. He pulled hard enough, but I had him; and arter so much salt tack, a bit of fish is first-rate, if it is only bonito.'

'Eh?' I says, for I couldn't make him out.

'Keep dark,' he says; 'they're a-coming back.'

'You know,' says Tom, going on again, 'all you have to do is to look sharp, and aim straight: any fellow could do it; and if the skipper'll let us, we'll— There,' says Tom, 'they're gone down now, and our watch is up; so let's turn in.'

Only that I knew t'other way, I should have said as Tom had been splicing the mainbrace; and I followed him down, and turned into my hammock close aside his, hardly knowing what to make of him.

'Now, I tell you what,' says Tom, beginning again, 'there's something up, my lad.'

'Well,' I says.

'How came them six passengers to be so thick with Rudd, and Johnson, and Brock, and Perkins?'

'How should I know?' I says. 'Why, what an old mare's-nest hunter you are, mate.'

'I've been reckoning 'em up, Jack, for above a week; and I knows a little more than they think for; and now I just want to get one more knot undone, and then I shall lay it all afore the skipper.—You're asleep, ain't you?'

'No, I ain't,' I says, rousing up, for I had been next door to it.

'Well, I tell you what,' he says, 'they mean that gold—that's what they mean!'

'What, their own?' I says, getting interested; for though I chafed him, I thought a good deal of what Tom Black said.

'No, no,' he says—'the treasure; and I'm blest if I don't think as them three chests o' theirs is all on 'em dummies.—Now, then, what d'yer think o' that, lad?'

I was so took aback for a bit, that I didn't know what to think; so I says: 'What makes you think so?'

'What do they want to be such good friends with them four chaps for, when nobody else is there; and not know 'em when somebody's a looking on?'

I didn't say anything.

'What do they want to know so exactly where the ship is, and to get her place marked on the chart for?'

I didn't answer.

'What do they pretend to know nothing about the sea for, and always call every sheet and bit of tackle by the right name, and have their sea-legs as soon as they come aboard?'

I didn't say nothing.

'I tell you what it is, Jack Cross,' he says, 'it's my belief as there'll be a fight afore long, and p'raps a change o' skippers; and if so, why, the Lord ha' mercy on them two poor gals.'

'Tom,' I says, growing quite husky, 'surely not quite so bad as that.'

'Mate,' he says, 'there's fifty thousand pound worth o' gold in them little boxes, and what some chaps would do for that!'

'What's the matter?' I says in a whisper, for he'd stopped short.

He didn't answer, but leaned over and clapped his hand across my mouth, and of course I lay still as could be, listening.

After a minute, he takes his hand away, and says: 'There's some devilment up, Jack Cross, and I'm hanged, mate, if I don't think it's on to-night.'

He spoke so huskily, too, and seemed so warm, that I could feel my heart go 'thud, thud,' like a pump.

'Why, what's up?' I says.

'Mate,' he says, 'there's two o' them Sydney chaps in the watch as relieved us, and when I stopped you, I know I heard some one a-stealing up the companion-ladder.'

'Phew!' I says very softly. 'What shall we do?'

'Let the captain know,' says Tom.

'If we can,' I says; for something struck me that if it was as he said, we should be stopped.

'Ah! if we can,' he says; and we slipped out quietly, and were both ready in a minute.

'Haden't we better rouse up these chaps?' I said, for there was half-a-dozen down beside us.

'Wait a bit,' says Tom; 'p'raps it's only a hum after all.'

So we stole under the hammocks to the ladder, and as I was first, I crept up, raised my head above the combings, and looked round, but did not see anything particular; so I crawled quietly on to the deck, and waited for Tom. He was aside me in a moment, and we were beginning to feel rather foolish, and to think we had both of us better go down, when, as we knelt close under the shade of the long-boat, we heard a bit of a scuffle aft, and then there was a faint cry, and a heavy plunge in the water, and then another cry, but fainter.

'Hush!' says Tom, grasping my arm; and then several dusky figures ran by us, seemingly barefooted, for you could hear the 'pad, pad' of their feet on the deck, and directly after there was another short scuffly noise—the sound of some one trying to shout with a hand held over his mouth—and then another splash in the water.

'Come on,' says Tom; and I followed him, and we crept along by the bulwark, and then darted down the cabin stairs, stopping a moment to listen, and then we heard them closing the hatch we had come up, and there was the sound of rope being piled on it.

We were at the bottom in an instant, when I was seized by the throat, and a voice growled: 'Who's this? What's the ship's course altered for?'

'Look out, Mr Smith,' hissed Tom: 'mutiny! They'll be here in a moment.'

'Damn nonsense,' roared the old fellow, pushing by us, and running on deck; and as we banged at the captain's and Major Horton's door, we heard a gurgling cry, an oath, and a heavy body fall. Directly after, there was a rush down the stairs;

and as Major Horton's cabin door opened, some one struck me a tremendous blow on the head, and I fell; but was conscious enough to see the major, with a light in one hand and a pistol in the other, send one fellow down; to hear the piercing screams from the two poor girls, whom I could not help; and then to hear the sound of shots and oaths, and blows in the captain's cabin, for a few moments; and then all was still—except the shrieks of the poor girls; while directly after more lights were brought, and I saw lying across a chair, with his head and legs upon the floor, the body of the poor old major; and then all seemed to be blank for a bit.

The next thing I recollect was hearing Hicks's voice giving orders, and I heard him say: 'Over with him;' and then there was the sound of a heavy body being dragged along the floor of the next cabin, and then I heard the head go 'bump, bump' up the cabin stairs; then scrape along the deck; and then came a heavy plunge in the water.

'That's the poor skipper,' I thinks to myself; and just then somebody walked right over me, and into the cabin, and I saw it was Hicks.

'Serve this old beast the same,' he says; and Phillips and Johnson takes hold of the poor old gentleman's legs, and drags him along; and as they knocked the chair down, there was a cry from the inner cabin.

'Silence!' roared Hicks, dashing the but-end of his pistol against the door; and then I felt the body drawn over me, and the warm blood drip on my face, and smear across it, as it was dragged along. Then followed the 'bump, bump' of the head up the stairs; the creeping, rustling noise on the deck; and then a splash told me the poor old gentleman was gone.

Now, just then I was in a sort of sleepy, dreamy state—half-witted, I may say. I could see and understand all that passed, and yet did not seem either in pain or afraid. I remember thinking that it would be either my turn or else Tom Black's next; for I supposed he was knocked on the head too, and lying in the captain's cabin; and I remember, too, feeling very sorry for those two girls; and then two fellows caught hold of my legs, dragged me up the cabin stairs, across the deck, and then I felt some one give me a bit of a heave, and felt the shock as I struck the water; and then it was as if new life rushed through me, and as I rose to the surface, I struck out, and directly after felt the ship's side.

I suppose that one of the first things they must have done, and the thing which poor Tom and I heard, was to pitch the man at the wheel overboard; for the ship was rolling in the trough of the sea, very gently, for there was no breeze on; and very fortunate this was for me, as I was able to swim along the side and climb up on to the rudder-chains, where I had just strength enough to lash myself with my handkercher, when I turned dead-sick again, and nearly slipped back into the water. But, somehow or another, in a half-stupified way, I managed to cling where I was, getting my legs well twisted round; and there I hung, drenched with the sea, shivering with the cold, but getting brighter and clearer in the head, which I now found was badly cut; but it soon stopped bleeding; and you may well suppose mine were not pleasant thoughts, holding on there under the stern of the ship—cold, and sick at heart, and waiting for the morning.

CHAPTER V.

If any poor wretch ever longed for the coming of daylight, I was that poor fellow, as clung there, feeling so weak and bad at times that I could have cried like a child; but after a bit I thought of my bacca, and got a bit in my mouth, and it did seem such a comfort. Being quite clear in my head now, and only in pain—pretty sharp pain, too, from the cut—I could think of all the events of the night without getting muddled and confused, as I did at first when I tried to; and now it seemed all clear enough, and just as poor Tom thought, for it was a deep-laid plot to get the treasure, and one which had succeeded only too well. And then I began to think about how many had been killed, and I counted up—two of the men in the watch; old Smith, the mate; the skipper; the poor old major; and Tom Black, sir; and then I wondered whether they'd killed the poor girls; but at that same moment I thought about Hicks and Phillips, and a regular shudder, and a sense of going half mad, ran through me, so that for a few moments I felt half blind, as though blood ran to my eyes; and that's how I felt every time I thought of those two scoundrels.

The more I thought of the bloody deed of the past night, the more impossible it seemed; for though we used to hear tell of such things, and the old-salts knew many a pirate yarn, yet it didn't seem to belong to these times, and I almost fancied I was making a fool of myself.

But there was no deceit about it—worse luck—and soon I began to count up how many chaps were left; and I reckoned there'd be eight, 'and not one of 'em as would turn pirate, I'd swear,' I says to myself. And then I wondered what they'd do with them, for they were all caged up safe in the fore-castle. 'Why, they'll shove them in one of the quarter-boats with the ladies, and cast them adrift,' I says.

Morning at last: first, a faint light; then, a red glow; and then, with a rush, up came the sun, seeming to make every wave a mass of jewels dancing in a flood of red gold, while the sky looked so assuring and sociable, that it seemed impossible that such a bloody deed should have been done in the darkness. Every warm ray served to cheer me up, and give hope of life, till I thought again of what was to become of me; was I to be shot, or to fall off for the sharks, or be drowned, or what? But another glance at the warm sun and the bright sky cheered me on again; and I thought I'd wait till they sent the rest of the crew off in a boat, and then I'd swim off to them, and risk the sharks.

And now there seemed some moving about, for the rudder was shifted, and the ship made some way; but, directly after, it fell calm, and she swung round, so that I got the full glow of the sun, which began to dry me a bit, and warmed my stiffened and chilled limbs. Then I could hear them dashing water about, and swabbing the decks, as busy as could be.

'That's to get rid of the blood,' I says; and soon after I hears a good deal of noise, and talking, and swearing; and then there was a pistol-shot, and directly after a splash in the water; and after a bit I saw a body float along, and knew the face as that of a mate as had been in my watch—a good man and true—and while I was looking sorrowfully at him, there came a sharp rush in the water,

and then he was dragged under, and I saw him no more; but at the same moment from above my head I heard a faint scream, and the whispering of voices, and then the closing of a window.

The sound of those voices revived me, so that I roused up, or I believe I should have slipped into the water, I felt that sick and dizzy, and then the sharks would have had another meal. I suppose I was weak from loss of blood, and besides, I had never seen any horrors before; while there had been enough during the last few hours to upset any poor fellow. I must have gone; for I had tied my handkercher round my head, because the cut was painful.

By and by, I heard the boat lowered, and splash in the water; and after a bit, as if they were putting in provision and water, I heard her push off, and made ready for a swim, or else to shout to them. So I leaned out as far as I could, and watched till she came in sight; for I dared not let those on deck see me; but when at last I did see her, my heart seemed quite to sink, for there were only six men in her, and the young ladies were not there; while, after a bit of study of the faces, I made out as it was the cook that was left behind.

'Poor gals, poor gals!' I muttered to myself, and I shrunk back in the chains, and sat there thinking, and giving up all hope of going with the boat, for I didn't feel as if I could; and so, without seeing me, the poor chaps rowed away, and at last got to be quite a little speck.

The heat of the day came, and still it was calm; then the evening, and I'd sat there with nothing to keep me up but a bit of tobacco; and now I knew it would soon be sunset, for the sky was getting all glorious again. I had not heard any more of the young ladies, though I fancied once the window opened; but from where I was, I could not climb up, nor yet see; and so I sat and waited, meaning to try and climb on deck when it was dark, for I felt famished.

Every now and then, I could hear the fellows shouting and singing, and it was evident that there was plenty of grog on the way. This set me thinking again about Hicks and Phillips, and I could feel now as nothing was too bad for the villains; and I tried whether I could not climb up to the window where the ladies were, knowing all the time that I, single-handed, could do nothing. But I soon found out that I could not manage it, and made up my mind to wait till it was dark, when perhaps they could hang out something to help me.

I was sitting waiting for the night, when all of a sudden I heard the window-glass up above me dashed out, and the little pieces fell spattering into the water; and then I know, for a few moments, I went mad, and frothed at the mouth. Shriek after shriek, and the noise of struggling; prayers for mercy, help, pity; and all in the most heart-rending tones; the knocking together of furniture and breaking of glass; and still, above all those pitiful cries for help, there came the angry voices of men and oaths; once, I felt sure, blows; and still the cries continued, and all at once ceased. Then there was the loud banging of a door, and noise and swearing on the deck; and all the while I was holding my head tight against the side of the ship, to keep it from splitting, for it seemed as though my brain must burst my skull.

After a bit, I heard a loud wailing sob, and such a bitter cry as brought the pitying tears coursing

down my rough cheeks, and that seemed to do me good, and I tried to make her as cried hear me. But I could not, and then I listened again, and I heard a choking voice say: 'God! Father, forgive us, for we cannot live!' and then it was quite dark, and I heard in the stillness of the night those two sisters bidding one another good-bye, so sweetly and lovingly, and my tongue stuck to the roof of my mouth, for a horrid chill ran through me, and I knew they were going to jump in. 'Stop, stop!' I cried at last, in a voice that I didn't know for mine.

'Who spoke?' I heard from above me.

'Hush!' I whispered, leaning out as far I could—'hush! it is me—John Cross.' And then I heard a sound as if some one had fallen on the ground. A few minutes after I heard the voice again.

'Pray—pray, save us! For Heaven's sake, help!'

'Yes, yes!' I said; 'but speak low, or we shall be heard.'—Miss Mary?

'Yes,' cried the voice eagerly.

'Is there a rope of any kind there?'

There was silence for a minute, and then she said: 'No!'

'Are you listening?' I said.

'Yes,' she whispered.

'Then take the sheets from the cots, and tie them tightly together, and then fasten one end to the table; tightly, mind.'

I waited while I could hear her busily toiling, but in a few moments the voice whispered despairingly: 'I can never tie them tightly enough.'

'Never mind,' I said; 'only tie them, all you can find, together, and lower them down.'

Soon after, something white was lowered from the cabin window, and hung down, swaying backwards and forwards; and at last, after many tries, I reached it. More and more came down, till there was far more than I wanted, when I made the knots fast, and whispered to her to draw up. 'Now,' I said, 'as soon as it is tight, twist all you have round the table-leg, and hold on.'

In a few minutes, I found the sheet-rope would bear my weight, and directly after, I was holding on by the cabin-window, with those two poor girls clinging, crying to me, and begging me to save them.

I felt most mad, as I looked at them by the light of the cabin lantern. Hair torn down; dresses half dragged from their shoulders; while, right across the face of Miss Mary, was a mark as of a blow, while her poor lip was cut and bleeding.

'Oh, pray—pray, save us!' she cried, putting her poor hand on mine, as I clung there.

'As I hope God may save me,' I said; 'or I'll die for you.'

And then there was silence for a few moments; and if I had dared, I should have kissed the soft hand that nestled against mine so trustingly, but I thought it would be cowardly, and I did not.

'And now,' I whispered, 'I'm going on deck.'

'Ah! don't leave us,' sobbed Miss Madeline.

'It is to try what I can do to get you away,' I whispered; and then the poor girl, who seemed half fainting, sank down, kneeling on the floor, and her sister leaned over her, and said to me: 'We'll pray for you, Cross.'

'Then I shall succeed,' I said, for I felt that I should; and so I left them, feeling nerved to have done anything in their defence.

I soon was over the poop, and crawling close under the bulwarks, when I found that the man

by the binacle-light was fast asleep, for the ship made no way at all. I stopped in the darkness for a few minutes, listening, and could hear voices in the fore-cabin; and it was evident there was a good deal of drunkenness and carousing going forward. Half-a-dozen stanch, well-armed fellows could have secured the ship, I felt sure, as I opened my knife that hung by a lanyard to my waist, and then shoving it open in my belt, I crawled to the skylight, and looked down into the passengers' cabin, where I could see Hicks, Phillips, and two more playing cards, while another lay on the bulkhead asleep. It was a good thing I had no pistol in my hand, or I should have had that Hicks's blood upon my head then.

I crept away from the skylight and under the bulwarks again, though it was as dark as pitch, and began making my way towards the other boat as hung from the davits; when all at once, some one had me by the throat, and tried to turn me on my back; but I was too quick, for I had my knife against his ribs in a moment, and hissed out: 'You're a dead man if you stir.'

That was sharp practice, for we were both on our knees close against the bulwarks, and I could feel his hot breath right in my face, as he must have felt mine. Just then, he gave a bit of a shift, and my knife pricked him, for I meant what I said then; but the prick made him start so that he a bit got the better of me, and had tight hold of my hand which held the knife.

'Now, you murdering, piratical scoundrel,' he hissed between his teeth; and I began to feel that if I didn't look sharp I should have the worst of it. 'Now give up the knife, you dog, or I'll strangle you, if it's only for poor Jack's sake.'

'Hullo!' I says in a whisper, slackening my hold.

'Hullo!' he says in a whisper, slackening his hold.

'What, Tom, matey!' I says.

'What, Jack, old lad!' he says; and I'm blessed if we didn't hug each other like two great gals.

'Why, I thought they'd knocked you on the head,' I says.

'Why, I see them pitch you overboard,' he says.

'Yes,' I says; 'but I got on the rudder-chains.'

'Ah!' he says; 'and in the tussle I was knocked down; but I got down below after, and got in that empty water-cask. I ain't been out quarter of an hour.'

'Who's on deck?' I says.

'Only that chap at the wheel,' he says, 'for I've been all round.'

And then we had a whisper together for five minutes, which ended in our creeping up to where the boat hung.

'There's water in her,' says Tom.

'And there's safe to be some biscuit in the locker,' I says.

'But,' says Tom, 'hadn't we better stop in hiding? We shall be starved.'

'Tom, mate,' I says; and then I whispered to him about what I'd heard and what I'd seen, when he stopped me.

'Hold hard, mate,' he says; 'just see if the boat-hook and the oars are in. I'm with you.'

Everything was in its place; and then cautiously we undid the ropes, and began slowly to lower down the boat, meaning to fasten the lines at last, and slide down. The blocks ran easy enough, but on such a silent night, do what we could, there was

some noise; and at last one of the wheels gave such a chirrup, that the noise in the cabin stopped, and we stopped too; and directly after, some one came up the cabin stairs and on deck; and as we covered close together under the bulwarks, holding on to the ropes, and trembling lest we should let them slip ever so little, Hicks—for I knew his step—walked close by us right forward, and then back on the other side, where he kicked the man by the wheel savagely, and spoke to him once or twice, but there was no answer, and then muttering to himself, he went below again.

'That was close,' said Tom, for he had almost brushed against us; and then we each took a long breath, and, amidst a good deal of noisy talk, the boat kissed the water, and we lashed our ropes fast.

'Now, if we only had some more prog,' said Tom, 'I wouldn't care.'

'Don't stop, mate,' I says; 'there's lines in the locker, and p'raps they've something in the cabin.'

'All right,' says Tom; and he slid over the side, and was in the boat in a moment; but not without rattling one of the oars, and I trembled again for fear he should have been heard. But all was quiet, and the next moment I was beside him; and as we couldn't unhook the boat, I cut the ropes fore and aft, and then Tom slowly worked her along and under the cabin window where those demons were sitting; then past the window of the captain's cabin, round the rudder, and then there was a joyful cry, for I had fast hold of the sheets hanging down.

'Make her fast with the painter, Tom,' I said; and up I went, and next minute stood between those two poor creatures, both of them clinging to me in that sad way—it was pitiful.

'Hush!' I said—'not a sound;' and then drawing up the sheet, I just looked at the knots, and made it fast round Miss Madeline, for Miss Mary would not go first. Poor girl, she tried all she could to help me; and so, she creeping out herself, I lowered Miss Madeline down into the boat, and the shaken sheet told me all was right.

'God bless you for this,' whispered Miss Mary, as I made the sheet-rope fast round her. 'Be kind to us, for we are in your hands.'

I didn't say anything, but I did kneel down and kiss her hand that time. She was a deal more active than her sister; and in another minute, I had her lowered down into the boat, and Tom cast off the sheet.

'Shy down some blankets,' he whispered; and I dragged those out that were in the cots, and threw them down, and the pillows too. On the table was biscuit, cheese, meat, and cake, and these I slipped into a pillow-case, and lowered down. In the lockers, too, were biscuit-tins, and two wicker-covered bottles; and these I lowered down, for I felt safe now, knowing how soon I could slip down, and that the ladies were out of danger; for I knew, if discovered, pursuit would be vain in the dark. So, as fast as I could, I lowered down cases of preserved meat, and wine, and everything of use that I could find in the lockers, when, giving a glance round, I thought, now I'll go. I thought the sheet-rope might come in, though, as an awning, so I stooped down to untie it, meaning to slip it round the leg after, and slide down with it double, so that I could then loose one end, and draw it after me. It was hard work, though, for the knots had been strained, and I kneeled at last, and tried

my teeth; but they were no good; and I pulled my knife out of my belt, cut the knot, drew up enough so as it should give double, and was passing it round the leg, when I heard a noise, started up, and leaped on one side, just as Hicks stood in the door, and fired at me. He had lowered his revolver to cock for another shot, but he had not time, for I was on him in an instant, with my knife driven deep into his throat and chest; and then, as he fell with a wild gurgling cry, I wrenched out the knife, dragged to the door, and was out of the window, just as Tom was climbing up by means of the boat-hook, for he could not reach the sheet.

'Back,' I says—'back quickly, and cast off the painter; and while he was getting out of my way, I had time enough to see Hicks give two or three clutches at the carpet, and then lie still. The moment after, I was in the boat, and with one tremendous shove, sent her yards away from the ship, as it were into a thick bank of darkness.

'Lie down,' I whispered to the ladies; and Miss Madeline crept to her sister's feet, while Tom and I got out the oars, and as quickly as possible paddled away, not daring to make a sound, for there was a noise on board, and three or four shots were fired at random out of the cabin window. Then we could see them on deck, and some one fired a pistol off again; but the bullet never came near us.

'They're going to try and launch a boat, I expect,' said Tom with a chuckle; 'and there's the dingy, as'll hold two comfortable; and as for the long-boat, I don't think they'll get her over the side to-night.'

'Pray—pray, row fast,' cried Miss Mary. 'Can't we help?' and she moved forward as if to get to an oar.

'God bless you, no, miss!' I said in a whisper; 'we'll bend to it directly.' And then we paddled a little further off, till I thought they couldn't hear the oars in the rowlocks, when we both bent to it, and rowed stroke for stroke for a good hour, and all on right through the thickest darkness I ever saw, and long after the lights in the cabin window of the good ship *Southern Star* had disappeared.

All at once Tom stopped, and threw in his oar.

'What is it?' I says.

'Matey,' he says, 'I haven't had bit nor sup since tea last night; and I think we shall work better after somethin'.'

I hadn't thought of it before; but I knew how weak I felt, and so I pulled in my oar too, and Tom pulled up one of the biscuit-tins, and found the cheese and a bottle.

'Lend me your knife, Jack,' he says, and my hand went naturally enough to my belt; but the moment after I shuddered, and told him to break the cheese, pretending I could not get at it.

Just as we pushed off, I could see by the cabin lights that Miss Madeline had crept down at her sister's feet; but on feeling now in the dark, I found they were sitting side by side; so I got one of the blankets over them, and then, after a deal of persuading, managed to get them to take some of the biscuit and cheese, and some wine. Tom and I took a sup each, and put our biscuit and cheese on the seat by us, and made ready for a start again, eating as we went on, and then rowing as true as we could, so as to keep the boat's head the same way; and without any more stoppage, for we knew

what trouble those poor gals were in, starting as they were at every splash we laid down to our work, and rowed on, hour after hour, right away into the thick darkness.

PROLOGUES AND EPILOGUES.

DRAMATIC authors have no reason now-a-days to echo Dryden's anathema upon the man who first wrote good prologues; that rent-charge on wit has not been levied for many a year. A new play fitted with the appendages of prologue and epilogue, would create much the same sort of sensation among a modern audience as the appearance of a gentleman with a pigtail would excite in a fashionable assembly. The 'Occasional Address,' a distant cousin of the prologue, may now and then be heard; but the once potent auxiliaries of the dramatist have long since gone to dusty death, in the lumber-room of literature.

Wise and witty Rosalind says: 'If it be true that good wine needs no bush, 'tis true that a good play needs no epilogue. Yet, to good wine they do use good bushes; and good plays prove the better by the help of a good epilogue.' Shakspeare, however, seems to have had little faith in his own preachment, and seldom sought to cajole his audience into applauding his plays. *Henry VIII.* is the only one among them provided with prologue and epilogue; *Troilus and Cressida*, and *Romeo and Juliet*, have prologues, but no epilogues; while *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *As You Like It*, *The Tempest*, and the Second Part of *Henry IV.*, are furnished with epilogue only. Shakspeare's prologues are merely explanations of the coming action, telling the audience how they may

See away their shilling
Richly in two short hours.

His epilogues are more noteworthy. That to *Henry IV.* is altogether a curiosity, and would seem to have been written as much in the interest of the management as that of the author. A dancer is made the mouthpiece of the dramatist; why, we gather from his own lips: 'Be it known to you (as it is very well), I was lately here in the end of a displeasing play, to pray your patience for it, and to promise you a better. I did mean, indeed, to pay you with this; which if, like an ill venture, it come unluckily home, I break, and you, my gentle creditors, lose. . . . If you be not much cloyed with fat meat, our humble author will continue the story, with Sir John in it, and make you merry with fair Katherine of France; where, for anything I know, Falstaff shall die of a sweat, unless already he be killed with your hard opinions, for Oldcastle died a martyr, and this is not the man!'

Three out of Shakspeare's four epilogues are alike in one respect—he appeals chiefly to the ladies to crown his play with success, and uses pretty nearly the same argument in each. Rosalind says: 'I charge you, O women, for the love you bear to men, to like as much of the play as pleases them; and so I charge you, O men, for the love you bear to women (as I perceive by your simpering none of you hate them), that between you and the women, the play may please!' So 'all the gentlemen have forgiven me,' says the dancer; 'if the gentlemen will not, then the gentlemen do not agree with the gentlewomen, which was never

seen before in such an assembly!' And again in *Henry VIII.*, the epilogue speaker argues:

I fear
All the expected good we are like to hear
For this play at this time, is only in
The merciful construction of good women,
For such a one we shewed them. If they smile,
And say 'twill do, I know, within a while,
All the best men are ours; for 'tis ill hap,
If they hold, when their ladies bid them clap!

Beaumont and Fletcher's prologues and epilogues are briefly and spiritedly written; but they did not approve the custom, although they occasionally bowed to it. One of their prologues commences:

To promise much before a play begin,
And when 'tis done, ask pardon, is a sin
We'll not be guilty of.

Indeed, most of the prologues and epilogues printed with their dramas were furnished by other pens, when the plays were revived after their authors' decease; and from Manager Henslowe's Diary, we learn that five shillings was the price usually paid for such things. In the prologue written for the revival of *The Nice Valour*, Fletcher's aversion to the practice of begging the audience's favour is thus plainly avowed:

It's grown a fashion of late in these days,
To come and beg a suzerainty to our plays:
Faith, gentlemen, our poet ever writ
Language so good, mixed with such sprightly wit,
He made the theatre so sovereign
With his rare scenes, he scorned this crouching vein.
We stabbed him with keen daggers, when we prayed
Him write a preface to a play well made!

Ben Jonson converted the prologue into a weapon of offence, with which he attacked his more popular rivals. Thus, in the prologue to *Every Man in his Humour*, after declaring he scorns to fight over the Wars of the Roses with rusty swords and 'foot and half-foot words,' he announces his comedy as being a model one, such as other plays should be:

Where neither Chorus wafts you o'er the seas,
Nor creaking throne comes down, the boys to please;
Nor nimble equib is seen to make afraid
The gentlemens; nor rolled bullet heard
To say, it thunders; nor tempestuous drum
Rumbles to tell you when the storm doth come;
But deeds and language, such as men do use,
And persons, such as Comedy would choose,
When she would shew an image of the times,
And sport with human follies, not with crimes.

On another occasion, he reminded his auditors that he did not deal in forced and monstrous action; but observed the laws of time, place, and persons; seeking, too, to mix some profit with the pleasure he provided; and so little was Ben given to the crouching vein, that he did not scruple to tell his patrons that, should they receive his play with disapprobation, it would prove that they had lost the art of judging, not he the art of writing.

The performances at our Elizabethan theatres always commenced with a flourish of trumpets; a second flourish was the prelude to the Induction, if there happened to be one; and a third ushered in the prologue, the speaker of which was attired in a long black velvet cloak, and sometimes wore a crown of laurel or bay. This rule was occasionally broken, as in Shakspeare's *Troilus and Cressida*, when he appeared as

A prologue armed—but not in confidence
Of author's pen or actor's voice; but suited
In like conditions as our argument.

Little seems to have been left to the actor's option:

The cloaks we wear, the legs we make, the place
We stand in must be one; and one the face
Not altered, nor exceeded; if it be,
A general hiss hangs on our levity.

Originally, the delivery of both prologue and epilogue devolved upon the author himself; but the poets soon delegated the unwelcome office to others, and every theatre had its recognised speaker of prologues and epilogues. Rosalind tells us it was not the fashion to give the lady the epilogue; and another authority assures us 'a she prologue is as rare as a usurer's alms.' The prologue to *Shirley's Coronation*, produced in 1640, was spoken by a woman, but it was evidently considered an innovation, the actress pleading that for once a lady might

Speak the prologue, give as free
A welcome to the theatre, as he
That with a little beard, a long black cloak,
With a starched face and supple leg, hath spoke
Before the plays this twelvemonth.

While Betterton was on the stage, the speaking of the prologues usually fell to his lot, and with good reason. Colley Cibber, who considered the delivery of a prologue the severest test of an actor's elocutionary powers, says: 'Betterton had a natural gravity that gave strength to good sense; a tempered spirit that gave life to wit; and a dry reserve in his smile, that threw ridicule into its brightest colours.' Wilks succeeded Betterton as prologue-speaker; but when Dryden brought out his *Pilgrim*, he paid Cibber the unusual compliment of desiring him to speak both prologue and epilogue; a request, Wilks declared, which was an affront to the rest of the company. The epilogue gradually found its way into female hands, and the male monopoly once broken in upon, the ladies were not long in obtaining a fair share of the prologue-speaking. Most of Congreve's were intrusted to Mrs Bracegirdle; and it was by her piquant delivery of one of Dryden's, that Nell Gwynne won her dubious promotion from the playhouse to the palace.

Playgoers at this time could provide themselves with broadside copies of the prologue and epilogue of the evening at the doors of the theatre; and these dramatic appendages had become of such importance, that in not a few cases the reproach was deserved, that the wit was ended before the play began. They had, in fact, undergone a complete transformation, by being made the vehicles of political, literary, and social satire. Congreve well describes the difference between the old and new fashions:

In former days,
Prologues were serious speeches before plays;
Grave solemn things, as graces are to feasts,
Where poets begged a blessing from the guests.
But now, no more as suppliants we come;
A play makes war, and prologue is the drum;
Armed with keen satire and with pointed wit,
We threaten you who do for judges sit.

Dryden's power of language and command of versification enabled him to more than hold his own against all rivals in this species of composition, and his aid was continually invoked in behalf of new plays. He varied his mode of writing according to circumstances: when addressing an Oxford audience, assuming a dignified and respectful tone he seldom employed in appealing to the grosser tastes of metropolitan playgoers. One of his later prologues, produced during William III.'s Irish

campaign, was prohibited after the first night's delivery, as offensive to the powers that were. In another, he girds at his literary foes—

Who, like bold padders, scorn by night to prey,
But rob by sunshine, in the face of day;
Nay, scarce the common ceremony use
Of, 'Stand, sir, and deliver up your muse!'
But knock the poet down, and, with a grace,
Mount Pegasus before the owner's face. . . .
Such men in poetry may claim some part,
They have the licence, though they want the art.

Dryden certainly did not want the art, and as certainly he scrupled not to use the licence, for there is scarcely one, if one, of his fine productions in this line that is not sadly disfigured by coarseness and indecency. The prologues of Davenant, Behn, Shadwell, and the mob of those who wrote with more ease than effect, have that one feature of resemblance to the works of the great poet; in other respects, no comparison can be made between them.

Addison is credited with having written the most successful epilogue ever spoken on the English stage—that to Philips's *Distressed Mother*, produced in 1712. His own famous tragedy, depicting

A brave man struggling in the storms of fate,
And greatly falling with a falling state,

had a splendid prelude in Pope's noble prologue, without doubt the finest ever written, worthy of Steele's eulogy and the thundering applause it received on the memorable first performance of *Cato*, when contending factions strove as to which should applaud the most, and the author of the prologue, to use his own words, 'sore against his will, was clapped into a stanch Whig almost every two lines.'

Dr Johnson did not disdain to try his heavy hand at these trifles of the hour. Charity impelled him to furnish a prologue for Kelly's unsuccessful comedy, *A Word to the Wise*, when it was played for the benefit of Kelly's widow and family; and his friendship for Goldsmith induced him to volunteer one for *The Good-natured Man*, which turned out a very inglorious specimen of the species. He was more successful in the case of his own play of *Irene*, the prologue to which is manly and spirited—

Be this at least his praise, be this his pride,
To force applause no modern arts are tried.
Should partial cat-calls all his hopes confound,
He bids no trumpet quell the fatal sound;
Should welcome sleep relieve the weary wit,
He rolls no thunders o'er the drowsy pit:
No snares to captivate the judgment spreads,
Nor bribes your eyes to prejudice your heads.
Unmoved, though writhings sneer, and rivals rail,
Studios to please, yet not ashamed to fail;
He scorns the meek address, the suppliant strain,
With merit needless, and without it, vain;
In reason, nature, truth, he dares to trust;
Ye fops be silent, and ye wits be just!

Goldsmith's efforts of a similar kind were cast in a much lighter mould. He was driven well-nigh mad trying to fit *She Stoops to Conquer* with an epilogue. Murphy sent him one to be sung by Miss Catley, which, after the poet had given it form and finish, was approved by that actress; but Mrs Bulkeley, who played the heroine, threatened to throw up her part if she was not allowed to speak the epilogue according to the custom of the theatre. In this dilemma, Goldsmith wrote a quarrelling epilogue, bringing both actresses before the curtain, and then

Miss Catley turned obstinate. The badgered author wrote a third; but this, Manager Colman declared was too bad to be spoken by anybody; and he passed the same verdict upon a fourth supplied by Goldsmith's friend, Cradock; so the poet had to get to work afresh, and at last succeeded in silencing, if not satisfying, all parties concerned.

Garrick was an adept in the art of prologue-writing, and made Johnson wonder at his prolificness and versatility. He furnished the stage with above a hundred prologues and epilogues of more than average literary merit. Here, in four lines, the great actor gives us his tribute to the talent of the first and last of English harlequins:

When Lun appeared, with matchless art and whim,
He gave the power of speech to every limb;
Though masked and mute, conveyed his quick
intent,

And told in frolic gestures all he meant.

He put, too, a happy couplet in the mouth of Mrs Barry, the actress of tragedy heroines:

No saint can lead a better life than I,
For half is spent in learning how to die.

There is something pathetic in Garrick's allusion to the fleeting nature of his art, made when the loss of Quin and Mrs Cibber was fresh in his mind:

He who struts his hour upon the stage,
Can scarce extend his fame for half an age;
Nor pen nor pencil can the actor save;
The art and artist share one common grave.
O let me drop one tributary tear
On poor Jack Falstaff's grave and Juliet's bier!
You to their worth must testimony give;
'Tis in your hearts alone their fame can live.
Still, as the scenes of life will shift away,
The strong impressions of their art decay;
Your children cannot feel what you have known;
They'll boast of Quins and Cibbers of their own!

Sheridan made a hit with what Walpole calls 'a very good though endless prologue,' spoken before the *Miniature Picture* of Lady Craven. It was so much relished by the audience, that they demanded its repetition after the comedy was concluded; and although it was then past midnight, waited patiently till King could be fetched from home to obey their commands. Spite of this success, Sheridan obtained Garrick's aid when a prologue was wanted for *The School for Scandal*; indeed, dramatists generally seem about this time to have relinquished the providing of these appendages, and left the task entirely in the hands of the managers, and this abdication of their duty naturally led to the speedy abolition of prologues and epilogues altogether.

BROUGHT TO LIGHT.

CHAPTER XXIX.—AT GRELLIER'S ALMSHOUSES.

A CHEERLESS wintry morning, with a clouded sky, and a bitter north-east wind blowing shrilly through the denuded woods of Belair. But the discomfort outside served only to enhance the charming coziness of the bright little morning-room which owned Miss Spencelaugh for its mistress. There she sat, the most charming object in that room, in a low chair on one side of the glowing fireplace, her white dressing-robe falling in ample folds around her, and all the wealth of her raven hair, held only by a band of blue velvet, flowing loosely down her back. On the opposite side of the fireplace sat homely Jane Garrod, in strange contrast with this lovely vision. There was an expression

of doubt and perplexity on the face of Frederica. She was thinking intently, her cheek resting on the tip of her forefinger, while her other hand held the Statement which had been drawn up by John English, and sent to her through Jane Garrod, and which she had just finished reading aloud. Each point had been verbally annotated by Jane as she read; and she was now thinking over the strange story which had thus singularly been brought to her knowledge, and as to the merits of which she was now called upon to decide.

'Your eyes are brighter, my bonny one, than when I saw you last,' muttered Jane to herself, while waiting for Frederica to speak; 'and your cheeks have got back some of the colour they used to have in them when you were a girl. Whatever your trouble was, you have pulled bravely through it. There is one honest heart I know of that loves you fondly. Do you feel any faint feeble flutterings that way, I wonder? I think you do—I think you do.'

'This is a very strange story, Jane,' said Frederica at length, 'and I really don't know what to think of it. It seems to bear the stamp of truth on every line, and yet some of its statements are almost incredible. The points that still want clearing up are many and difficult; and the whole affair is certainly rendered more complicated by the unaccountable disappearance of Mr English. Even supposing him to have been suddenly called away, I cannot understand why he has not written to you since his departure.'

'There's some treachery at work in the matter, Miss Frederica, you take my word for it,' said Jane with energy.

'I have once or twice had the same thought myself; but then you tell me that you have ascertained that Mr English did really quit Pevsey Bay by a certain train, having taken a ticket for London.'

'Just so,' said Jane. 'Still, I am none the less certain that some treachery has been at work. He may have been enticed away by a false message, and be neither able to write nor come back. Oh, Miss Frederica, darling, something must be done, and that at once!'

'I feel with you, nurse, that something must be done. The truth or falsehood of this Statement must be proved. If what is here put down be true, then has a foul and hideous wrong been done, and the sooner it is brought to light, and the perpetrators of it punished, the better it will be for all of us. If, on the contrary, it be nothing but an ingeniously woven web of lies, then the writer of it—'

'But it is not a web of lies, Miss Frederica, but gospel truth every word of it,' burst in Jane vehemently. 'Think of the likeness—so strong that after twenty years it scared me as if I had seen a ghost. Think of the strange mark on his shoulder—the coiled snake holding the mystic lotos-flower in its mouth. Think over, one by one, the different things he has put down on that paper, and then you must be as firmly convinced as I am that he has not written a word more than the bare truth.'

'You are letting your enthusiasm, and your liking for Mr English, run away with your reason,' said Frederica. 'In the unexplained absence of that gentleman, and as he has appealed to me, I will, with Heaven's help, have this story sifted to the bottom, and so deal with it as I shall find it true or false!' Her cheeks wore an added flush as

she said these words ; but in her eyes there was a solemn, almost melancholy light, as though she felt that the duty she had taken upon herself to perform would lead her perforce through dark and troubled waters, to a goal which as yet she discerned not at all.

'Spoken like my own brave darling!' said Jane admiringly. 'We want nothing but the truth.'

Frederica ran her eye over the Statement again. 'It almost seems to me,' she said, 'that it would be better for me not to interfere personally in this matter at all, but to put it as it now stands into the hands of my lawyer, Mr Penning, and leave him to test its value in whatever way he may deem advisable. And yet the interests involved in it are so peculiar, and there are those under this roof who would be so deeply compromised if what this narrative contains be true, that I cannot help feeling reluctant to let it pass out of my hands without at least giving one person whom it deeply concerns a knowledge of the case equal to my own, so that she may be prepared at the proper time to disprove its statements, should she ever be called upon to do so. Then, again, the story is such an incredible one, and there are so many weak points about it at present, that I question whether quiet, matter-of-fact Mr Penning would not pooh-pooh it altogether, and smile compassionately upon me for allowing myself to put faith in so palpable an absurdity.'

'Cannot some of those weak points be strengthened?' said Jane.

'How so?' said Frederica.

'Mr English makes mention there of a room in which he was shut up before he was taken across the sea—of a room with barred windows, in which there was a hideous bed that frightened him into a fit one day. Now, there must have been such a room, Miss Frederica.'

'There may have been such a room certainly, nurse ; or it may have had an existence merely in the imagination of Mr English. But even granting the room to have been a real one, what then ? Where are we to find it ?—and if found, in what way would it benefit our case ?'

'Wait a bit, Miss Frederica, please,' said Jane. 'Besides what Mr English has put down on that paper, he told me many little things that came into his memory, bit by bit, when we were talking together about his early life ; and many a long talk about it we had. Among other things, he told me something more about that house with the barred windows, which would seem to shew that he was shut up there for some time. Whenever he cried to be taken back to the place he had been brought from, and could not be quieted any other way, the people of the house used to take him down stairs, and hold him over a dark hole or well, in one of the lower rooms, into which they threatened to throw him unless he behaved better. The recollection of that horrible well had been impressed so strongly on his childish mind, that he could still recall the shudder with which long afterwards he would awake at night from a dream of being cast headlong into it. Now, there was something in all this that struck me in a way I cannot explain. I've been turning it over and over in my mind—churning it, like—ever since Mr English told me about it ; and it was only this very morning that the idea flashed all at once into my head that the house he spoke about could have been no other than White Grange, a lonely farmhouse among the hills, about a dozen miles from Kingsthorpe. You

know, Miss Frederica, that I was brought up not many miles from there ; and once, when I was a thin slip of a girl, my father, who was a miller, had occasion to go to White Grange on business, and he took me in the cart with him. Whether the windows had iron bars outside them or not, I can't just say ; but I do recollect being shewn in one of the outhouses a deep grim-looking well—they took off the wooden cover, so that I might see down into it—and very frightened I was, more particularly when they told me the story that was connected with it. It was said that more than a hundred years before that time, a traveller, who had lost his way, and had begged a night's shelter at the Grange, had been foully murdered, and his body thrown into the well ; and never after that time would anybody touch a drop of the water that was drawn from it. The name of the family that lived at White Grange when I knew it was Sandysom, and they didn't bear an over-good name among us country-folk : many queer things were whispered about them.—Now, supposing, Miss Frederica, that it was really White Grange where Mr English was shut up as a child, mightn't it be worth our while just to inquire whether any of the family who lived there five-and-twenty years ago can now be found ? and if they can be found, whether anything can be got from them as to such a child having been shut up there, and for what purpose ? Would it not be worth our while to try this ?'

Miss Spenceclough agreed that it might, perhaps, be worth while to make such inquiries, but was doubtful as to their resulting in anything tangible. It was, however, ultimately decided that Jane should do what she could in the matter, and that no further steps should be taken until she had done so.

So Jane set about making cautious inquiries among her friends and neighbours through the country-side ; which inquiries resulted in the discovery that the family that had occupied White Grange twenty years previously were, with one exception, either dead or gone abroad. That one exception was an old woman now residing in Grellier's almshouses at Eastringham. With this information, Jane went once more to Frederica ; and next afternoon the Belair brougham was put into requisition, and the heiress and her humble companion were driven over to the place in question.

Grellier's gift to the poor of Eastringham—to twelve relicts of decayed tradesmen of the burgh—was a foundation of ancient date. It had been in existence for three centuries ; but although it had waxed fat and plethoric upon the accumulated interest of its capital, and the increase of revenue derived from the advance in the value of its lands and tenements in different parts of the county, it had not yet seen its way clearly to substitute for the tumble-down, inconvenient old edifices in which so many generations of poor old women had breathed their last, a row of substantial modern-built cottages ; nor to increase the scanty stipend doled out weekly to its ancient recipients, which, in these days, was hardly sufficient to keep body and soul together. But Grellier's charity had a governor and directors of its own ; all gentlemen of wealth and standing ; who met in the board-room twice a year, to audit the accounts, fill up vacancies, and discuss a choice luncheon from the *Royal Hotel* ; and if they were satisfied with the state of Grellier's affairs, surely no one else had any right or reason to complain.

'I want Margaret Fennell. Can you tell me in which of these cottages I shall find her?' asked Frederica of an old crone who was airing herself feebly in the wintry sunshine.

The old woman put her hand to her eyes, and blinked weakly for a moment or two at the bright vision before her. 'Margaret Fennell is it your Ledyship is axing for?' she said at last in a thin quavering voice. 'There's no such body living here.—Stay a bit, though,' she added, with a clutch of her thin brown hand at vacancy. 'It's mebbe Owd Meg as your Ledyship is looking for. She lives, Owd Meg does, in the top house but two; and she's a cat, that's what she is, and everybody will tell you the same. The top house but two, your Ledyship. And does your Ledyship happen to have an ounce of tea or a bit of snuff in your pocket, to comfort a poor old body with? It's precious little of either we gets here. They take good care of that—that they do.' Frederica had dropped some money into the old woman's hand almost before she had done speaking, and so left her, staring speechlessly at the bright silver coins in her skinny palm.

The 'top house but two' looked, if possible, more ruinous and unfit for a human being to live in than any of its neighbours, except that it was clean both inside and out, as, indeed, were all the almshouses: the matron was very particular, and properly so, on the score of cleanliness; and had a tongue of her own, which she rattled about the ears of the feeble old dames to some purpose whenever she found anything that offended her nice sense of the virtue that comes next to godliness in her frequent rounds of 'sniffing and prying,' as her domiciliary visits were irreverently termed by the inmates.

Frederica knocked timidly at the heavy oaken door. 'Why don't you come in, you imp—your devil! instead of knocking there? How many times do you want telling?' screamed a harsh, high-pitched voice from within. Frederica opened the door a few inches, and looking in, had a vision of an old woman smuggling a black bottle and a short black pipe rapidly out of sight. Looking again, she saw that this woman was very old, with a hook nose and a pointed chin, which nearly met; and with black eyes, that still retained something of their former bold bright look. Her long gray hair was without covering of any kind, and fell in a wild dishevelled mass over her shoulders. She was wrapped in an old woollen shawl of many faded colours; and when Frederica saw her first, was crouching over a meagre spark of fire, but rose suddenly as her visitor entered, displaying, as she did so, a form tall beyond the ordinary height of women.

'Beg your pardon, my pretty lady,' she said; 'but I thought it was that rascalion of a baker's boy, who always will knock, and trail my poor bones across the floor to open the door for him. Yah! I'll break the bellows over his head next time he comes!' she added viciously. Then changing suddenly into a half-whining, half-caressing tone, she said: 'Old Meg can guess what has brought those bright eyes here. Cross her hand with a bonny bit of yellow goold, and she'll tell the beautiful lady her fortune, as predicted by the stars, and confirmed by the changes of the cards, which cannot lie when shuffled by the hands of a wise woman. Cross my palm with a bonny bit of goold, and I'll tell you your fortune true!'

'You mistake the purpose which has brought me here,' said Frederica with a smile. 'I do not want my fortune told at present.'

'Then what should bring a fine lady like you to such a hole as this?' said Meg suspiciously.

'I have come in search of certain information, which I believe you can supply me with.'

'Me supply you with information? Nay, nay; you're mistaken there. What should a poor old woman like me know, unless it was the prices of butter and cheese, and such like; with, maybe, now and then a comforting text or two.' Her face broadened into a wicked leer as she said these words. 'Besides that,' she added, 'my memory's so bad that at times I can't recollect what happened the day before yesterday, let alone things years ago. Nay, nay, you'll get no information out of Old Meg.'

Miss Spencelaugh in nowise daunted, advanced into the room, followed by Jane Garrod, and stood looking down for a moment or two at the miserable creature, who had sunk into her chair again, and drawn her shawl round her, and was cowering over the embers, taking no further heed of her visitors.

'Five-and-twenty years ago, if I am rightly informed,' said Frederica, 'you went to live with Job Sandyson as housekeeper at White Grange.'

'Five—and—twenty years ago,' muttered Meg slowly. 'That's a long, long time to look back to. Well—maybe I did, and maybe I didn't—what then?'

'One-and-twenty years ago—try to carry your mind back to that time—a child, a boy about five years old, who belonged in no way to any one living in the house, was taken to White Grange, and after being shut up there for several weeks in one of the upper rooms—a room with barred windows—was fetched away after dark, one night, by a man and two women.'

'A lame man and one woman!' screamed the hag. 'I allus said we should hear of it; I told Nance so a dozen times; and my words have come true after all these years!'

'Then you do recollect the circumstance I mention?' said Frederica eagerly. In her statement respecting the child she had boldly hazarded a vague surmise as a fact, and she felt that her courage was about to be rewarded.

'Curses on this blabbing tongue of mine!' hissed Meg from between her toothless gums. 'You mustn't mind an old woman's wanderings, my sweet miss,' she added. 'My head's a bit light at odd times, and then I fancy all sorts of rubbish.'

'But I am certain that you can tell me what I want to know,' said Frederica; 'and I will pay you well for your information.' With that she took out her purse, and counted five sovereigns, one after another, on to the dirty little table. Meg's head came round with a twitch as the pleasant chink of the gold fell on her ear, while over her face there crept such an expression of mingled greed, cunning, and fiendish malignity, as caused Frederica to draw back in horror. 'There are five sovereigns for you,' said Miss Spencelaugh with a shudder; 'and you shall have five more if you answer my questions truthfully.'

Meg's brown skinny arm and thin cramped fingers came suddenly out from the folds of her shawl, and pounced on the gold as savagely as though it were some living thing for whose heart's blood she was hungering. A moment or two she gazed at the bright yellow pieces in her open palm,

and then she spat on them. 'That's for luck,' she muttered. Then producing a dirty bit of rag from some mysterious pocket, she folded the sovereigns carefully in it, and deftly smuggled the package out of sight among her tattered habiliments. 'Remember, five more before you go away,' she said in an eager whisper.

'I shall keep my promise,' said Frederica.

'Then ask me what you like, and I'll answer you as far as I know the truth.'

'You remember a child being brought to the White Grange twenty-one years ago?'

'Ay, I remember.'

'Whose child was it, and what was its name?'

'I dun know.'

'Who took it to White Grange?'

'Mrs Winch, landlady of the *Hand and Dagger* at Normanford.'

'Who fetched it away?'

'Mrs Winch and her brother the lame doctor—Kruff or Kreefe was his name.'

'How long was the child kept at White Grange?'

'For six weeks.'

'Was he kept locked up all that time?'

'Yes, all that time, in the strong room at the top of the house. Once he screamed himself into a fit, and we had hard work to get him round again. Once or twice, when he was in his tantrums—crying to be let out and taken back home—Old Job, he took him down stairs, and taking the lid off the well, threatened to pitch him headfirst in, and so frightened him into being quiet for a while.'

'Describe the appearance of the child, as far as your memory will serve to do so.'

'He was as handsome a lad as ever I see, with black hair and a devil of a temper.'

'You say that he was fetched away by Dr Kreefe and his sister?'

'Ay, they came for him one dark night. They had a little covered cart waiting just outside the gate; and they put the lad into it, and drove away with him; and I've never clapt eyes on him from that day to this.'

'You are positive that you know nothing as to the child's name or parentage?'

'Nothing at all—I'll take my oath,' said Meg emphatically. 'Old Job Sandysen, he knew who the child belonged to; and Jim Billings, he knew; but neither my girl Nance nor me was ever told. Old Job gave Nance and me two sovereigns apiece the day after the lad was taken away, and told us never to say a word, or he'd twist our necks for us; and he would have done it as soon as look at us.'

'Job Sandysen has been dead many years, I am told,' said Frederica; 'but who was Jim Billings? and how did you become aware that he knew anything respecting the child?'

'Jim was a footman at Belair at that time, and was courting my Nance; and she, soft-like, as all wenches are when they're in love, let out everything to him about the lad, and asked him whose child he thought it was. Jim laughed at her, and called her a young fool, and said he knew well enow whose child it was, and all about it; but that he wasn't going to tell her or anybody else, because it was a secret, and he meant to make a lot of money out of it.'

'And what became of this man? Did he marry your daughter?'

'Not him,' said Meg. 'He got into trouble soon

after that—was mixed up in some way with a robbery—and got twenty years across the herring-pond. Nance went to see him when he was in the stone-jug, and didn't forget to ask him about the child—you see, we thought we might as well make a bit of money by the secret, now he was going away. But do what Nance would, she couldn't get him to split. "The secret will keep," said he. "I shall be back before ten years are over, and then I shall make my fortune out of it." But we never saw Jim Billings after that day; and whether he's alive or dead, I neither know nor care.'

After a few more questions of minor importance, Frederica laid the remaining five sovereigns on the table, and rose to go. 'I shall call and see you another day, if you will let me,' she said—'not about this matter, but about yourself. I want to see you with more comforts round you, and in a happier frame of mind than you are at present.'

'Ay, ay, bless your sweet face, miss; I shall allus be glad to see you. But Meg has been a bad un all her life, and a bad un she'll die—yes, a bad un she'll die.'

Jane Garrod, turning to look as she followed Frederica out of the room, saw Meg winking, and beckoning to her to go back and take a friendly dram out of the black bottle, which she had already brought from its hiding-place.

CHAPTER XXX.—A FRUITLESS VISIT.

On leaving Grellier's almshouses, Miss Spence-laugh drove into Normanford, and was set down at the *Hand and Dagger*. After hearing Old Meg's narrative, she had at once decided to call upon Mrs Winch. There was just a faint possibility, Frederica thought, that when the landlady learned how much was known to her already, she might see the uselessness of further concealment, and deem it best to make a full confession of her share in the abduction of the child. At all events, the chance was one worth trying. What she had just heard at Eastingham only served to confirm more fully her belief in the truth of John English's strange story. Having taken this matter in hand, she was determined to go through with it, happen what might.

It was the slack time of the day at the *Hand and Dagger*, and Mrs Winch was seated at work in her own little room. She rose in some confusion as Frederica was ushered in, and a dark frown passed like a spasm over her face; but she recovered herself immediately. 'This is indeed an honour, Miss Spence-laugh,' she said, with a respectful courtesy. 'I sincerely trust that Sir Philip is no worse; and her Ladyship—I hope that she is quite well.—Maria, a chair for Miss Spence-laugh.—Will you allow me to offer you a glass of sherry and a biscuit?'

Frederica declined the refreshment, but accepted the chair. She had come in alone, leaving Jane Garrod in the brougham. She was perplexed in what way to begin what she wanted to say. She felt, rather than saw, the landlady's cold inquisitive eyes fixed upon her; and perceived more clearly than she had hitherto done the difficulties of the task before her. She would have felt more reassured could she have known how timidly the widow's usually fearless heart was beating—could she have known what gnawing anxiety, what haunting fears, were at work behind that pale, colourless face, intent on nothing more important just then, as

it seemed, than the neat folding up of a piece of embroidery, the completion of which Miss Spencelaugh's arrival had delayed.

'You are, I believe,' said Frederica, 'acquainted with a gentleman of the name of Mr John English?'

'Mr English? O yes, I know him very well,' said the landlady with a ready smile. 'He slept here two nights on his first arrival at Normanford; and a more affable, pleasant-spoken gentleman I don't know anywhere.'

'Mr English had, I believe, on one occasion, some conversation with you on a rather peculiar topic. I daresay you know to what I allude.'

'Pardon my stupidity, but really I do not,' said the widow as cool as an icicle. 'Mr English and I had many conversations together. Will you oblige me by giving me more precise details as to the topic in question?'

Frederica flushed slightly. There was a lurking defiance in the widow's manner of saying these words that chafed her. 'Mr English spoke to you on one occasion respecting a child,' she said, with that cold metallic ring in her voice which was never heard except when her pride was touched—'a child who was taken to America by your brother, Dr Kreefe, and his wife. You, Mrs Winch, were by when the child was put on board ship. Mr English asked you the child's name, and to whom it belonged; and I am here to-day to ask you the same question.'

'Oh,' said the widow with a little shrug, 'is that all? What a trifling matter to need so elaborate a preface! I answered Mr English's question, as I now answer yours, Miss Spencelaugh. The child belonged to a friend of my brother, who had emigrated about a year previously, and Jeremiah agreed to take him out to rejoin his parents at New York. The circumstance was such a trivial one that I had really forgotten it till Mr English recalled it to my recollection. Mr English was quite satisfied with my explanation, and I am certainly at a loss to understand why so great a lady as Miss Spencelaugh should'—

'Stop one moment, if you please,' said Frederica coldly. 'Mr English was not satisfied with your explanation, otherwise I should not be here to-day. Do you mean to assert positively, Mrs Winch, that you know nothing more respecting the child who was taken by your brother and his wife to America than you have just now told me?'

'I do assert so, most positively.'

'And yet it was this very child, Mrs Winch, who was taken by you to White Grange; and after being locked up there for six weeks, was fetched away surreptitiously after nightfall by yourself and your brother! And yet you tell me that you do not know its name!'

The widow's pale face grew a shade paler as Frederica spoke, and an evil look came into her eyes.

'Where did you learn all that?' she exclaimed. 'A lie! a lie! every word of it, I tell you. And even if it were true, which I deny that it is, what right have you, or any other person, to come prying into my private affairs? I will not be questioned thus about matters that concern myself alone. You have got my answer—I know nothing about the child; and if you question me till doomsday, I have none other to give.'

'Take care!' said Frederica gravely as she rose from her seat. 'The net is closing round you slowly but surely; the links of the chain are being

forged one by one, and but few are wanting now. Be warned in time. Reveal everything, and so save yourself while you can yet do so. Soon it will be too late.'

'Go, go!' said the widow in a hoarse whisper, with one hand pressed to her heart, while the other pointed to the door. 'Go, before I do myself or you an injury. You presume on your position, Miss Spencelaugh, to come and insult me in my own house. But I can bear it no longer. Go!'

Frederica bowed her head, and drew her veil over her face, and passed out slowly without another word.

'Who told her about White Grange, I wonder?' said the widow to herself as soon as the door was closed behind her visitor. 'Why, who could tell her but old Meg Fennell! There's no one else left alive that knows of it. To think that the old witch should tell, after keeping the secret so faithfully all these years! But she would sell her own soul for gold. I thought I had buried her alive, put her out of the way of being found by anybody, when I got her into the almshouse at Eastingham. But though they've found out all about White Grange, they've yet to prove who the child was that was taken there; and who is there now living that could tell them that, except her Ladyship and myself? And even if, by some miracle, they got to know it, and the worst came to the worst, why, even in that case, we should have nothing really to fear.—Ah! Miss Frederica, dear, it is plain to see who has won your proud heart at last; but you little dream that at the end of your search you will find yourself in the arms of a skeleton! There was something diabolical in the laugh with which the widow ended these words. She then took a purse from her pocket, which she proceeded to open, and drew from it a piece of paper folded up into a very small compass, which she opened and smoothed out very carefully. It was a telegram, and the information it conveyed was comprised in one short line. A triumphant smile lighted up the widow's pale face as she read it. 'So ends the tragedy,' she said. 'The heroine may weep for her hero, but he will never come back again; his is the sleep that knows no waking. I will go up to Belair after dusk this evening, and shew this paper to my Lady. What a weary load it will lift off her heart!' She carefully refolded the telegram, and put it away in her purse. 'Poor young gentleman!' she murmured. 'How kindly, and brave, and handsome he was! He deserved a better fate.—Maria, bring me a small glass of cognac.'

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AGAINST INANIMATE OBJECTS.

THE title of this paper is not one of those enigmatical ones which I perceive to be so fashionable now-a-days, wherein a riddle, as it were, is propounded to the Reader at the very commencement, which may or may not be resolved by the time he has perused the entire essay. When I say Inanimate Objects, I do not refer, for instance, to plain and phlegmatic females, although a good deal might with reason be written against *them* beside Mr Bailey's pardonable though scarcely chivalrous aspiration: 'I wish I was behind you with a brad-awl!' I simply mean Things without Life—artificial ones only, for I know better than to find fault with Nature's handiwork—which arouse the passion of anger in the human breast with greater frequency than even the conduct of Boys themselves.

For example, I am about to seal a letter, for I am one of those old-fashioned persons who still use wax, and object to sear my tongue with patent gum and the backs of postage-stamps until it becomes as glutinous as an anteater's: well, I have just placed the seal at the left-hand corner of my desk, and have dropped the wax in a fine oval upon the envelope; all is prepared for the impression of my family arms, a Tortoise *passant* over a Hare *couchant*, and the motto *Patientia vincit omnia*; when—hey presto—the seal is gone! I put it there—*there*, in that left corner, not a moment ago (I will take my Bible oath of it), and now it's gone! I am not a passionate man, goodness knows; I don't think anybody ever heard a profane expression escape my lips; but when I am quite alone, and these sort of things occur, I use a Formula. Surely my readers must have suffered again and again from this extraordinary and magical disappearance of Inanimate Objects, and will admit the necessity of some safety-valve for the feelings in such a case. I know a most respectable old lady, the widow of a Doctor of Divinity, who, when 'put out,' always invokes the northern counties of England—Northumberland, Cumberland, Westmoreland, and Durham—magnificent names, with a slightly

blasphemous ring about them, and I recommend ladies of hasty temper to take a leaf out of her book. For myself, however, I confess that shibboleth is not sufficiently powerful, and I use another mixture, equally innocent, but of a more satisfying kind.

But this seal, and how it has got away! Mis-laid *itself*, you know; for that's what it comes to, and no less—how can we explain it? 'Here to-day, and gone to-morrow,' is a startling statement with respect to human mortality; but how can it compare with 'Here this instant, and gone the next,' as has happened to my seal? The seal is said to be rather like a human creature, but no analogy can be founded on that circumstance; for if it had been a pencil-case, or a bit of blotting-paper, or an inch of Indian ink, the same thing is just as likely to have occurred. The sudden and mysterious appearance of Inanimate Objects is a matter that has never yet been properly handled. We are all aware that they *do* disappear, instantaneously, unaccountably, and oftentimes as irrecoverably as though they had been magnetically attracted to the centre of the earth; but the explanation of the phenomenon has never been attempted. Perhaps the philosophers secretly shrink from grappling with a circumstance so weird and supernatural; and I must acknowledge that the belief in the influence of demons in small domestic mischances (still common among the Irish peasantry) is hereby afforded no little excuse. Don't tell me that we ourselves mislay the articles in question, and have forgotten where we placed them, for such an explanation is simply an insult to your fellow-creatures. As for that seal, you might just as well endeavour to persuade me that I could mislay my hand or my foot. Yes, I am aware that I am near-sighted; and a nice, gentlemanly, agreeable person you are to remind folks of their physical imperfections—but I can see a yard all round me (except of course Behind), and much more ten inches and a half, which is the exact visual distance to the left-hand corner of my desk, where I placed that seal. Pooh, pooh. Of course I know the particular disadvantage under which I

labour. Often and often, have I gone about with my spectacles pushed up on my forehead, in the utmost fume and fury, because they were not in their case, nor anywhere else where I looked for them; my Formula itself was scarcely adequate to those terrible occasions; I have sat down—I confess it—and stamped with irritation to think that some of those Boys (my nephews) had carried off my spectacles, and would probably bring them back, if they brought them back at all, with only one glass. But it is not to such exceptional misadventures that I here allude. I am speaking of the sufferings that all of us, whether blind or not, endure from Inanimate Objects.

Still confining myself to the subject of their disappearance, what words can paint the desolation that seizes the human soul upon finding, in a strange house where one is a guest for the first time, and when the second dinner-bell is just on the point of ringing, that there is no button to the collar of one's embroidered shirt. This deficiency can scarcely be called unexpected, for washerwomen are the natural enemies of mankind, and are always doing them injuries, either of this sort, or through unpunctuality and iron-mould; but the dreadful consequences of the thing make up, and more, for the absence of that one element of horror—Surprise. We have dressed, with the exception of coat and waistcoat, in entire ignorance of our loss, and only discover it as we prepare to affix our shirt-collar to the treacherous band. If it had been any other button of the shirt that was missing, an erect position, and the hand artistically placed over the spot, would have carried us through the evening without discovery; but the collar-button is the very seat and principle of existence as respects costume, without which there is no such thing as being dressed at all. No; there is nothing for it but the taking everything off again (including those exquisite studs, which took five minutes apiece to put in one's shirt-front without creasing), and the Formula for those who have one. If one, who has no such innocent safety-valve, is led to use 'a few cursory observations,' as struggling to disembarass himself of his garments, like Hercules with the shirt of Nessus, he pictures to himself the assembled guests below, and his punctual host standing, watch in hand, with his back to the drawing-room-fire, let us hope that the Recording Angel will take the excessive provocation into account, and, as in the case of Uncle Toby, obliterate the accusing words with a pitying tear.

Another rather trying position in which one is apt to be placed when away from home, and without one's wife, is the not being able to part one's hair. Love, they say, is like a Wig, because *the worst of it is the Parting*; but the same may be also said of one's own hair, and especially of that portion of it at the back of one's head. Some men don't part their hair at all, and others have none to part; but those, perhaps overcast and precise folks, who, like myself, make a practice of doing so, will bear me out in the statement that there are few Inanimate Objects with which a man is more apt to get in a passion than with his Comb. It does its mission, with respect to that straight white furrow, well enough, so long as its progress can be watched in the glass, and when coming home (if I may say so) under one's own eye; but at the top of the head, and still worse, behind it, you feel that its course has been erratic in the extreme. In vain, you turn your head round swiftly in hopes to

catch the reflection of the back of it in the mirror before it has time to fade away. The comb is taken in hand, and blindly guided, hither and thither, until, with a hideous ejaculation, you dash it to the ground, and knock three or four of its teeth out. To ask the lady of the house, or even the chambermaid, to be so good as to part one's hair for one, is a thing we seldom venture to do.

One of the most terrible domestic positions is to find one's self at an inn—for such things do not happen in well-regulated private households—in a bed that is too long for the sheet, or rather, where the sheet is too short for the bed. No suspicion of the state of things has been awakened by the external appearance of the couch: the fair white linen is liberally folded down above the counterpane. It is only when you have (literally) 'got to the bottom of it' that you become aware of the hideous deficiency. There is blanket, rough, unpleasant, ticklish blanket next to your astonished toes. The light is out, and you have no means of getting another; you are addicted to sitting up o' nights, and therefore all the people are gone to bed; is it worth while to rouse all the house, as well as those whom it immediately concerns, in order to inform you that your sheet is too short for your bed? That is the question, as you lie with your knees tucked up, rolling the Formula about on the tip of your tongue. A short man would never have found anything amiss, but you are six feet two in your stockings, though, unfortunately, you have not got your stockings on. It is doubtful whether you could 'make a bed' in broad daylight; it is certain you cannot do so in the dark. What can you do, then? Why, you grasp the sheet between your feet (like an acrobat), and compel it to come down lower; as you do so, the whole paraphernalia of the bed-clothes goes to pieces; the mischief, no bettered in the original situation, extends all over the bed; you find pieces of blanket everywhere; what is worse than all, the pillow slowly unrolls itself—for that sheet was pillow-case also—and all is desolation and ruin. Thus thoroughly uncomfortable and sleepless, you are in an admirable situation for observing the irritating behaviour of other Inanimate Objects, beside that sheet, which would never have come under your notice during the day. A door, you know not where, goes 'bang, bang' in the silence of the night, as though it were firing minute-guns for the death of your Sleep: nay, your own door rattles at unexpected intervals, just as though somebody were trying the handle. There is not a breath of wind—although the exposed portions of your frame are very cold, and if you draw the clothes over them, others are laid bare—and yet those doors keep on 'bang, bang,' and 'rattle, rattle' like heavy artillery and musketry. This is very odd, but I suppose the statement will scarcely be set down to my being short-sighted, and indeed I am sure it will be corroborated by every one who has lain awake all night in a strange house. There are certainly other noises that need explanation beside spirit-rapping.

Another disagreeable attribute of doors at Inns, and especially of bedroom doors, is, that though they have keys, key-holes, and a proper hole for the reception of the bolt, they stubbornly refuse to lock. The landlord sagaciously observes that the wood has shrunk, and then imagines that he has himself shrunk from all responsibility. But the nervous guest, who does not believe in putting the

water-jug on the top of a chair, as an insurmountable obstacle to Burglars, will go on turning that key for hours, until suddenly it shoots in with a thud. Finding it, however, quite impossible to turn it back again, and being at least as much afraid of Fire as Thieves, the door has to be forced open, and he finally retires for the night (but not to rest) with nothing but a plank with flapping hinges between himself and the expected Murderers.

A golosh too big for one—it seems almost big enough for two—is a very unpleasant Inanimate Object, if that can be called so which slips about independent of your own will, and buries itself in the wet ground like a mud-fish; although even this is not so bad as a tight boot.

An umbrella that won't open, is another trial to the temper; a sharp shower sets in, and you find this whalebone apparatus not a bit more useful than a walking-stick, until, just as the sun comes out, you burst open the refractory contrivance with violence, and half the ribs fly through the silk. If you think you will ever shut it again after *that*, you are very much mistaken.

When you hire an open carriage, your modesty will probably induce you to take the back-seat: now, that back-seat, which sticks up very well of itself, will, now that you have begun to lean against it, obstinately endeavour to fall forward; it keeps tapping against your shoulders with the persistency of that famous drop of water that formed so cheap and popular a torture with the Holy Inquisition, and will drive you almost as frantic. Now, why does this happen, I should like to know?

When you are 'driving yourself,' as the phrase goes, and you benevolently endeavour to flick a fly off your horse's ear, what a sad affair it is to find your whip-lash fast in the harness. You might have tried to hitch it there ten thousand times, and would have failed; but now, if you had got out, and tied it, it could not be more securely fastened. You can't leave the vehicle, because the horse won't let you get in again; but although a notorious runaway, he now begins to crawl as though he were in the shafts of a one-horse hearse, for he knows that you can't give him the whip because you have given it to him already.

A fishing-line hitched in a tree is also a situation likely to evoke the Formula.

A cab-window that you cannot quite close, even though it rains, for fear of being suffocated, and from the reflection that several patients bound for the Small-pox Hospital may have recently ridden in it, is a very objectionable Inanimate Object when there is no button (and there never is) to hold the window-strap. You have to keep it in your hand as though you were deep-sea fishing, and do so until you are nearing your destination, when, looking round for your traps, you forget all about it, and suddenly leave go of your slippery charge; then the window falls to the bottom of its receptacle, and is smashed to atoms.

There are some Inanimate Objects which awaken other sensations than those of irritation or anger, such as Roasted Apples, which instantly suggest powders, and give one an attack of the shivers; and Cold Water, which reminds one, by a twitter in the small of the back, of taking pills; but these are rather foreign to the subject of this paper. To come suddenly with a tender tooth, as one is eating game, upon a large round shot (such as are used in fowling-pieces of course; not cannon), is to

anticipate, if I may say so, the Destruction of the Universe. For a moment, besides the complete disintegration of one's own private physical economy, the End of the World seems really to have arrived! It is far worse than ice-pudding, which, as we all know, caused poor Sir Alured Denne to use such sad language, after having promised St Romwold never to swear again:

Astonishment, horror, distraction of mind,
Rage, misery, fear, and iced pudding—combined!
Lip, forehead, and cheek—how these mingle and meet,

All colours, all hues, now advance, now retreat,
Now pale as a turnip, now crimson as beet!
How he grasps his arm-chair in attempting to rise,
See his veins how they swell! mark the roll of his eyes!

Now east, and now west, now north, and now south,
Till at last he contrives to eject from his mouth

That vile spoonful—what

He has got he knows not;

He isn't quite sure if it's cold or it's hot;
At last he exclaims, as he starts from his seat:
A snow-ball, by — what I decline to repeat.

For Sir Alured, poor fellow, was unacquainted with the Formula.

It is seldom that Inanimate Objects become odious, unless in private life; but there are two exceptions which greatly harass my individual mind in London streets. The one is a great painted face with a gaping mouth and canvas throat and palate, exposed at a certain toy-shop in Oxford Street I have to pass every day of my life, and which haunts my dreams; the other is a picture of Prometheus Bound, with his liver being pecked at by the Vulture, which has met my gaze so long in Chancery Lane that it is actually affecting my liver. Both these distressing exhibitions I shall one day have to buy and burn.

Nothing else save the few little things which I have mentioned ever ruffles the naturally smooth cur—cur—cur—current of my tem—tem— If there is one Inanimate Object in this world which excites my indignation and fury beyond endurance, it is a steel pen that won't write, and *I have got hold of one now*. I have tried him forwards, and I have tried him backwards; I have coaxed him, and given him ink enough for ten pens: and now, I have dashed his points against the desk, and broken them both, and I feel a little better. Excuse, Mr Printer, my setting down these last few words in pencil.

EVERYBODY'S CARRIAGE STOPS THE WAY.

YES, everybody's carriage stops the way. The omnibuses bringing city-men to business are reduced to an alternation of crawl and stand-still by the time they reach the city margin. The Hansom cabs can only go ahead by getting entangled among the four-wheelers, and endangering the lives of Materfamilias and the little ones. The private carriages of aldermen and well-to-do city, when they venture east of Temple Bar, are in imminent peril of having their glossy panels burst in. The coal-wagons, brewers' drays, dock-wagons, and sugar-wagons, block the way, and are blocked; although they don't care, for nothing can hurt them. The hop-wagons threaten to hurl their bags and

pockets into the first-floor windows; while the timber-wagons are always ready to dash into the plate-glass shop-windows. Pickford is ever quarrelling with Chaplin and Horne, as to which did not get out of the way when the other was coming. Butchers' and poulterers' carts at Leadenhall and Newgate Streets keep all other carts in defiance; while fishmongers' carts effectually blockade Lower Thames Street. To make matters worse, the Chatham and Dover Company are always either tearing up or blocking out the streets; or if not they, the Holborn Valley improvers; or if not they, the sewer-makers; or if not they, the water-companies; or if not they, the gas-companies; or if not they, the Pneumatic-tube people. Turn which way we may, we are in a peck of troubles; almost shut out from our own London, by obstacles that try the patience sorely.

The corporation, dismayed at this system of almost perpetual blockade, requested Mr Haywood, in the early part of the present year, to 'see about it'—to determine the extent of the evil, and, if possible, to devise some mode of cure. That active and well-informed engineer and surveyor to the City Commissioners of Sewers, has sent in a Report crammed with information. He tells us that the population of the metropolis has increased from 960,000 in 1801, to 3,000,000 in 1865; that he expects it to be nearly 6,000,000 by the end of the century; that there is one parish or district, East London, having as many as 170,000 persons to the square mile; and another, Lewisham, having so few as 2400; that the actual number of people in the heart of the metropolis is less now than it was ten years ago, owing to the pulling down of dwelling-houses to make room for banks, insurance-offices, commercial buildings, warehouses, and railways; that the suburbs are rapidly thickening in population, in a far greater ratio than the city is thinning; and that all these suburban people have an inveterate knack of considering the city as *their* city, and dabbling in it to an extent immensely increasing every year. He further tells us, that our hundred and twenty square miles of land, forming the present metropolis, will probably be increased by forty square miles more by the end of the century—driving the green fields away to a most alarming distance. The city, properly so called, is barely a mile square—a very small but rich kernel in a very large shell; and this 'city' is the part which is becoming choked with traffic more and more every year. The streets, roads, lanes, and alleys of various kinds in the city amount to the large number of 913; but only 154 of these are wide enough to admit two or more lines of carriages—in itself a very significant cause of blockade. Altogether, these public ways extend fifty miles in length, and cover one-fourth of the area of the city. There are about fifty inlets at which we may enter the city; these inlets being streets, paved courts, bridges, steam-boat piers, water-side stairs, and railway stations; or rather, there were this number in 1860; for there have been several additional railway stations opened within the city in the last six years.

Let us see to what extent the people, cits and non-cits, block these city streets; and let us compare the figures with a few others relating to the western districts of the metropolis. In 1850, Mr Haywood selected twenty-four spots in the city, and caused each spot to be watched from eight in the

morning till eight in the evening, on a summer day, with a view of ascertaining the number of vehicles which passed each spot. The enormous number of 13,000 passed over London Bridge in the twelve hours; nearly as many passed through Cheapside; while the next busiest spots were the Poultry, Temple Bar, Ludgate Hill, Newgate Street, Leadenhall Street, Blackfriars Bridge, Cornhill, Gracechurch Street, and Bishopsgate Street. The busiest hour was from four to five in the afternoon; and this was nearly equalled by the hour from ten to eleven in the forenoon. About the same period, between eight in the morning and five in the afternoon, there entered the city 315,000 persons—an average day, not selected on account of any peculiar circumstances. On another day, Mr Bennoch ascertained that 10,767 vehicles crossed London Bridge in nine hours. In 1853, the five bridges were watched for nine hours on a particular day: 63,000 foot-passengers and 11,500 vehicles crossed London Bridge; Blackfriars and Westminster Bridges divided between them nearly an equal number; while the two toll-bridges took mere dribbets; the total was 127,030 foot-passengers, and 23,713 vehicles—London Bridge accommodating almost exactly as much traffic as the other four combined. In 1854, there passed over Westminster Bridge in one week 341,398 foot-passengers, 3046 horsemen, 19,157 cabs, 5326 omnibuses, 24,579 carts, 1299 wagons, 2265 vans, 526 donkey-carts, and 1942 trucks. In 1855, a particular mode of enumeration brought out the fact, that 400,000 persons entered or left the city on foot, 88,000 by omnibus, 54,000 by the railway termini, and 30,000 by steam-boat piers, in one day; but this was afterwards believed to have overstated some of the items, and understated others. In 1856, on an October day, Mr Haywood ascertained that in twelve hours the wonderful number of 16,000 vehicles passed over London Bridge. In 1857, on a winter's day, the London Bridge traffic comprised about 15,000 vehicles and 85,000 foot-passengers between eight in the morning and eight in the evening. In 1859, the late Mr Daniel Whittle Harvey, as Commissioner of City Police, caused London Bridge to be watched for twenty-four consecutive hours; he found that the stupendous total of 107,000 foot-passengers, 61,000 persons in vehicles, and 20,000 vehicles of one kind or other, crossed the bridge in this time. In May 1860, all the inlets to the city were carefully watched during the whole twenty-four hours on one day, and it was found that 706,621 persons—equal to one-fourth of the entire population of the whole metropolis—entered the city in one day. This is equal to the census population of twenty such towns as Ashton, Bury, Cardiff, Chatham, Chester, Exeter, Halifax, Huddersdale, Ipswich, Macclesfield, Northampton, Rochdale, Wigan, or Worcester, combined. Were it not that Mr Haywood gives the sanction of his name to this statement, we should hardly know how to give it credence. 'And this is the true population,' he adds; 'for although not residential, most of its waking existence is spent within the city limits; and it comprises mainly the owners of the city property, and the creators of its wealth, importance, and traffic.' Still more puzzling is it when we are told that, as five-sixths of all the persons who enter the city are males, it gives a total of 590,000 males—not far under one-half of the whole male population of the metropolis. Male and female together, about one-fourth of all the persons who

entered the city were in or on vehicles. Although there are about fifty entrances into the city, one-half of the whole traffic entered it at eight places—Aldgate, Aldersgate, Bishopsgate, Blackfriars, Finsbury, Temple Bar, Holborn, and London Bridge. Pass we on to 1863, when 26,000 vehicles crossed London Bridge in one day, and 11,000 crossed Blackfriars Bridge. This, comparing the census returns of different years, shews that vehicles increase even still more rapidly than the population. Then, in 1864, taking Oxford Street instead of the city, 11,000 vehicles passed one spot in twelve hours of one day. In 1865, just about the same number passed a particular spot in Regent Street in twelve hours—shewing that the West End also has its busy streams of vehicular traffic; but then Oxford Street and Regent Street are places of magnificent width, which Fleet Street and Ludgate Hill, Newgate Street and the Poultry, might well envy. In the same period of twelve hours, in the same year, 76,000 vehicles passed one or other of the eight busiest inlets into the city, named a few lines back.

There! If the reader is not satisfied with these bewildering groups of figures, his appetite can only be satiated with a whole book of mathematical tables. The figures are really very instructive, if we look at them with reference to the blockade of the city streets. Well indeed may there be a blockade. Even some years before the railway turmoil commenced in Ludgate Hill, Skinner Street, and Cannon Street, Mr Bennoch thus depicted the struggle against difficulties encountered by a vehicle in wending its way from west to east through the metropolis: 'Along the Strand, the progress is steady and rapid; there is room for two or three vehicles each way, making four or five altogether. They approach Temple Bar; the two or three vehicles passing eastward are met by two or three going westward. But even supposing there be only two proceeding each way, there is only room for one to pass through the Bar in each direction at the same time. The process is like drawing a wire: the two lines of traffic are drawn into one, and the result is that carriages occupy exactly double the time they ought to do. This is obstruction the first, and the experience of all will confirm the fact. At Chancery Lane, a stream of traffic from Camden Town to Kensington, by way of Blackfriars, swells the tide, and, meeting with contending currents in Farringdon Street, they chafe, or rather chaff each other, and all progress is for a while suspended: Fleet Street is blocked up. By and by, that is cleared, and there is a cheerful trot round St Paul's. A slight check is felt at the corner nearest Cheap-side; and a third lock takes place in the Poultry. We pass the shoals of the Mansion House, where the diverging streets are as numerous as the mouths of the Danube; and ultimately we get into the Straits of Cornhill. But a fourth lock occurs in the gorge of Leadenhall.'

Considering how cruelly vehicles are detained in the streets by this blockade, and considering, moreover, that time is money, a long-headed fellow has estimated how much money is wasted thereby. He thinks that the carriers, cab-owners, omnibus companies, wharfingers, and wholesale dealers of the metropolis lose a hundred thousand pounds a year in this way! It must be admitted that such an estimate is rather a wild one, although the loss is really very great.

Besides the entrances into and the exits from the

city, the circulation within the city itself is something immense. The reader of course knows that wonderful spot which all the omnibuses-men in London call 'Bank,' but which is the open space whence branch out the Poultry, Princes Street, Threadneedle Street, Cornhill, Lombard Street, King William Street, and Walbrook. Well, this open space, every day between eight o'clock and five, is crossed by sixty thousand persons on foot; sixty thousand persons risk their necks by crossing over between and among the vehicles. Lucky it is that Mrs Gamp is not often here; poor soul, she would soon be run over; and so would Mrs Grundy, Mrs Partington, and other famous old women. It is a place for men, and men nearly monopolise it. Then there are more than forty thousand who cross on foot, within the same number of hours, the spot surrounding King William's Statue, marked by the junction of King William Street, Gracechurch Street, and Cannon Street; nearly forty thousand at the junction of Ludgate Hill, Fleet Street, Farringdon Street, and New Bridge Street; and nearly thirty thousand at the junction of Cornhill, Leadenhall, Bishopsgate, and Gracechurch Streets.

What is to be done? What can be done with streets blocked up in this way by human beings and all kinds and shapes of vehicles? We sacrifice lives, we break limbs, we ruin horses, we fracture vehicles, we exasperate tempers, and we waste much valuable time; and it is not easy, as the corporation have amply proved, to devise a remedy. Mr Haywood calls for new openings, new inlets and outlets, wherever they can be made. He points to the fact, that when the Brighton Railway Company opened their Victoria branch to Pimlico in 1860, a large amount of traffic was thereby diverted from London Bridge; that when the South-eastern opened their Charing Cross Extension in 1864, three-fourths of the Dover and Hastings traffic were very speedily transferred thither from London Bridge; that when New Southwark Street was opened from end to end in the same year, a large amount of traffic was at once transferred from London Bridge to that at Blackfriars; that when Southwark Bridge was opened toll-free last year, the vehicle-traffic over it increased fivefold, mostly to the relief of London Bridge. These are all promising instances, because they tend to shew that traffic eagerly avails itself of new outlets. If these outlets had not been formed, London Bridge would by the present time have become almost impassable. Mr Haywood states that, even now, the average rate of progress for vehicles over the bridge, and for some distance north and south of it, barely exceeds three miles and a half an hour; so choked with traffic is the whole route.

'We must have another bridge below London Bridge,' the city engineer strenuously asserts: or, if not a bridge, a tunnel. He ascertains that just about one million inhabitants of the metropolis live eastward of London Bridge, and that this bridge is the only channel over the river for the vehicles belonging to that million of persons, comprising a very large proportion of the heaviest wagons, vans, and carts. Buy Southwark Bridge, by all means, and make it permanently toll-free; finish the new street from Blackfriars to the Mansion House; finish the new Blackfriars Bridge, on which workmen are now so busily and usefully occupied; but there will still remain London Bridge charged with the large traffic of the eastern

half of the metropolis, supplemented by no inconsiderable a portion of the western. Cost what it may, a new eastern bridge or tunnel for vehicles as well as foot-passengers, *must* be made sooner or later; such is the bold assertion of Mr Haywood.

As for the east and west traffic, he wants a supply of new streets that would frighten all the finance companies in England to pay for. From Temple Bar to Aldgate Pump, the whole length is too narrow, notwithstanding that the traffic has been relieved by the opening of New Cannon Street. It is curious to see how Mr Haywood couples his remarks concerning the want of new streets with other remarks touching the advantages derived from such new streets as have already been made; but there is no inconsistency in this; he shews that if the new streets had not been made, we should have been choked by this time; while, on the other hand, the success of the remedial measures encourages us to go on in the same path. Works already authorised, and more or less commenced, will mend our ways a little. There is the Thames Embankment, which, when finished, will take off some of the traffic which throngs the Strand and Fleet Street. There is the new street from Blackfriars Bridge to Cannon Street and the Mansion House, which will relieve Ludgate Hill, St Paul's Churchyard, and Cheapside. There is the new Palace of Justice in the Strand, which, when finished, will probably lead to the removal of the courts of law from Guildhall, and the relief of some of the traffic in that quarter. There is the Holborn Valley Viaduct, which is just now the cause of hopeless confusion at that unfortunate spot where Holborn Hill, Farringdon Street, Skinner Street, Snow Hill, and Farringdon Road meet; it will facilitate the division of the two streams of traffic which go respectively east and west, and north and south. There is the new Meat-market at Smithfield, which, when it and the adjacent roads are finished, will clear Newgate Street of its present extremely aggravating market (Paternoster Row people well know *how* aggravating it is!), will possibly clear Leadenhall and Whitechapel Markets, and will furnish a new line of route from Holborn to Long Lane and the north-east of London. There is the new Blackfriars Bridge, already mentioned, which, being wider and more level than the old bridge, will eventually accommodate a larger traffic. There are the widenings of existing streets by the City Commissioners of Sewers, actually in progress, at certain parts of Leadenhall Street, Fenchurch Street, Great Tower Street, Newgate Street, Upper Thames Street, Mansion House Street, and Ludgate Hill. There are other contemplated widenings at Basinghall Street, Bluecoat Buildings, Lime Street, Liverpool Street, Lombard Street, Seething Lane, Threadneedle Street, Throgmorton Street, Tottenham Yard, Bevis Marks, King's Head Court, London Wall, and Silver Street. There are the many new railway stations—the South-eastern in Cannon Street, the Great Eastern in Liverpool Street, the East London, also in Liverpool Street, the North London in Broad Street, the Metropolitan at Moorfields, the Metropolitan Extension at Tower Hill, the Metropolitan District at many points between Tower Hill and Blackfriars, and the never-satisfied and never-satisfying Chatham and Dover at Ludgate Hill—all these, in their several ways, will take off some of the people and some of the vehicles which throng the streets.

Nevertheless, it is almost incredible how much the traffic of all kinds in the London streets increases, despite these railway facilities. The Great Omnibus Company say they carried 1,357,645 more passengers in 1865 than in 1864, notwithstanding that the Metropolitan and the Chatham railways had apparently diverted much of the traffic. In truth, travel-facilities increase travel-tendency, supply creates demand, stay-at-home people cease to stay at home when there are so many means of getting out about.

If all that Mr Haywood recommends to be done should be done, the millions of money would be wanted with a rapidity absolutely startling; indeed, where the money is to come from, we cannot even guess. Let us see. *Item First.*—A new bridge over the Thames, either near Great Tower Hill or near St Katherine's Docks, with broad and convenient approach-roads from Whitechapel in the north, and from Bermondsey in the south, so as to constitute an entirely new line of route from Shoreditch to the Kent Road. How the masted vessels could get up to Billingsgate under such a bridge, or what sum the bridge and its approaches would cost, the reader may determine if he can. Mr Haywood's mode of dealing with the subject is peculiar; he says, this bridge *must* be made some day or other, and all collateral questions must be regarded merely as difficulties to be conquered. *Item Second.*

—A new street east and west, to relieve the main artery through the city. It would start from the eastern end of the Holborn Valley Viaduct, near St Sepulchre's Church, cut across the grounds of the Blue Coat School, cross St Martin's le Grand north of the Post-office, bisect Noble Street, Wood Street, and Aldermanbury, pass behind Guildhall and the Bank, cross Bell Alley to London Wall, cross Bishopsgate Street to Houndsditch, and so on to Whitechapel Road. This street would be about a mile and a quarter in length. Such a street would unquestionably relieve Cheapside and its continuation of a large amount of heavy merchandise traffic. But Mr Haywood says he must pull down Christ's Hospital to execute this work; and we may guess what a formidable financial enterprise this would be. *Item Third.*—A budget of improvements, which, speaking roundly, may be characterised as widening nearly all the narrow streets in the metropolis—Fleet Street from Chancery Lane to Temple Bar; the Old Bailey at its southern end; St Paul's Churchyard on the east and north sides; St Ann's Lane and Foster Lane behind the Post-office; the north end of Queen Street; the whole line of Long Lane and Barbican; the whole line of Beech Street and Chiswell Street; Duke Street at the Smithfield end; the Poultry in its whole length; and others so numerous that we can hardly spare space even to name them. *Item Fourth.*—This consists of many improvements distinct from mere widening of streets. Mr Haywood would make a Circus round Temple Bar, leaving the Bar in the middle of it, to please those who wish to see the old structure preserved. He would make a new street from Farringdon Street diagonally to Holborn near Hatton Garden; and another new street where Fleet Lane has till now hitherto been. He would pull down the clump of houses at the western end of Cheapside, to throw open the view of St Paul's, and to facilitate access to the neighbouring streets. He would continue Bouverie Street southward to the Thames Embankment. He would run a new street through the churchyard of

St Botolph, Bishopsgate, as a communication between Bishopsgate Street and New Broad Street.

If the reader can guess what all this would cost, we congratulate him on his acuteness; and if he can further tell us where the money is to come from, we shall be still more obliged to him. Great as the cost would be, Mr Haywood thinks that it would be double as great twenty years hence, owing to the rapidly increasing value of land in the city—a million sterling per acre in some recent instances. Meanwhile, Everybody's Carriage Stops the Way. The corporation have enacted by-laws, and parliament has passed a special statute for controlling the traffic in the streets; but it seems to require more wisdom than corporation and parliament possess to keep a clear path for everybody in a city of three million people, four hundred thousand houses, and eight thousand miles of street.

AN OCEAN WAIF.

IN NINE CHAPTERS.—CHAPTER VI.

I SUPPOSE it must have been the devil put it into my head, for while I was busy lowering things down into the boat, I thought how easy it would be to get upsides with the murdering party as were in the ship. I'd only got to turn over the cabin lantern, and she'd soon have been in a blaze, when my gentlemen would have had enough to do to save themselves, and the treasure must have gone to the bottom. But I shouldn't have done such a thing, and in another minute I should have been helping to shove off the boat, if that Hicks hadn't rushed on to his death; that was a terrible thing to think on, not but that he deserved it richly, and I knew what I did in self-defence, and for the sake of them two poor gals.

I should say it was about twelve o'clock when we laid to at it, and rowed straight off right away into the thick darkness, with not a sound to be heard but the 'lap, lap, lapping' of the water against the boat's stem, and the splash and rattle of our oars. There wasn't a word spoken, for we wanted all our breath, and knew well enough that all depended on our being well out of sight of the ship when day broke; and of course they would be sweeping the offing with a glass. What I was most afraid of was, that we might get rowing in a circle, and not get far enough off, when we knew what would be the end of it if they once caught sight of us. It quite made me give a shudder and lay back at my oar, till Tom said 'Steady!' when steady it was again.

There seemed something awful and solemn about that night: what with the horrors we had been through, and one thing and another, I felt quite outer sorts; and the still darkness we were driving through, far out there in the midst of the great ocean, seemed to hang heavy-like upon me, so that I did not care to speak. A regular long, steady pull, hour after hour, and all that while not a star to be seen, while I could barely distinguish my mate Tom when I looked over my shoulder; and in front sometimes I could make out something indistinct, which was the ladies, though not often. But it was hot, steaming hot, that night, for there

wasn't a breath of wind stirring; and at last the pull began to tell upon us both, so that we were glad to take another sup apiece of the wine; but that did not take us long, and we were off and away again faster than ever.

All at once, with a sort of jump, the clouds began to tinge, and we then knew what we didn't know before, that we were pulling due north; and then, almost all at once, up came the sun, and shone upon them two poor things fast asleep—worn out, as they sat in the bottom of the boat, with their arms tight round one another, and their poor faces that pale and bad, it was pitiful. Up went the sun higher, and there was the sea heaving gently and curling over, and all glowing with the most beautiful colours. But we had no thought for the glowing morning, for there was something else to take our attention—there lay the ship, not half the distance off that I had hoped; and so near, that I knew if a breeze sprung up, she must soon overhaul us. If the darkness had only kept on, I shouldn't have cared, but there it was, a bright, glowing morning; and I knew, if they looked out, they must see us; our only hope being that, half-drunk overnight, they might be hours yet before they roused up; and then, dispirited with the loss of their head man, they mightn't care about pursuit.

'Wash your face, Jack,' says Tom in a whisper, as we lay to, looking at the ship, now standing out quite plain on the horizon—'wash your face and hands, mate.'

I looked at my hands, and gave a shudder, for they were all over blood, while I suppose my face was in the same state, and it wasn't from the cut as I had on my head. So I leaned over the side, and had a good dip in the cool, pleasant water; and while I was drying myself upon my handkercher, Miss Mary gave a sigh, and opened her eyes, and looked at me as if she didn't know where she was, nor anything about it; but, directly after, the colour began to come into her cheeks, and she reached over her hand to me, and I kissed it; and then she reached her hand over to Tom, and he did the same; and of course we did it roughly, but Miss Mary seemed to know what we meant, and she gave us a sweet, sad smile, and then kissed her sister, and woke her.

We were dead beat, both of us, Tom and I; but I gave a look at the poor old *Star*, and so did Tom, and we quite understood one another, and rowed on with a quiet, steady stroke, for we were too tired to make a spurt. I got the ladies to sit down in the bottom of the boat, so as to shew as little as we could, and then we kept on till they begged of us to stop and have something by way of breakfast. You see Miss Mary had ranged the pillows and blankets, and made a place for her sister to lie down, for the poor gal was so ill she could hardly hold up her head; and then she had stowed the stores about a bit handy, and made things straight, in a way just as if she hadn't been a delicate lady as had never known trouble before. And now, as I said afore, she and her sister begged of us to stop and have some breakfast.

But we couldn't do it. I knew that every yard now was as good as a mile by and by, and though I felt ready to drop, it was pull steady, though we had a fresher as we went on.

I didn't think as they knew the ship was in sight, for nothing was said about it; but as she was passing a cup of wine over to Tom, Miss Mary leaned her hand upon my shoulder, and whispered: 'Don't let my sister know that the ship is in sight.'

How that poor girl did work to cheer up the other, as she lay there; and to have looked at her, you would not have thought she had a trouble upon her, for she had a cheerful word for all of us; and as I dragged away there at my oar, it seemed to me that we must have got an angel in the boat.

I did not want to make any more show than I could help, or I would have soon made an awning over where the ladies sat; but we laid a blanket across an oar, and sheltered Miss Madeline, for the sun came down fierce. I could have hoisted the sail, too, and let the light breeze, which now just touched us, give us a help along; but I daren't; and I'd just taken hold of my oar again, when I saw that the *Star* had some sails shook out, and was coming bowling along after us fast.

I couldn't help it: if my life had been at stake, that groan must have come; and just then there was another behind me. I turned sharp round just as Tom's oar hit me in the back, and there was the poor fellow swooned right away.

I laid the oars in, and Miss Mary came and helped me, when between us we got him laid in the bottom of the boat; and then, while putting him comfortable, I found what I didn't know before—that his head was regularly laid open, and there had he been working till he dropped, without saying a single word, or giving a groan. We bathed it, and tore up one of the sheets, and tied it up; and after a bit, he seemed to come to a little, but it was only to talk wildly, and throw his arms about, and stare. So when we had done all we could for the poor fellow, we made a sort of shelter over him; and then, as I was shading my eyes, and looking out towards the *Star*, to see what way she made, I found as I couldn't see her, and that things looked swimming and misty-like, and then back I went across the thwarts, as if struck down. But I wasn't long so, for I soon came to; and as I did so, and the horrible, deathly sick feeling went off, I felt the blood come up in my face with a rush, as a regular wild thrill ran through me, and I closed my eyes, and lay quite still, as if I dare not move; for there was that face bending over me, and those soft white hands were bathing my face; while twice over there was a tender, pitying tear fell upon my cheek.

'Poor fellows! what you have suffered for us,' she said, as I got up and said I was better now.

'It was that crack on the head, you see, miss,' I said.

'What! were you wounded, too?' she exclaimed.

'Oh, not much,' I said; 'not much, miss. One of those blackguards knocked me down in the scuffle. But,' I said, trying to put a good face on the matter, though I could not help feeling better as I said it—but I'm only a common, thick-headed sailor.'

'Hush!' she said, with such a quiet, dignified way as she could put on when she liked—'hush! Don't speak like that, when you have acted so nobly, so heroically, and—and—may God bless

you for it!' And here her voice seemed to break down, and she turned away her head for a minute; but directly after, she was quiet, and still, and reserved again, and tearing up some more of the sheet, as if to make bandages.

'Let me look at your head,' she says all at once; and though I was against it, and didn't want her to, she would examine it; and cut away the hair with a tiny pair of scissors, and then bathed it, and bound it up; and I suppose it was a bad cut, for if I didn't go right off again just as she'd bound it up, and only came to feeling sick and done up, and without a bit of life left in me hardly. The sun came down fiercer and fiercer, so that we were all soon parched with thirst, and glad of the water, as there was fortunately a good drop of; and Miss Mary wetted our lips for us from time to time, for after about an hour, I gave up, and was obliged to lie still.

And all this time the ship came slowly nearer and nearer, and Miss Mary told me from time to time as I asked her, and she did it, too, without moving a muscle; and at last, towards evening, when we knew they must see us as they came slowly on, Miss Mary kneeled down by me to put the bandage more comfortable, and then whispered to me with her face and lips, too, quite white: 'Was any one killed last night when you escaped?'

I couldn't do anything else, and so I said: 'Yes.'

'Who was it?' she said again in a voice that didn't seem to belong to her.

'It was his own fault,' I said: 'it was to save my own life.'

'Was it that fiend who shot poor papa?' she whispered.

'Yes,' I said; and then she closed her eyes for a bit, and did not speak; but after a time she leaned closer to me, so that I could feel her breath upon my face, and then she whispered: 'We shall be taken again, shall we not?'

I could not answer, but I knew that if the wind freshened ever so little they would be alongside us by dark. But she wanted no answer, for she read it all in my face.

'God bless you, brave, noble man!' she said: 'then we must join poor papa;' and then she seemed as if she would say something more, but did not speak for perhaps half an hour; when, as the wind freshened, and the ship came bowling along towards us, she spoke again in a whisper.

'You know, if we are taken, what is in store for us; and I suppose,' she said mournfully, 'they will not be merciful to you?'

I gave my head a shake.

'Then,' she said, with quite a smile on her beautiful lips, 'I want you to promise, on your oath as a man, that we shall not—poor sister and me—fall alive into the hands of those monsters.'

'What do you mean?' I says, falling all of a tremble, and with the sweat standing on my forehead. 'What do you mean?'

'For God's sake—for the sake of your own mother—by all you hold dear and holy,' she whispered, 'kill us both.'

'I couldn't—I couldn't,' I groaned.

'Would you sooner see me do it?' she said quietly.

I could not speak, for I felt choking. I could do nothing but gaze in a wild sort of way at the beautiful creature who was talking so calmly and patiently of death.

'There is no mercy from those monsters,' she

said—'so promise;' and she took both my hands, and I promised; for the blood seemed to rush through my veins again as she held my hands, and I thought of the cries and prayers I heard as I hung on by the rudder-chains, and then I felt that I should sooner clasp her in my arms, and plunge overboard, than that one of those ruffians should ever again lay a finger upon her.

'I swear it,' I says; and then, with a choky, husky voice I says: 'And you'll forgive me!'

'Yes,' she says; 'and pray for you. And now I feel calm.'

On came the ship, with the wind freshening every minute, so that our little boat began to dance a little on the waves. The sun sunk down lower and lower, and the cool breeze seemed quite to revive me, so that I sat up, and then helped Miss Madeline to sit up as well; when, with poor Tom fast asleep, I sat down in the stern-sheets waiting for the end, with those two well-born ladies, one on each side, clasping my hands, and trusting to me to save them, but not from death. In the calm of that golden, glorious evening there was more than one prayer said aloud by a sweet and touching voice, as I sat thinking how hard it was to die so young; and there we sat, with the vessel coming nearer and nearer, but not to touch our boat, for with the boat-hook near at hand I was ready to drive out a plank or two when I saw it was time; and there we sat waiting for the end.

CHAPTER VII.

'Another quarter of an hour, and then death,' I muttered as I thought to myself; but they both heard it, and Miss Mary looked up in my face with so sweet and heavenly a smile as she said: 'Yes, dear friend; and rest where there is no more sin and suffering, no more pain and sorrow. But a little while, and we shall be at peace.'

It was not for such as me to answer her; but her sweet calmness seemed to nerve my arm, and as the ship came nearer and nearer, I drew the boat-hook closer to my hand, and laid it across the boat. The sun was now just dipping, and roused and excited as I felt then, it seemed to me that the broad red path which stretched along the waves would be the one we should take; and certain as death then seemed, I don't know that I felt to dread it so very much, for there was so much pity, so much sorrow for the young and beautiful girls by my side.

'Very soon now,' said Miss Mary; and with a wild, strange look, she laid her hand upon my knife, which stuck in my belt, and taking it, tried, with her tender fingers, to open the great blade, while her sister, seeing the movement, covered her face with her hands, and slipped fainting off the seat.

'Poor Maddy! good-bye!' said Miss Mary, kneeling by her, and kissing her pale face; and then she glanced at the ship, and then fixed her eyes on mine as I held the great open-bladed knife in my hand. 'I will not flinch,' she whispered.

'Not with this,' I said hoarsely; 'it's stained with his foul blood;' and cutting the lanyard which held it, I threw it overboard. 'No,' I says, 'I could not do that; we'll go down together.'

As I looked at her, I remembered some words I had read in the Testament about seeing Stephen's face shine like the face of an angel. I've said that hers was an angel's face, but if I had thought so before, how much more did it seem so now, in its

sad, mournful beauty, with her bright, golden hair hanging down loose, and the deep glow from the setting sun, half beneath the water, full upon her; and the sight of this made me hesitate, for it seemed impossible that man could wrong one so beautiful; and though my hand was stretched out to take hold of the boat-hook, I drew it back; when she saw what was passing, and whispered: 'Your promise!' and then I called up those dreadful cries again; seized the boat-hook, and stood up, watching the bearing down of the ship, with the water foaming beneath her bows, and the golden sunlight seeming to creep up her masts till all below was in shadow; and nearer and nearer she came, as though to run us down.

I gave one look at Miss Mary, whose eyes were now closed; and with clasped hands, and a sweet smile still playing on her lips, she knelt by her sister, waiting for the end, now so near.

And nearer and nearer still came the ship; but now the shadow deepened, for we were where there was no twilight, but a quick change from day to night. I could now see plainly the faces on board, and see that preparations were being made for shortening sail; and then I laughed, for I knew what our old ship was, and that she would shoot by far enough before they could bring her to.

They saw me standing up with the boat-hook, and, I suppose, thought I meant to hook on when they brought up, but, in another minute, it would have gone through the bottom of the boat with a crash. I looked towards poor Tom, who lay asleep; Miss Mary was still on her knees, beside her fainting sister; and I felt that the moment had come; when, with a prayer for mercy—one learned years upon years before, and which now came rushing to my lips—I raised the pole. The ship would pass within twenty yards of us, I knew; but it was almost dark already, and as she came dashing down, the breeze seemed to freshen as if by magic; and as the old *Star* swept by, my arm sank to my side, and I fell on my knees in the boat, muttering: 'Saved, saved!' for the ship was far astern, and I knew that before she could bring to under their clumsy management, it would be night, for even now it was dark.

The change from despair to hope was so sudden that for a few minutes I could scarcely believe in the truth of our position, but a hand laid upon my arm roused me, and I explained how it all was, and that there was yet a chance of life. Then I set to and considered a little, and tried to think what was best to do; but for a bit my brain was all in a whirl, and I could do nothing.

It was now dark, but not like the night before, for the stars shone out brightly overhead, and there was a brisk breeze blowing. I could just make the ship out, and could see that they had brought up; but felt sure that we could not be seen. Once I thought I heard a shout; then there was the flash of a gun; and then the fools began to burn blue-lights, thinking, I suppose, that we were flies ready to go and burn our wings. But I saw my way clear now; and set to work, and shipped the rudder as well as I could in the dark; cleared and stepped the little mast; and before long had the sail set, with a reef in it, for the breeze blew fresh; and then knowing pretty well where the ship lay, shaped to give her the go-by in the dark; when I felt sure they would wait about all night, and with the breeze then on, and the long dark hours before me, I hoped yet to get clear off.

Just then, they burned another blue-light; and I hove several points off, and kept on till we were far enough, when I put the boat's head before the wind, and she seemed to leap through the water, and dashed away like a live thing. Another blue-light far astern, and then another when we were a mile off, and again another faint glow far astern, and then I fancied I saw another, but it must have been but fancy, for the bright stars overhead shed the only light that we could see.

'Only pray for this wind to keep up, miss, and if we see her masts in the morning, I shall be surprised.'

'Then are we saved indeed?' whispered a voice; but it was not hers; and on speaking again, I found that Miss Mary had given up at last, and was now sobbing in her sister's lap, when she, the poor weak one, roused up directly, and was soothing and comforting her sister, who had held up so long and so bravely.

Just then, my attention was taken off, for it seemed to me that the wind sank, and I felt my heart sink too, for it was like losing sight of life again; but directly after, the little boat careened over, and away we went before the wind, at a rate that seemed to lend fresh vigour to me every moment. Soon after, Miss Mary was sitting calm and quiet beside me as I steered, so as to get all the speed out of the boat I could; and after a bit, in the stillness of that bright and beautiful night, she offered up a simple prayer, and so sweet and touching that it brought the tears from my eyes, unused enough to such weakness; but then I had been wounded, and had had a hard time of it. I'd heard prayers read often enough by the captains I'd sailed with, and been to church times enough, but never heard words like those that seemed to move the heart, as they offered thanks for our preservation from so great a peril, and prayed forgiveness for our desperate resolve. And then there was a deep silence among us for some time, and the brisk breeze bore us along gallantly, so that one's heart seemed to bound with the boat, and it was all I could do to keep from shaking out more sail.

After a while, Miss Mary crept forward, and saw to poor Tom, who still lay in a heavy sleep; and then forced some biscuit, wine, and water upon me; when I made that an excuse for getting them both to take some, and I wanted them to try and get some rest. But no; they both said they would sit with me, and they did, too, all through that long night, when that breeze, which was truly for us the breath of heaven, never once failed, but bore us bravely on, and on, and on, with hope rising in our breasts, till we saw the stars pale, the glow in the east, and the sun once more leap up, and shed the golden path across the waters, now dancing with life!

Although we were going so free, before the sun rose I downed the sail, and when there was the full daylight, I looked long and anxiously for the ship, and again and again sweeping the horizon well; but there was not a mast in sight, and so I told those anxious ones, whose lips were quivering, and who dared not ask the question. 'Not a sail in sight,' I said; and I up with our own once more; and away we went over the bright and dancing waters, while so great was the change which had now come over me, that, in spite of calling myself a fool for fancying it, I could not help looking at a pale face at my side, and thinking how sweet it

would be to go on sailing like this for ever. But directly after, there came another change over me, and I felt bitter, and sorrowful, and dull, and I couldn't tell myself why it was, unless it was because I was such a poor common man, though it had never seemed to matter before.

CELESTIAL CEREMONIES.

BARBAROUS countries and their savage populations are strange and interesting to read about; and travellers' stories concerning them, however ill told, have an irresistible charm, which surmounts their literary defects, and supersedes that of civilised adventure, at least within European limits. Another class of narratives have almost equal interest, and are in certain aspects still more strange; they are those which introduce us to systems of civilised life, utterly different to our own in motive, history, principle, and progress—systems built upon other foundations, and sustained by modes of thought and action quite foreign to ours. This dissimilarity is the first feature apt to strike the attention, in reading such narratives; and as each detail only adds to the first effect, the freshness and novelty of the description of scenes, persons, and customs absolutely new to us, are apt to be lost in the constant pressure of the sense of contrast, in the preponderance of our observation of what the strange race is not, over our perception of what it is. The more matter-of-fact, the less suggestive the writer's style is, the less we are exposed to this temptation of reading the history of foreign civilised nations by the light of our own habits and customs; and therefore the Rev. Justus Doolittle's book on the *Social Life of the Chinese* is one of the most instructive which has yet been written concerning the inhabitants of the largest and least known empire in the world.*

We have all attained a sort of surface-notion of the Chinese. We know they have sloping eyes, pigtailed, petticoats, deformed feet in the upper walks of society, peculiar ideas on the subject of eating and drinking, including dog-pie and boiled wine. We don't think them handsome, though we have seen Chang; or dignified, though the Celestial ambassadors have done the duty of a London season, without going to the Derby, however. We know a little about Hong-kong, and less about Shang-hae; we have read the Abbé Huc, and Mr Fortune, and Dr Rennie, and the English Tae-ping, and yet it is not venturesome to say that few of us feel any familiarity with Chinese affairs, or sympathy with the Chinese people. We have heard about the early Christian missions, their failure, and the martyrdom of the missionaries; of the coolie question, and the social discontent produced by Chinese immigration in Australia; of the affair of the Summer Palace, and of Mr Commissioner Yeh—whose name, we have been told, is to be pronounced like 'yes' in German and Dutch—and at

* *Social Life of the Chinese; with some Account of their Religious, Governmental, Educational, and Business Customs and Opinions.* By Rev. Justus Doolittle. Sarapnon Low & Co.

first sight this looks like a tolerably respectable catalogue of useful knowledge ; but it is not : in reality, we know very little of the Flowery Land. Considering the huge space it occupies in the expanse of the wonderful earth, and the enormous number of our fellow-creatures who inhabit it, the great empire which stretches its vast length across the map of Asia, whose borders are the countries of immemorial antiquity which are the earliest landmarks of the human race, before whose traditions our most ancient are the puny devices of yesterday, merits closer study than it receives at our hands, who have so much to read about, that China is laid aside, somehow, and the convenient season for making ourselves acquainted with its history never comes.

Mr Doolittle is a conscientious and minute chronicler ; and the present generation has an opportunity of becoming wiser than its fellows, by at least an extensive knowledge of the city of Fuh-chow, or the 'Happy Region,' which is the capital of the province of Fuh-kien, situated on the river Min ; and is about as fairly representative a Chinese city, as self-contained, as any which could be selected for the instruction of the general public. Fuh-chow occupies the central position of the five ports opened to foreign trade and residence at the end of the Opium War, and is equally distant from Canton and Shang-hae. It is a walled city, affording pleasant promenades on foot, or in the favourite sedan-chairs ; it numbers one million inhabitants, and is remarkable as the chosen place of dwelling in ease and dignity of numerous retired official dignitaries of the empire. It is a great literary centre ; and as it is not easy to connect the idea of much literary activity with the Chinese printed and written characters, it is good to correct such erroneous notions, and to learn that at Fuh-chow is the official residence of the imperial commissioner, the literary chancellor, and the unofficial residences of many men of high literary attainments ; also, that all the literary graduates of the first degree over the province of Fuh-kien, which includes the large and beautiful island of Formosa, must appear at Fuh-chow twice in each period of five years, to compete in the provincial examination-hall for the second degree, if they desire to compete for that degree at all. On these occasions, the 'educated talent' of the province musters by thousands—a statement which has rather an odd effect on readers who have had their notions of China mainly formed by the late Mr Albert Smith. All this 'educated talent' appears to us to affect the mental and moral attitude of the people very little ; and the result of close and elaborate descriptions—drawn from long personal observation and experience of the present, and from impartial study of every record of the past, within reach—is, that the Chinese are, as was said of the ancient Egyptians, only full-grown children. The unpleasant aspects of childhood are distinctly to be seen in the national character : its instinctive cruelty, its silliness, its love of senseless gauds, its incapacity to understand the beauties of nature, its superficiality and fickleness, its self-conceit, and ready, touchy jealousy. The simplicity, the grace, the generosity, and the more poetical

aspects of childhood, are wanting in the Chinese character, which is grasping, narrow, and inconceivably credulous and superstitious, without any mixture of the romantic, the graceful, or the beautiful in its superstitions. The elaborate idolatry of the people, who boast an immemorial civilisation, has something in it more distressing, more repulsive, more hopeless, than the rude savage ignorance of the most debased Indian tribes ; than the utter absence of recognition of the supernatural among the Australian aborigines ; or than the melancholy, material aspiration, taught by their frightful life-long condition of absolute want, to the starved and frozen Esquimaux. The angular artificiality, the 'infinite littleness' which pervades everything Chinese, which we remark in their most elaborate works of art, from the decorations of a vast Buddhist temple to the designs on a tea-cup, are peculiarly noticeable in their religious and social ceremonies. It is easy to get into one's mind, and retain in one's memory, facts concerning the commercial importance of China, the ways and means by which the vast population of the empire and its huge vague dependencies exist, the unwieldy fabric of its government, and the peculiarities of its cultivation and industries. It is not difficult to get into one's mind a picture of Chinese localities—of the streets, in which no vehicles are to be seen, and only government officials make their appearance on horseback. It is not difficult to picture crowds of the Chinese people ; the process is easy enough where features and complexion are monotonous, where dress never varies either in material or in form. But what is difficult is to get at the reality of human lives all overlaid by a multitude of little forms and observances, which have their origin in the silliest and meanest notions, and which trammel every incident and event of solemn, joyful, or sorrowful importance in existence with fantastic gear, and foolish mummeries at once ghastly and grotesque. It is the contrast between the civilisation of China, its venerable history, its vast and multiplied industries, its place in the sphere of humanity—which, though concentrated, and producing little effect outside its own limits, is large and important—and the contemptible folly which pervades the actual life of every family, that strikes the reader of Mr Doolittle's book so painfully. We do not shrink with any sense of incongruity, however strong that of disgust may be, from the Obi and the fetish of the African, from the Angeko of the Esquimaux, from the Anton of the Bornean, from the medicine-man of the Iroquois. Either the savage tribes to whom these delusions are a law, will disappear in their savagery, or they will become civilised, and these wretched superstitions will lose their stay ; but the heathenism which is the law of civilisations so old that those of Europe are but of yesterday in comparison with them—it is from the contemplation of this that the mind shrinks with pain. Not only is Chinese heathenism revolting and despicable when regarded from the point of comparison with Christianity, but it is so when compared with other forms of heathenism. An immeasurable gulf of inferiority divides its mean, low, crapulous devices, its wretched aspirations, its silly cheateries, from the poetical mythologies of Greece and Rome ; and its sole superiority to the hideous Mexican form of idolatry consists in the absence of human sacrifices. Its dogmas are weak, obscure, complicated, and

calculated to affect only the lowest instincts of the human mind; its details are inconceivably childish, and would be laughable, were they not lugubriously oppressive and tiresome. Fortune-telling and paper-flowers accompany every action in life, from betrothal, in which they play a conspicuous part, to burial, which it is hard to believe can be a solemnity in the eyes of the performers of such elaborate and idiotic mummeries as those prescribed on the occasion. The ceremonies of betrothal and marriage, of worshipping the parents of bride and bridegroom respectively, are of the dreariest absurdity; and those which precede and accompany a birth, especially those inflicted on a Chinese infant during his first three days of existence, are perhaps the silliest of all. Innumerable ceremonies are gone through before the child is a year old; among these, 'passing through the door' is the strangest. If the child be sickly, it is passed through the door once or twice a month; and as it takes a whole day to perform the ceremony, it must be very invigorating to the young invalid and his relatives. A number of goddesses are implored to be present, and are supposed to be willing, on the correct and emphatic enunciation of their names and addresses; incense, candles, rattles, and tinsel-paper are largely in demand; and the 'door,' which appears to resemble the stage representation of a triumphal-arch, is arranged as follows: 'It is made out of bamboo, covered with red and white paper, and is some seven feet high by three feet wide. The furniture is so arranged that the priests and the party passing through this door can go around and around without doubling on their track. One of the priests—who wears a fancy-coloured shirt, and has on his head a curiously-shaped head-dress—takes in one hand a small bell, or a sword having small bells fastened to the handle, and in the other a horn, and commences reciting formulas or incantations in front of this door, which is often at this time standing near the centre of the room. The priest, thus dressed, personates "Mother," in the act of performing magic spells for the purpose of saving children from evil spirits and unhealthy and malignant influences. The Paterfamilias, or, if dead or absent, some one in his stead, takes the child who cannot walk, or is sick, in his arms; and the other children, if any, take a single stick of lighted incense in their hands. The priest blows his horn, and advances slowly through the door, followed by Paterfamilias and all the children of the family. All the other priests are at this time doing something to aid, as beating the drum and clapping their cymbals. The head-priest brandishes the sword in the air, or, in its place, he sometimes flourishes a whip made in the shape of a snake, as though he was striking an invisible object. The door is then taken and placed at one of the four corners of the room; and the priest, father, and children again pass through it in a similar manner. It is then successively placed in each of the other corners, and again in the centre, where it is respectively passed through by the priest and his followers. Soon after this, the door is hacked in pieces, and its parts set on fire, and burned in the open court of the house, or in the street.' The active and all-pervading influence of spirits, especially of the evil kind, is the very central belief of the wretched delusion under which these creatures live. The ceremonies of propitiation are endless, and one ludicrous part of

the folly is that they fondly flatter themselves they can deceive the evil spirits, and induce them to leave their children unmolested, by pretending to dislike them, by subjecting them to certain insulting treatment, and especially by calling them bad names, of which 'Buddhist priest,' 'beggar,' 'refuse,' 'dirt,' are supposed to be the most effectively contemptuous. If one read about Mr Baker's and Captain Speke's friends on the White Nile, or Lord Milton's Assiniboines, doing these things, and returning respectively to their ant-hills and their wigwags, it would be sufficiently humiliating; but the idea of a people who buy and sell, who make war, who understand diplomacy, who despise all the rest of mankind, who have the whip-hand of the world in many industries, who have a grand system of philosophy, and plenty of purple and linen, worshipping gods of the measure, the bedstead, the eaves of the house, and doing it with the assistance of cut-paper and Dutch cheese, is infinitely horrible.

The superstitious treatment of disease is an extraordinary feature in Chinese social life. Death, they account for by saying it is in accordance with the 'reckoning of Heaven;' and it would appear that in this at least they are not far out of theirs. Recovery is by the grace of some particular god or goddess. The general practice, as a preservative, is the propitiation of a certain destructive divinity, concerning whose operations they entertain a very uncomfortable notion. They imagine that this evil god works by mysterious influences existing between and among the members of a family, and resulting in illness. Hence innumerable bribes offered to this pleasant familiar, and large profits to the Taoist priests. The formulas employed for the expulsion of deadly influences proceeding from evil spirits are painfully absurd, especially 'the mandate of the arrow.' This is an arrow-like utensil, two feet long, with the word 'Command' upon it, which is begged by a dishevelled and weeping procession from the temple of some powerful god, set up in the centre of a table, and worshipped with burning of incense and candles until the sick dies or recovers. In the latter case, the temple gets a thank-offering. The catalogue of the absurdities perpetrated in cases of disease is of a melancholy length. One of its items is the invitation of the god of medicine to the house. A friend of the sick man goes to a temple of the god, and having tickled his ears, and thus gained his attention, makes his request. Then he rubs the portion of the god's body which corresponds to the afflicted part of the patient. Lastly, having burned candles and incense before the image of the 'Doctor,' he returns to the home of his friend, carrying some of the ashes taken from the censer standing before the god. These ashes represent the 'Doctor,' and must be treated with respect and reverence by the family. They are done up in red paper, and placed in the censer belonging to the household, and incense and candles are daily burned before them, accompanied with kneeling and bowing. Another pleasant notion entertained by them is, that disease is to be ascribed to the enmity of the spirit of a deceased person, and priests are employed to use the formula for dissolving or untying grudges, a portion of which performance consists of getting ten men to become 'security' for the sick person. The ceremony of endeavouring to bring back the departing spirit by carrying about the sick man's clothes on a bamboo

pole, with a number of antics in which a white cock and a bright mirror perform important parts, must be extremely trying to the gravity of even the most sympathising foreigner. Hiring a priest to ascend a ladder of knives is an expensive, but very favourite resource in cases of urgency; and the burning of a paper image, with a quantity of household stuff to enrich the holocaust, as a substitute for the invalid, is found very efficacious in cheating the god who desires his decease. Epidemics are believed to be under the control of 'the five emperors,' which are five particularly hideous specimens of 'bogey,' much dreaded by the people of Fuh-chow. The Celestial lady who patronises small-pox, looks her part to perfection. These horrible idols are carried in procession in July and August, to prevent summer diseases.

When all has proved vain—when the gods have finally refused to be either propitiated, bribed, or duped, and John Chinaman has really gone to correct his impressions in another sphere, the ceremonies for death, mourning, and burial begin, and are quite on a par with those which have preceded them. Of these, 'moving round the bridge-ladder,' and burning a miniature paper sedan for the use of the dead, are perhaps the most absurd. Before burial, there is bringing water in the morning, waiting on the dead at meal-time, and worshipping the 'longevity' picture. One item in the performance has an especially strange sound to foreign ears—it is 'informing the ten kings of hell of the death of the individual.' Whether this is done with a strict view to the honest discharge of liabilities, is not explained. The meritorious ceremonies performed for the benefit of the dead, are numerous and extraordinary. Among them are the burning an image of a crane, and trunks of mock-money and mock-clothing—they have a 'frugal mind,' it seems, and do not forget that, though they have not cheated the god in the main particular, they may do so in the lesser—sending money to pay the debt of the deceased, or for the use of the animal to which he belongs; and the ceremony in propitiation of the ten kings of hell.

The worship of their ancestors by the Chinese has a poetical side, wanting in all other customs and ceremonies; and had their idolatry rested there, it would have been reconcilable with the 'educated talent' of which Mr Doolittle speaks, and of the really high state of cultivation and prosperity, of which he gives numerous proofs, statistical and otherwise; but as if the grotesque must needs come into everything these people do, the pretty and even pathetic 'worship of the ancestral tablet' is made ridiculous by the custom of making inquiries of the dead. On the anniversary of the death of an ancestor, his surviving descendant makes kindly inquiries of him, in regard to health or food, by dropping on the floor before the tablet two pieces of wood, each piece having an oval and a flat side. The character of the answer of the dead is supposed to be indicated by the relative positions of the same after reaching the floor. If the first reply is unfavourable, another trial is made; and so, until a satisfactory reply is given, for it would never do to desist from inquiring so long as the reply indicated displeasure or dissatisfaction on the part of the deceased.

The mythology of which all this nonsensical posturing is the outward expression, is singularly silly and uninteresting. In vain will a trace of

the grace and meaning, the poetry and the subtlety of classic inventions, be sought in the coarse, fantastic, childish complications of Celestial superstition.

BROUGHT TO LIGHT.

CHAPTER XXXI.—LADY SPENCELAUGH'S APPEAL.

'HER Ladyship's compliments, and she will be glad to see you in her dressing-room after breakfast, if you will kindly go as far.'

Thus one of the Belair Abigails to Miss Spencelaugh, the morning after Frederica's visit to Grellier's almshouses. More strongly convinced than ever that John English's narrative was based upon truth, and that for her there was now no going back from the cause she had taken in hand, Frederica had pondered through a sleepless night, questioning herself as to what her next step ought to be. She had at last decided to send Lady Spencelaugh a copy of John's Statement, together with a supplement embodying the further information given by Jane Garrod, and the result of Frederica's own visit to the almshouses; with a request that her Ladyship would throw some light upon that portion of the narrative which seemed to inculcate her in some mysterious way, and to mix up her name in a nefarious transaction, of the workings of which she might, after all, be in utter ignorance. In any case, Frederica decided that she would take no unfair advantage of Lady Spencelaugh: every particular of the case as known to herself should be made known to her Ladyship also. But this request for a personal interview changed Frederica's decision. 'I will see her, and tell her everything,' she said to herself. 'A few simple words of explanation from her may shew how entirely innocent she is of any complicity in this dark plot. I pray Heaven that it may prove so!'

'My dear Frederica, this is really very kind of you,' said Lady Spencelaugh with a languid smile, as she extended the tips of her fingers to Miss Spencelaugh. 'My nerves are very variable this weather, and I did not feel equal to the task of looking you up in your own room. You have breakfasted of course?—Yes. How I wish that I possessed your energetic habits, and talent for early rising. It is a talent, dear, depend upon it, that of getting up early these dark, cold mornings. But sit down, pray. Not so far off. That is better. I want to have a cozy chat with you this morning. And yet how to begin?—Ah, I see your eyes are taking in the pattern of that embroidery.—Quite new, I assure you. Clotilde did it. She is certainly clever with her needle; but in some things, a pig—yes, *cara mia*, an absolute pig. But her accent is good: I am ready to admit that: good, that is to say, for a person in her position.'

Although the day was still young, Lady Spencelaugh had been carefully made up, and looked very fresh and charming in her demi-toilet, as she dawdled with her dry toast and chocolate. Frederica wondered in her own mind what her aunt's long preface would lead to: generally speaking, her Ladyship was rigidly polite, and as sparing of words as the occasion would admit of in her intercourse with Miss Spencelaugh.

'You know, dear, I am much older than you,' resumed her Ladyship, a little diffidently; 'and

you must allow me for once to use a matronly privilege, and give you a little wholesome advice.'

'Go on, please,' said Frederica with a haughty little bend of the head.

'I have lately been informed—how, it matters not,' continued her Ladyship, 'that for a short time past you have been mixing yourself up in the affairs of a certain Mr English, a wandering photographer, whom Sir Philip was so injudicious as to ask here to dinner once or twice. I do not seek to know your reasons for doing this, my dear child: that you had some reasons, I will at once assume: but however strong they may have seemed to you, I have every reason to believe that you have been imposed on; and in any case, for you to go roaming about the country, looking after this young man's affairs, is, to say the least of it, both unladylike and ridiculous. Excuse me, dear, if in the excitement of the moment I use strong language, but really the case seems to me one which demands a strong remedy. The health of Sir Philip, as you are aware, is too precarious for him to be troubled with such details; and this being the case, I consider myself as being in some measure his delegate, and assume an authority in speaking to you which on any other occasion I should be sorry to exercise.'

'Pray, make no excuse on that score,' said Frederica coldly. 'But before deciding that I have been either unladylike or ridiculous, would it not be well to inquire more particularly into the nature of the business which has made me appear either one or the other in your Ladyship's eyes?'

'Certainly not,' said Lady Spencelaugh hastily. 'I have no wish to know more of this wretched matter than I know already.'

'But I think it highly necessary that your Ladyship should at least know as much of the case as I do. When you sent for me, I was about to copy out a certain Statement which is in my possession, and send the copy to you, together with the outline of certain other facts with which I have become acquainted.'

'I am very glad you did no such thing,' said her Ladyship warmly.

'Let me, at least, fetch the Statement, and read it to you.'

'Certainly not: I should consider myself degraded by listening to such a farrago of nonsense.'

'Your Ladyship cannot know how serious are the interests involved, or you would not speak thus.'

'I know quite sufficient already, and I have set my face against knowing more. I know that this man—this John English, as he calls himself—has put forward some preposterous claim by which he seeks to make people believe that he is a great man who has been defrauded out of his rights. I know further, and from reliable sources, that he is a common swindler and impostor; and that this is neither the first nor the second occasion that he has striven to make himself out as a scion of some family of position; and at the present time, as you yourself are no doubt aware, he is not to be found—no one knows whither he has gone. Is it not so?'

'It is,' said Frederica a little shaken.

'But you don't know the reason of his sudden disappearance,' went on her Ladyship. 'Well, I happen to be in a position to enlighten you. He fled to avoid being arrested and brought to account for his previous impostures. I think he is too wary ever to shew his face in this part of the

country again; but should he do so, and I become aware of it, I shall certainly have him apprehended as a notorious swindler.'

Frederica was staggered. The audacity of Lady Spencelaugh verged on the sublime; but her Ladyship's tone, bold as it was, was wanting in sincerity, and carried no conviction to her listener's heart. 'If you would but allow me to tell you all that I know of this matter!' said Frederica in a voice of genuine entreaty.

'Certainly not, Frederica; and I am astonished, after what I have said to you, that you should still persist in such a foolish request. For the heiress of Belair to have her name mixed up in any way with that of this impostor, is a degradation to the family, and one which, were it to reach the ears of Sir Philip, might well, in his delicate state of health, prove fatal to him. Take my advice, my dear child, and have nothing further to do with this man or his affairs. He is trying to compromise your name by trading on your good-nature.'

Frederica wrung her hands. 'Heaven help me!' she exclaimed. 'I know not what to do.'

'Do? Why, take my advice, of course,' said Lady Spencelaugh, 'and don't allow yourself to appear any further in this wretched business.'

Frederica sat in painful silence for a few moments, watched eagerly by Lady Spencelaugh. 'No,' she said at length as she rose from her chair, while a deep flush overspread her face—'No, I cannot think that Mr English is an impostor. I believe him to be as true and loyal a gentleman as ever breathed. Mistaken he may be, but not intentionally so, I am sure. That he will some day come back, if alive, I fully believe. Meanwhile, I will comply with your Ladyship's wishes in one respect; I will take no further steps in this matter personally, but will put it at once into the hands of Mr Penning, my lawyer, and leave him to deal with it in whatever way he may think best.'

With a little tremulous cry, Lady Spencelaugh started forward from her easy, lounging posture. 'Frederica Spencelaugh, you will do no such thing!' she exclaimed. 'Do you want to kill your uncle, rash girl? and such a scandal would kill him.'

'It is too late now for me to go back,' said Frederica sadly. 'The task was not of my seeking; but now that it has been given me to do, I dare not shrink from it till I arrive at the truth. Oh, dear Lady Spencelaugh, pray believe me when I say'—

She stopped suddenly, affrighted at the strange look on the face of the woman before her. Her Ladyship's mask was pushed aside for a moment, and the lurking fiend behind peeped out in all his native hideousness.

'Am I, then, to understand that it is your fixed determination not to give this matter up?' asked Lady Spencelaugh in a tone of ice.

Frederica bowed her head, but did not speak. Lady Spencelaugh touched the small silver gong at her elbow. 'The door, for Miss Spencelaugh,' she said to Clotilde. Frederica passed out slowly and sorrowfully without another word.

'Let her do her worst,' said Lady Spencelaugh to herself as soon as she was left alone; 'I can still defy her—defy all of them. I shall triumph in spite of everything—but at what a terrible cost!'

She took a scrap of paper from her satchet, and opened it. It was the telegram which had been received by the landlady of the *Hand and*

Dagger on the previous day. Its contents were embodied in one line, and that one line ran as under: 'The *Ocean Child* has foundered with all on board.' Lady Spencelaugh's eyes glittered, and her mouth puckered into an evil smile as she read these words. 'It's an ill wind that blows nobody any good,' she muttered as she replaced the telegram in her satchel.

The fast afternoon train of that same day bore Frederica Spencelaugh and Jane Garrod swiftly London-ward.

CHAPTER XXXII.—JIM BILLINGS IS WANTED.

Miss Spencelaugh took up her quarters at the house of a friend in Harley Street, and was waited upon, the morning after her arrival in town, by Mr Penning.

A quiet, shrewd, middle-aged gentleman was Mr Penning; the embodiment of prosaic common-sense; if there were a spark of imagination anywhere about him, he concealed it so carefully from the world that its presence was never suspected.

'Oblige me by reading this paper carefully through,' said Frederica as she gave John English's Statement into the lawyer's hands.

Quietly observant of him as he sat opposite to her, Frederica saw his white eyebrows go up several times in the course of the reading, but he said no word till he had mastered the last line; then folding up the document carefully, and allowing his double eye-glass to drop from its resting-place on his nose, he turned a face of mild inquiry on Frederica, and said: 'A singular document, my dear Miss Spencelaugh—a very singular document. Have you any corroborative evidence to offer as to the truth of its statements?'

Frederica gave him an epitome of her visit to Grellier's almshouses, and then called Jane Garrod into the room. Mr Penning listened attentively to Jane's narrative, and took notes of the chief points. '—This, I presume, completes the case as far as it goes at present?' said the lawyer when Jane had left the room.

Yes, Frederica said, that was all the evidence she had to offer.

'In the present state of this affair,' resumed the lawyer, as he saw Frederica's eyes fixed inquiringly on him, 'you must please excuse me from offering any opinion as to the value or worthlessness of what I have just heard and read. I have seen so many strange cases in my time which seemed at the first glance to be built up of such strong evidence that it was almost impossible to doubt their validity, and which yet, when they came to be looked into, were found to be utterly worthless, that I have learned at last to doubt everything that is at all out of the common course. There is certainly an air of romance and improbability about Mr English's Statement; but for all that, it may contain an underlying vein of truth, sufficient to necessitate further investigation. As you tell me that you are determined to go on with the case, I will at once put it (with certain reservations) into the hands of one of my people. The whole affair is certainly complicated by the unexplained absence of Mr English. Were he here, our first duty would be to ask him to prove his identity with that of the child taken to America by the man Kreefe and his wife, in support of which fact we have nothing at present beyond his bare word. As, however, he is not here, the first point for us

to take up is to try and track out this Jim Billings, who is said to be the only person able to throw any light on the parentage of the child taken to White Grange by Mrs Winch. Mind you, I think the chances of our finding him, even if he be still alive, are very faint indeed. But we will try; and meanwhile, my dear young lady, you must wait patiently till I bring you some news as to the success or non-success of my efforts. One last word at parting—don't be over-sanguine.'

The mention of Lady Spencelaugh's name was studiously avoided both by the lawyer and Frederica.

So Jane Garrod went back home, and Miss Spencelaugh waited in Harley Street for the news that seemed so long in coming. Three weeks passed away before she saw anything further of Mr Penning, but at the end of that time he called upon her.

'I always said Meriton was a sharp fellow,' he began, after the usual greetings, 'and this case proves the truth of my opinion. He has actually hunted down this man Billings, and is watching for him at the present moment, as a terrier watches for a rat, ready to pounce on him the moment he makes his appearance. Excuse the vulgarity of the simile, my dear Miss Spencelaugh, and listen to my explanation.—Meriton ascertained, in the first instance, at which town Billings was convicted, the nature of his sentence, and the date of his departure for Australia. There you would naturally think that all trace of the fellow would cease, at least on this side the water. But not so. Meriton, by some means best known to himself, and with the assistance of his good friends the police, discovered, from some register of such transactions which is kept at head-quarters, that Billings was let loose with a ticket-of-leave before the expiration of his sentence, and came back to this country about eight years ago. Following up the clue thus obtained, Meriton found further, that Billings had not been many weeks in England before he was again convicted on a charge of robbery with violence, and was again sentenced—this time, to ten years' penal servitude. That sentence—reduced by a term of two years—he has been working out at Portland, and it expired a fortnight ago. But, as if it were destined that he should not escape us, Billings is still there, in the infirmary, suffering from a severe accident, which he met with while working in the quarries. Meriton is waiting close at hand, ready to pounce on him the moment he shews his scoundrel's face outside the walls; and if this fellow has any secret worth knowing, Meriton is just the man to twist it out of him. We shall probably have further information in a few days; but don't be over-sanguine, my dear young lady—don't be over-sanguine.'

Three days later, Mr Penning came again, bringing a letter with him. 'News at last,' he said. 'But I had better, perhaps, read Meriton's letter, and enable you to judge of its importance yourself.' He adjusted his eye-glass with a little show of importance, and then read as under:

MY DEAR SIR—As my last letter informed you, I have been dawdling away my time here for more than a week, awaiting the discharge of Billings. I had been apprised by a friendly official that he would leave the infirmary this morning, and I took him in tow the moment he was outside the gates. I had secured a snug little place beforehand, where

our interview would not be likely to be interrupted. Billings is evidently much reduced by his illness, and therefore perhaps more amenable to my little persuasive ways than he would otherwise have been, which is so far fortunate for us. A more thorough scoundrel I think I never talked to; not that he is by any means unintelligent, or wanting in shrewdness, but in that he is so thoroughly brutalised by the kind of life which his crimes have compelled him to lead. He was suspicious of me from the first moment. 'Ah,' said he, 'such gents as you don't take any interest in coves like me unless you have got some end of your own to serve.' 'Quite right,' I said; 'I have got an end to serve, and if you will come quietly with me, I'll tell you what it is.' The moment I spoke of White Grange, he started guiltily. Then with a sneer and an oath, he exclaimed: 'That's the business you have come about, is it? But you're not going to get anything out of me about White Grange. I've not kept the secret all these years to be carneyed out of it by a white-faced fox like you. I know a trick worth two of that.' I really thought at one time that he was going to prove impracticable; but after a good dinner, followed by an ample supply of old rum and strong tobacco, he became more amenable to reason; and not to trouble you, sir, with useless details, I did actually succeed in talking him over, and in inducing him to see on which side his bread was buttered; and I may be allowed to say that I felicitate myself a little on the victory. The terms are rather high, I must confess, but a lesser figure would have been of no avail. In return, I have obtained full information as to the name and parentage of the child; and Billings has consented to lie quietly by for a few weeks, in case he should be required as a witness. Further details I reserve till I see you: but as you will probably be anxious to know exactly what it is that I have been told, and as I think it hardly advisable to trust such information to this letter, I will telegraph to you in cipher to-morrow morning, half an hour after post-time, as I shall go on from here to Exeter to see Mr Collinson re: the disputed-will case. Yours respectfully,

FRANK MERITON.

'You have got the telegram?' said Frederica eagerly when Mr Penning had finished reading the letter.

'I have,' said the old lawyer gravely. He saw that Frederica's eyes were fixed anxiously on him. Writing materials were on the table, so he took a strip of paper, and writing a few words on it, handed it across to Frederica. 'That is a copy of Meriton's telegram,' he said.

Frederica's cheek grew pale as she read, and next moment tears sprang to her eyes. 'Oh, Mr Penning,' she exclaimed, 'what terrible mystery is here? My poor dear uncle'—

There was a knock at the door, and a servant entered with a salver, on which lay a strange-looking letter, addressed to Miss Spencelaugh. Frederica opened it. It was another telegram. 'Sir Philip Spencelaugh is dying. Come at once.' 'Pray Heaven that I be not too late to tell him this strange news!' said Frederica through her tears.

'Better that he should die in ignorance of it, my dear young lady,' said the old lawyer gently—'far better that he should die in ignorance of it.'

Five hours later, Frederica alighted at the porch

of Belair. The housekeeper, with a sorrowful face, was waiting to receive her. 'My uncle'—said Frederica, and then she stopped, reading but too clearly in the face of the other the tidings she dreaded to hear.

'Sir Philip died three hours ago,' said the housekeeper. 'Your name was the last word on his lips.'

THE PEACHES.

WHEN summer flowers begin to jade,
And summer leaves begin to fall
One here, one there: in juicy strength,
The peaches redden on the wall.
And so, indeed, hot youth being past,
Our lives should shew their fruit full fast.

The peaches redden on the wall,
Hiding in hollow cells of green,
Where plaited leaves hang thick about,
And scarce permit them to be seen.
And so, in truth, good deeds should be
Concealed in sweet humility.

The peaches redden on the wall,
Close set upon low branching trees;
And any hand may easy touch
The gifts that the eye easy sees.
And so with us, 'tis well for each
To keep within the other's reach.

The peaches redden on the wall:
They take the kisses of the sun,
The joy-tears of the flying cloud,
The darkness when the day is done.
And thus, well used, the changing hour
Will help us to a larger power.

The peaches redden on the wall,
To drop when chilly winds shall blow;
But careful hands are swift to stay
Their fragrant lives from ending so.
And surely thus a Hand will save
The good from falling in the grave.

The peaches redden on the wall—
But look up higher overhead,
Where all the vastness of the sky
With faintest, calmest blue is spread.
And what is that from where we stand
But blue mist hiding Fatherland?

The peaches redden on the wall,
Though night's dark curtain drips with dew;
The white stars shew themselves, and shine
Through mounded cloud and hovering blue.
And oh, to feel 'past fruit and tree,
The Lights of Home shine forth for me!'

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A PERFECT TREASURE.

I AM not a man to have hobbies—far from it—but everybody, I suppose, likes one thing more than another, and what I like is Plate; good serviceable gold and silver, such as is pleasant to see upon one's table, whether by sunshine or candle-light, and which one likes one's guests to see. It is whispered by malignant persons (so at least certain good-natured friends tell me), that I should not give so many dinner-parties, if it were not to exhibit these costly articles. I am not conscious of such a motive for my hospitality; but if it exist, it need not surely be objected to; it is I who have to pay for the weakness, and not my friends—as happens in some cases I could name. If I possessed a selection of the most hideous china in the whole world, and filled my drawing-rooms with unhappy persons *after* dinner, who are compelled to bow down before Bel and the Dragon (if I may say so without impiety), as Colonel Twankay does, for instance, *then* I grant you there would be some ground of complaint: or if I invited people to 'athomes' every Wednesday evening (a most impertinent form of invitation, in my opinion), in order that they should have the pleasure of hearing me confute Professor Piebald upon the question of the Theory of Development, as my good friend Dr Twistie is in the habit of doing: or if I had a daughter with high notes, and inveigled the Unworthy with the bait of 'a little music,' like my neighbour, the Hon. Mrs Matcham—so proud and stuck up, that she is as often as not called Lucifer Matcham—who, I dare say, thinks her invitations quite an honour to the recipients— But there; I have no patience to speak about such people. These, forsooth, are the persons—*these*, with their tea and thin bread and butter, and threepenny-worth of cream, and with what they call 'a light refreshment' to follow—weak lemonade and cheap ices—to charge me with the crime of Ostentation! If that means to 'shew off,' which, I believe, is its strictly classical sense, I should like to know which of us four is the most guilty. At all events, there is something *beside* show in my little entertain-

ments; my dishes, if they do happen to be silver-gilt (and really the moulding is worth looking at), have, at all events, something in them; I don't ask men to put on black broad-cloth and polished leather boots, in this sultry June, with nothing to come of it all except perspiration. That's vulgar, according to Mrs Matcham, I have no doubt; but it's true. If one could cool one's self by means of the frigidity of one's hostess, her drawing-room would be a very pleasant place; but as it is, I fancy folks prefer the contemplation of my ice-pails—as pretty a device in frosted silver, by the by, as you will often see.

Do not imagine that I am annoyed: towards persons who, when they *do* give a dinner-party, omit to supply ice in this weather (though it would cost them but one penny a head), I am incapable of such a feeling. Ostentation, indeed! At this very moment—11.30 P.M., and the thermometer next door at 85 degrees at the very least, I'll answer for it—I can hear Miss Lucifer Matcham screaming through the wall.

It was not looking at my gold and silver plate, I suppose, which made my mother-in-law bilious; she might have stopped a long time, at some other houses I could name, without getting the quality, or even the quantity, of food that would produce an indisposition of that kind. Mind, I don't blame her; she gave way to an amiable weakness (it was truffles), poor lady, and she suffered for it more than enough. Neither was it mere Ostentation, I suppose, that caused me to provide her with a sick-nurse—Mrs Maqueechy. My wife, of course, did everything she could for her mother, but *ours* is a large household, and we see a good deal of company; so we thought it best to provide a person exclusively to wait upon her. We had the highest written testimonials as to character, and her behaviour was everything we could wish. Instead of 'interfering,' and setting the other domestics by the ears, as persons of her class are accused of doing, she kept herself to herself, and when anything was wanted, she would fetch it in person, rather than give anybody trouble. I used to meet her walking all over the house upon these little

errands, and I noticed, to her great credit, that though she must have weighed nearly twelve stone, she made no noise. She so won upon me, indeed—for I am not at all a man to be familiar with my inferiors, and should certainly not 'take a pleasure in exhibiting my plate to a maid-of-all-work or a crossing-sweeper,' as some people have been so good as to affirm—I say, I was so pleased with Mrs Maqueechy's quiet and respectful manners, that finding her upon one occasion in the dining-room admiring my two new shield-shaped salvers upon the sideboard, I took pains to explain to her the design of the engraving, and especially the embossed cipher; with which her intelligent mind was highly pleased. In short, she was a perfect treasure, and if we had wanted a housekeeper, or any confidential servant of that sort, I should certainly have retained Mrs Maqueechy in that position, after her duties as a sick-nurse were concluded; and in that idea my wife entirely concurred. Mrs Maqueechy was neither young nor good-looking, but a more thoroughly respectable-looking person, in her condition of life, it was not easy to find. Although I had every confidence in Bowles—Bowles has had the charge of my plate for these ten years—yet there seemed somehow to be a double warranty for the safeguard of my property, while Mrs Maqueechy was under my roof. She was not a suspicious person, far from it; but she once remarked to me, in a meaning way, that the charge of so much valuable plate was a great responsibility, and would be even a temptation to some people; and I saw she kept her eye on Bowles. As the event proved, alas, Mrs Maqueechy had only too good reason to do so.

Last Wednesday, we happened to have rather a large dimer-party; I had been dining out a good deal at various clubs lately, and of course it was necessary to invite my entertainers in return. It is not that I will ask *anybody* to come and admire my plate, but certainly some of the men were not intimate friends of mine, but only acquaintances. However, I suppose the fact of persons belonging to such clubs as I frequent, is a sufficient guarantee for their social position. They were quite good enough, in my opinion, to meet Mrs Lucifer Matcham at all events, and they met her. The dinner had gone off uncommonly well. The shield-shaped salvers had been very much admired, and so had my new tureen. The ladies had retired to the drawing-room, and I had just passed the vine-leaf claret-jug to Colonel Twankay (on which the old hunks did not pass the slightest remark, by the by) when Bowles stooped down and whispered in my ear that a person wished to see me in the Hall, upon very important business.

'Ask him what it is,' said I. 'It is impossible that I can leave my guests.'

'I did ask him, sir, and he refuses to state,' replied Bowles confidentially. 'It is my opinion he's a begging-letter impostor; but he says he must see you in person.'

I was upon the point of saying: 'Tell him to leave the house,' when something or other in

Bowles's manner struck me so decidedly that I resolved not to do so. Why should he say a man, about whom he could know nothing, was a begging-letter impostor? Perhaps I placed rather too much confidence in my butler, as Mrs Maqueechy had hinted that very morning. Actuated by a vague presentiment of distrust and danger, I rose from table, made a hasty apology to my friends, and went with Bowles into the Hall. A shabby-genteel sort of person, answering, indeed, very tolerably to my man's description of him, was standing by the umbrella-stall.

'What is it you want with me, sir?' said I, in a magisterial tone.

'One minute's private conversation with you,' replied he, with a glance at the butler.

'You may leave us, Bowles,' said I; and he withdrew accordingly, although, I am bound to say, very unwillingly. The thought flashed across me like lightning: 'Bowles has something to fear from this man's disclosure;' and the next words of my visitor confirmed me in the suspicion.

'I am a member of the detective police force,' said he, 'and I come to warn you that there is Something wrong in your house.'

'Nothing to do with my plate, I hope?' said I with considerable anxiety.

'Very much to do with it, sir,' returned he grimly. 'There is a thief harboured here; and by this time to-morrow, you will not have a silver spoon in your possession, unless I find him out. I must see every soul you have got under your roof.'

'A thief!' said I; 'impossible! I never have even so much as a strange waiter. That butler has lived with me for ten years, and my two footmen even longer. I will answer for their honesty.'

'Let me see 'em, sir; that's all I want,' was the decisive reply.

'It is not Bowles?' said I appealingly; 'don't say it's Bowles;' but, although it agitated me beyond measure to think that I should have to trust a new butler with all my plate, I confess that I had a horrible idea that it *was* Bowles.

'I think not,' said the detective quietly. 'Let me see the other men.' I turned the gas-light over the door as high as it would go, and called them both into the Hall.

'It is not them,' said he. 'What other men have you got in the house?'

'None but my guests,' said I, 'here in the dining-room.'

'Do you know them all very well, sir? Are none of them mere acquaintances or neighbours?'

'Well,' returned I with hesitation, and feeling very glad that Mrs Matcham was not a third party to this interview, 'I know some, of course, better than others.'

'Just so,' said the detective quietly: 'then I must see them.'

This was a shocking proposal, and made me feel hot all over; but still I was not going to run any risk with those shield-shaped salvers. Major Pinky, I now remembered, had expressed a great wish to examine them, and perhaps that fact had

had some weight in my inviting him to dinner. Who the deuce Major Pinkey *was*—except that he belonged to my club—I certainly knew no more than the detective, and perhaps a great deal less. Still it seemed a very base thing to open the dining-room door, and let this fellow scrutinise my guests, in hopes to find a scoundrel among them.

'Upon my life,' said I, 'Mr Detective, I can't do it.'
'Very right, sir—very natural,' replied he, smiling in his quiet way. 'It would never do, would it? But look you, sir: I'm a waiter, a hired waiter. Who is to know that I have not business at your sideboard? In one minute, I could run my eye over the whole lot, and spot my man, if he's there, as sure as taxes.'

I did not like even this arrangement; but still it seemed the only thing to be done. So, sending for Bowles, I arranged with him the plan of proceeding, and then returned to the dining-room. My feelings are not to be described, when, a few minutes afterwards, sitting at the head of my table, I heard the door open, and knew that the detective was in the room. He was much longer at the sideboard than he had promised to be, and every hair on my head seemed to stand upright all the time. Suppose he should suddenly fall on Major Pinkey, and cry: 'This is my man!' Nay, suppose Colonel Twankay himself should prove to be the offender! I seemed to have lost all confidence in my fellow-creatures. After a period of anxiety no measure of time could indicate, the supposed waiter took his departure.

'You've got a new man, I see,' said Dr Twistie carelessly: 'with so much plate about, I hope you are satisfied about his honesty.'

I was exceedingly glad to find old Twistie honest, and had not been taken by the shirt frill, and walked off to Bow Street; but of course I did not tell him that.

'Please, sir, you're wanted again,' whispered Bowles as he brought in another bottle of claret.

'If the kitchen chimney is on fire, I am glad we have dined,' observed the major good-humouredly: 'if I can be of any service, pray command me.'

I did not inform him what a relief it was to me that he was *not* Wanted, but remarking that it was only a little domestic matter, I once more sought the inspector.

'The one I'm after is not among *them*, sir, so far as I know,' observed this official, jerking his thumb in the direction of the dining-room. 'Are you sure there are no more men in your house beside those I have seen?'

'Yes,' said I; 'there are no more.'
'Then now I must have a look at the ladies.'
'The ladies!' cried I, aghast at this proposal. 'You don't want to go into the drawing-room?'

'It would be more satisfactory,' observed the detective coolly. 'My information is very reliable. But, at all events, Who is there?'

'Well,' said I; 'my wife is there for one: you have no information against *her*, I suppose?'

He nodded satisfaction so far.
'Then there's the Honourable Mrs Matcham and her daughter.'

'Safe!' rejoined the detective, checking them off on his fingers.

'Mrs Twistie of Regalia Square, and Lady Bobbington.'

'I suppose they're all right,' remarked my inquisitor doubtfully. 'Are you sure there are no more?'

'There's my mother-in-law, but she's in her own room, and exceedingly unwell.'

'Very good,' observed the detective inconsequentially. 'There's a Plant somewhere in this house, however; you may take your oath of that, and very likely in the last place where you would ever look for it; so now I must see the maids.'

It was astonishing even to myself in what complete subjugation this man had placed me. Once, and once only, a terrible misgiving seized me—I was as full of suspicions by this time as a porcupine of quills, and darted them in as many directions—that the detective himself was a 'Plant' that would presently blossom into a burglar; but my overtaxed mind refused to bear this burden. If it was so, I would trust to his clemency—just as an inhabitant of Dubernitz, deserted by Feldzeugmeister von Benedek, might have trusted to a Prussian—to leave me a silver fork or two to carry on the business of life. If this man turned out to be anything less than what he described himself to be, all authority would henceforth lose its effect with me. If Solomon had ever had to do with a metropolitan detective, he would never have spoken so slightly of mankind. I had read of 'the grasp of the law' in works of fiction, but I had never understood the tremendous nature of that figure until I felt this gentleman's knuckles (metaphorically) inserted in my white cravat. He had to repeat: 'So now I must see the maids,' in his undeniable manner, before I could collect myself sufficiently to lead the way to the kitchen—a spot to which I should not alone have ventured to penetrate. To say that the cook and the kitchen-maid stared at the phenomena of our presence, is to underrate their powers of vision.

'Now, I daresay you have no charwoman nor any temporary assistant, my good lady, even on an occasion like the present,' observed my companion urbanely; 'but you and this young woman do all the work yourselves.'

'That's true, sir; we don't mind hard work now and then,' returned the cook, tossing her head; 'and besides, I don't like strangers in my kitchen,' added she with meaning, '*especially when I'm busy, and would rather have their room than their company.*'

I could have given that woman five shillings upon the spot (and I did so the next morning) for that rapid discharge of words: the detective's tongue, although I had found it so terrible a weapon, was silenced by my domestic's needle-gun, and he retired much discomfited, I could see, notwithstanding that he strove to conceal his defeat beneath a contemptuous smile.

'Now, if I'd been an ordinary policeman, and in uniform,' whispered he to me, as we reached the Hall again, 'I could have come over that cook in no time.'

Without remarking upon this confession of defeat, I led the way up to the nursery. The servants in that department were not unused to visitors, and evidently imagined that my companion was some family-man among the guests, who had expressed a wish to 'see the dear children' in their cribs. He, on his part, immediately understood the rôle he was expected to play, and walked admiringly from cot to cot, as though he were a connoisseur in babes.

'Charming children, and well taken care of, I can see,' observed he, with rather a familiar nod (I thought) towards the under-nurse. 'It's neither of

them,' he added in a low whisper. 'You have got a housemaid or two, I suppose!'

His tone was exactly that which an ogre might have used in making inquiries concerning the larder at a Cannibal inn.

The housemaids were inspected, and pronounced to be free from suspicion. 'But I cannot have seen everybody,' said he decisively.

'Yes,' said I, 'everybody, except Mrs Maqueechy.'

'Friend of the family?' inquired the detective, with a disappointed air.

'Well,' said I, 'I might almost say so. She came to us not only with the best of written characters, but my wife had an interview with her late mistress, a Mrs Ogilvie, who pronounced her a perfect treasure; and we ourselves have found her all that could be wished.'

'I should like to see the "perfect treasure,"' quoth the detective, smiling grimly: 'we often find them to be the very people we want.'

'Nay,' said I, 'but in this case your suspicions are quite groundless: Mrs Maqueechy is a superior person, and takes an interest in us which you seldom find in a domestic except after years of service. Besides, she is my mother-in-law's sick-nurse, and most likely they have already made their arrangements for the night. It would be a pity to disturb them.'

'I must see Mrs Maqueechy,' returned my companion gravely; 'she seems altogether too charming to be missed.'

'You detectives are clever fellows,' replied I with irritation; 'but you often spend your time very fruitlessly. It is a pity that a man can't be determined, and yet avoid being obstinate. However, since you have gone so far, you shall go through with the business.'

With that I knocked at the door, and, admitted to the sick-room, informed my mother-in-law briefly of what was taking place; while the invaluable Maqueechy retired with her usual delicacy to the dressing-room. Perhaps, I spoke a little too loud—for that Mrs Maqueechy could stoop to eavesdropping, it is hard to believe—but, at all events, that intelligent woman must have possessed herself of the substance of what I related, for when I opened the door to admit the officer, I found her already outside, and in his custody. She had endeavoured to escape through the second door of the dressing-room—'bolted like a rabbit,' said the detective—but had run into the very danger she would have avoided, and there she was with a couple of handcuffs over her neat mittens.

'We know one another very well, me and Mrs Maqueechy,' observed the detective grimly. 'I was told I should find an old friend in this house, although I had no idea who it would be until you mentioned Mrs Ogilvie. She is very charitable, she is, in getting her fellow-creatures situations in respectable families where there happens to be a good deal of plate. It was this very night that this good lady here had engaged to open your front-door to her husband and a friend of his, who keeps a light cart in the news yonder. Being a sick-nurse, you see, nobody would be surprised at her being about the house at all hours.—Wasn't that your little game, Mrs Maqueechy?'

'Well, I suppose it's a five-year touch!' observed that lady with philosophic coolness.

'Well, I'm afraid it is, ma'am; since that other little business in Carlton Gardens still remains unsettled.—Good-bye, sir; you will see Mrs M.

again, once or twice, before you have done with her; and in the meantime you take my advice, sir, and in hiring another sick-nurse for your mother-in-law, don't you apply to Mrs Ogilvie.'

And off he walked with our 'perfect treasure.'

SEA-SIDE FLOWERS.

VISITORS to the sea-shore love to wander along the beach in search of the beauteous shells of scallop or cowry, left by the retiring tide, and delight to trace their exquisite design and structure; or, scrambling over the slimy rocks, covered with treacherous algae, will peer into the little pool, fringed with crimson and purple weed, inhabited by various anemones, gray shrimps, and darting fish, in hopes of discovering some new treasure to capture, and carry off in triumph for the aquarium at home; but how few care to examine the modest beauty of the many sea-side flowers blooming unregarded at their very feet; nay, their very existence often unknown, or looked upon as common weeds, devoid of all beauty or interest. Many a lover of wild-flowers and country beauty will pause in the fields and lanes, and even dusty roads that skirt the shore—especially if they be on the southern coasts of England—where the brier and hawthorn hedges are tangled with luscious honeysuckle, and the primroses cluster in masses; where the wild hyacinth peeps from amidst the nettles, and the speedwell opens its 'angel's eyes' of loveliest azure; but as they approach the sea-beach, the proverb of its sterility,

Barren as the sand on the sea-shore,

is felt, and nought is expected or looked for but the rich harvest of ocean's wondrous things cast on the shingle, or left in the pools beyond. The immediate banks and links of the sea-side are usually treeless, and, to non-observant eyes, dreary wastes; but not a spot on this wide world is without its interest and beauty, and delightful it is, when rambling along the sandy beach, listening to the music of the waves on the pebbly shore, to find how many lovely blossoms are scattered even here, ornamenting the rugged sides of the chalky cliff or rock, wearing a flowery tapestry over the sloping links, and binding together with interlaced roots the loose substance of many a sand-bank.

Unlike the country meadows, where the loveliest blossoms appear with the earliest sunshine of the year, the fairest sea-side flowers are to be gathered during the summer and autumn months, though even in spring, the turf which enameles the links, down often to the water's edge, will be found decked with an occasional early blossom—

As if the rainbows of the first fresh spring
Had blossomed where they fell.

While, at all seasons of the year, here, as elsewhere,

Daisies with their pinky lashes
raise their glad faces to the sun;

On waste and woodland, rock and plain,
Its humble buds unheeded rise;
The rose has but a summer reign—
The daisy never dies.

The first gleam of spring sunshine is however reflected not only by the silver daisy, but by that 'sunflower of the spring,' the Golden Dandelion, which glitters as early as April on the sandy, grassy slope, familiar to all, and common everywhere. The leaves of the dandelion grow from the root; they are deeply cut and notched, and from this have gained their name, which, we English have corrupted from the French *dent-de-lion*. The Scotch call the dandelion the hawkweed gowan. The leaves are much eaten on the continent for salad, and a medicine is extracted from the root. Every one is familiar with the downy ball that succeeds the flower:

The dandelion with globe of down,
The school-boy's clock in every town,
Which the truant puffs amain,
To conjure lost hours back again.

When Linnaeus proposed the use of what he termed a floral clock, which was to consist of plants which opened and closed their blossoms at particular hours of the day, the dandelion was one of the flowers selected, because its petals open at six; the hawkweed was another—it opens at seven; the succory at eight, the celandine and marigold at nine, and so on, the closing of the blossoms marking the corresponding hours in the afternoon. Nor is this the effect of light on the plants, because, when placed in a dark room, the flowers are found to open and close their petals at the same times.

In the month of May, many sea-side blossoms appear; but in June they burst forth in such wild profusion, that we are at a loss to know which to gather first:

For who would sing the flowers of June,
Though from gray morn to blazing noon,
From blazing noon to dewy eve,
The chaplet of his song he weave,
Would find his summer daylight fail,
And leave half told the pleasing tale.

We must only attempt to pluck such as are most common, and most likely to attract attention.

Many a sea-side cliff is adorned with the handsome pale-yellow clusters of the Sea-cabbage, which flowers from May until the late autumnal months, and is very ornamental, hanging in tufts from the crevices of the chalky heights. It grows from one to two feet high, has woody stems, and leaves a deep green, tinged with purple and yellow. It is very common on the Dover Cliffs, where it is gathered, and sold to be boiled and eaten. From it spring our numerous varieties of cabbage; and this reminds me how very greatly we are indebted to our sea-side plants for many of our most valuable vegetables: the fresh crisp celery, the dainty asparagus, the beet, and sea-kale, in addition to the cabbage, are all derived from our salt-marshes, and, under careful cultivation, have become what they are.

The Rest-harrow, which we gather in the corn-field, may also be found adorning many a green patch on the chalky cliff-side or sandy bank near the sea. Its woody thorns are more abundant and stronger than when flourishing in richer soil. Its leaves are numerous and small, its butterfly-shaped blossoms usually a purple-rose colour, but some-

times almost white. Near the sea-side, I have often found the little Sea Pearlwort, which requires close observation to detect it. It grows upright, has tiny, delicate leaves, and flower-cups tinged with a reddish-purple colour.

Very common in the sand is the Sea-rocket, a smooth, glaucous plant, with pretty lilac-pink flowers, which often mixes its blossoms with the white petals of the Scurvy-grass.

But June flowers press upon us: here we have plentiful at Dover and many other sea-side places the Viper's Bugloss, certainly one of the handsomest wild-flowers, either of the neglected field or beach, that we have. It is a magnificent plant, sometimes attaining the height of three feet, its rich purple blossoms, with their long bright red stamens, often extending half-way down the stems. It is peculiar for the variety of tints it exhibits in its flowers, the buds being a rosy red, but the expanded blossom a rich purple, which gradually assumes a deep blue. Sometimes it is found white. The stems and leaves are covered with bristles and brownish warts, or tubercles. Its name is taken from the resemblance the seeds bear to a viper's head, and its spotted stem to the snake's skin; and in olden times, the plant was supposed to heal the bite of a viper. It flourishes best on a chalky hill, or sandy waste ground:

Here the blue bugloss paints the sterile soil,

and rears its rich spike of closely-set flowers with a stately air. Though its foliage is coarse, its blossom is very beautiful; not easy, however, to gather, for bees are ever hovering around it—

Flying solicitous from flower to flower,
Tasting each sweet that dwells
Within its scented bells;

and oft tearing their delicate wings amongst the thick, hairy prickles. The common Kidney-vetch flourishes luxuriantly by the sea-shore, decking the heights with its handsome yellow flowers from May to September. It crowds its blossoms into flower-cups, thickly covered with down; and two such tufts or heads usually grow at the top of each stem. It is as common a flower on the continent as with us, though it varies in colour—owing, Linnaeus tells us, to the nature of the soil. The French call it *barbe de Jupiter*, Jupiter's beard. We also give it the names of lady's-fingers and lambtoe. Clare tells us—

The yellow lambtoe I have often got,
Sweet creeping o'er the banks in sunny time.

During June, the common Pellitory of the wall spreads over many a rocky spot, sometimes trailing its stems over the surface, and at others rising erect, a foot high. Its leaves grow up the hairy stalk, and are mixed with the small purple-red flowers that lie closely against the stem. The White Ox-eye, though loving best to bow in beauty midst the waving grass of the meadow, may yet be found straying near the coast; and very beautiful are its large solitary flower-heads, with their rich golden centre and pure white ray.

Several thistles are to be found flourishing by the sea-coast, blooming from June to September. Perhaps the most familiar is the common Sow-thistle, growing on almost every waste place, and greatly relished by rabbits, on account of the milky juices it contains. Its leaves are deeply notched, the lobes turned backwards, its flowers yellow.

The Milk-thistle is easily recognised by its large leaves veined with white, and deep purple flowers. It is a prickly plant, often growing as high as four or five feet. Though common in England, it is rare in Scotland, and, I have read, is only to be found on the rocky cliffs near Dumbarton Castle, where tradition tells it was planted by Mary Queen of Scots. The Star-thistle may occasionally be found among the wild blossoms of the sea-side, growing on cliff-tops, or green patches of the beach. It has hard woody spines, standing out from the flower-cup only, and in this differs from the other thistles, which are usually covered with sharp bristles, and seem defiantly to announce:

I am Sir Thistle, the surly,
The rough, and the rude, and the burly;
I doubt if you'll find
My touch quite to your mind,
Whether late be your visit or early.

July comes laden with a host of fair blossoms of her own, as numerous as those of June:

Bright gems of earth, in which perchance we see
What Eden was, what Paradise may be.

Perhaps one of the most attractive, as well as one of the first in beauty, and blooming down almost to the water's edge, is the Yellow-horned Poppy, scattering its crumpled golden blossoms with every passing breeze on the surrounding sea-weed. Its stems and leaves are a delicate blue-green, wearing the bloom that is called glaucous, from which its botanical name is taken. It is hairy, and its peculiar, curved, horn-like pods are often half a foot long. It is a showy, handsome plant, but smells badly, and is said to be poisonous. Quite as pretty, and far less harmful, is the Sea-convolvulus, trailing its rose-coloured bells with yellow rays, and dark-green succulent leaves, in clusters on the sandy links, where it presents a succession of delicate, short-lived flowers; and equally common, but less showy, are the green blossoms and thick wavy leaves of the Sea-beet (*Beta maritima*), which, when cultivated, we often recognise as a useful vegetable. I have often gathered near the sea the Hound's-tongue, easily recognised by its dark purple-red blossoms, and strong smell of mice. Its soft downy leaves are supposed to resemble in form the tongue of a dog, and from this it derives its Greek and common name. It is a tall plant, often growing two feet high. Its foliage is a dull green, its flowers a rich claret colour.

On the sandy downs and in the rock-crevices down even to the shore,

Flourishing so gay and wildly free,
Upon the salt-marsh by the roaring sea,

are the pink and white heads of the sea-pink, or well-known Thrift, so often used as a bordering in our flower-gardens, but here hanging in little tufts from the rocks, thriving where little nourishment can be afforded, and thus well meriting its name. Its leaves grow from the root, and mostly resemble coarse grass. Its flowers form round heads of lilac-pink blossoms, and crown downy stalks, some four inches high. There, too, is

The sea-lavender, which lacks perfume, and is a species of everlasting, retaining its colour and form long after being gathered. Its spike of blue-lilac flowers is very handsome. There are several species of sea-lavender; and in August we have the delicate lilac-blue blossoms and bluish-

green foliage of the upright-spiked Sea-lavender, so often gathered to deck the winter vase. It is smaller both in leaf and flower than the former species.

Growing down, even amid the sand, we may now gather the compact head of the tall eryngo, or Sea-holly, which has blue blossoms, in shape resembling the thistle's; and firm prickly leaves, beautifully veined, and adorned with that pale sea-green bloom so common in our sea-side plants. It grows about a foot high, and is stiff and rigid.

One of the purest-tinted blue flowers that we have may be found flourishing by the sea. It is the narrow-leaved Pale Flax, a sweet, delicate, fragile blossom, that drops its petals as we gather it. It is a tall plant, with a solitary flower on each stem, and small alternate leaves, adorning each to the root. Its stem is tough and fibrous, like all its species. The flax cultivated for commerce is a pretty pale-blue bell, erect and fragile, dancing and trembling with the faintest whisper of the passing breeze. Mrs Howitt well describes it:

Oh! the goodly flax-flower!
It groweth on the hill;
And be the breeze awake or 'sleep,
It never standeth still!
It seemeth all astir with life,
As if it loved to thrive,
As if it had a merry heart
Within its stem alive.

How pretty are the little sandworts now in blossom, especially the sea-pimpernel, or Sea-side Sandwort which blooms in shining, glossy patches only a few inches high. Its clustering white flowers are almost hidden by the thick, crowding, succulent leaves. There are ten species of sandwort. Perhaps the commonest of all is the sea-spurry sandwort, which hangs its little star-like blossoms in trailing tufts from the cliff-sides.

In this month also we may gather the white-rayed flowers of the Sea-side Feverfew, which often grows far down on the beach. Its blossoms are the size of a daisy, its stems thick, its leaves stalky, its growth low. And now also, decking the sides of the banks, is the perfoliate Yellowwort with its bright yellow flowers, and pale sea-green leaves, which grow in couplets, joining at the base, the stalk passing through them. The plant grows about a foot high, is not uncommon, and to be found in flourishing abundance on the Kentish coast.

Fringing the summit of the tall sea-cliffs, and clothing with its clusters of yellowish-white flowers and fleshy sea-green leaves the many crevices on the steep sides of the rocks, we may see the Samphire, so plentiful on the southern shores, and especially at Dover, where it is gathered during May for pickle. That there is danger to the gatherer we may infer, from Shakspeare's mention in *King Lear*, where the scene is laid near Dover:

Half-way down,

Hangs one that gathers samphire: dreadful trade!

Several kinds of Sea-southernwood are now shewing their green flowers; the Saltwort, and funny-looking, jointed-branched, leafless Glasswort are to be gathered now; both so useful for the soda they contain.

There is a species of Nightshade often to be found flourishing on our sea-beaches, with blossoms shaped like the potato-flower, but white, and followed by black berries, highly poisonous.

There are also the Dwarf-centaury and the Dwarf-tufted Centaury, neither growing beyond a few inches in height, both possessing light-green stems, and clusters of rose-coloured blossoms.

The Buck's-horn Plantain is common on the sea-shore. It derives its name from the peculiar cutting of its leaves.

Very common on the rocky bank is the Wild Mignonette. Though lacking the sweet fragrance of the garden species, its pale greenish-yellow spikes are very ornamental. The Sea-side Pea grows on the links and banks of our beaches, but is uncommon. Its butterfly-shaped blossoms remind one of the sweet-pea of the garden :

Where swelling peas on leafy stalks are seen,
Mixed flowers of red and azure shine between.

During the great famine of 1555, it is said that thousands of families subsisted on the seeds contained in the pods of the sea-side pea.

Near the beach, I have often gathered the Knot-grass, so named from the knottness of its stem, and to be found flourishing everywhere :

By the lone quiet grave,
In the wild hedgerow, the knot-grass is seen,
Down in the rural lane,
Or on the verdant plain,
Everywhere humble, and everywhere green.

Shakspeare has called it 'the hindering knot-grass,' on account of the obstacles its trailing, tangled stems offer to the husbandman. Milton speaks of it as

The knot-grass, dew besprent.

It is familiar to almost every eye, forming little green patches even between the stones of our streets, its tiny, pale-pink blossoms growing so closely to the stem as to be half-hidden amongst the leaves. Its seeds and young buds afford a store of food for birds; and it is said that swine and sheep love to feed upon it. Milton tells us,

The chewing flocks
Had ta'en their supper of that savory herb,
The knot-grass.

It bears little resemblance to a grass; but this reminds me that amongst our sea-side plants the grasses are perhaps the most interesting, as well as useful and important, and are often of great service by their spreading mass of tough underground stems offering a strong resistance to the inroads of the sea. Several of the shores of England are so protected; and the greater part of the coast of Holland being composed of dykes, owes its security to the powerful obstacles the peculiar growth of these grasses affords. Thus we see

The commonest things may ofttimes be
Those of the greatest utility.
How many uses hath grass which groweth,
Wheresoever the wild wind bloweth.

Useful as the sea-side grasses are, however, we have not space in this short paper to take more than a passing glance at them, remarking that the two most deserving of notice for their value in sea-resistance are the Sea-wheat Grass and the Seareed.

I have often seen flourishing near the sea-coast the rich clusters of the Ragwort (*Senecio Jacobææ*), bright as the golden sunbeam, waving its tall blossoms in the breeze, and emitting a strong smell of honey. It opens its flowers first in July, but often,

Coming like an after-thought,
When other flowers are vainly sought,

lingers on until Christmas; and when cold winds and wintry snows have withered every other flower, this remains,

A token to the wintry earth, that beauty liveth still.

Very pretty is the yellow carpet spread on the dry bank by the Yellow Bed-straw, with its mass of tiny blossoms and slender thready leaves of brilliant green. Its flowers, like those of the ragwort just mentioned, also smell sweetly of honey. In the Hebrides, a reddish-brown dye is extracted from its roots.

In September, we see the tall, handsome Golden-rod, not only in our woods and hedgeways, but also on the sea-side cliff, somewhat stunted in growth, but still beautiful with its crowded clusters of golden blossoms, over which butterflies, moths, and bees hover incessantly, in spite of its

Florets wrapped in silky down,
To guard it from the bee.

In the days of Queen Elizabeth, it was sold in the London markets by herb-dealers. It was supposed to cure wounds.

Then also the Michaelmas daisy, or Sea-starwort, opens its pale lilac petals, and continues to blossom until other flowers have nearly all faded away :

And the sole blossom which can glad the eye
Is yon pale starwort nodding to the wind.

It often grows as high as three feet; its leaves are smooth, a sickly green in colour, and very succulent. At this time, we shall also find the Marsh Mallow. It is a medicinal plant, containing a quantity of starchy mucilage, which is formed into a paste, and taken as a cure for coughs. Its flowers are a pretty rose-tint; its leaves soft, downy, and very thick. It grows about two feet high, and is altogether an attractive, handsome plant, the more valued,

Because a fair flower that illumines the scene,

When the tempest of winter is near;
'Mid the frowns of adversity, cheerful of mien,
And gay, when all's dark and serene.

Such are a few of the sea-side blossoms to be gathered on our coasts. Let my readers, next summer, take a ramble along the beach, and hunt for themselves, when they may discover a host of fresh beauties rising on all sides, creeping over the loose sand, topping the rocky heights, or decking the grassy slopes—

As though some gentle angel,
Commissioned love to bear,
Had wandered o'er the green-sward,
And left her footprints there.

Let not the humblest, most neglected flower be discarded, for each bears its own little mine of beauty, fraught with instruction, and the promptings of pure and holy thoughts, that lead the mind from 'nature to nature's God.'

Nature never did betray
The heart that loved her; 'tis her privilege
Through all the years of this our life to lead
From joy to joy; for she can so inform
The mind that is within us, so impress
With quietness and beauty, and so feed
With lofty thoughts, that neither evil tongues,
Rash judgments, nor the sneers of selfish men,

Nor greetings where no kindness is, nor all
The dreary intercourse of daily life,
Shall e'er prevail against us, or disturb
Our cheerful faith, that all that we behold
Is full of blessings.

BROUGHT TO LIGHT.

CHAPTER XXXIII.—WHITE GRANGE.

THE lone farmhouse known as White Grange was buried from the world among the bleak, desolate hills and solitary sheep-walks which stretch from the sea on one side, across the north-eastern corner of Monksore, almost to the edge of the lovely valley in which Normansford lies warm and sheltered; beyond which, the country becomes more fruitful and open, if less picturesque. White Grange was a gray, old, storm-beaten building, and bore the date of 1695 carved above its rude porch. Near it stood a barn, and a few other out-buildings, the whole surrounded by a ruinous, moss-grown wall; beyond which you came at once upon the bleak, high moorland, open to every wind that blew. In one of these out-houses was the well from which in former times the family supply of water had been drawn. Connected with this well, there was a dark story of a murdered traveller whose body had been thrown into it; which, whether true or false, gave the place an uncanny reputation through the country-side.

White Grange seems to have been unfortunate in its tenants for a long series of years. Such a story as that of the murdered traveller would hardly attach itself to any reputable household; and old Job Sandysen, as we have seen, was by no means the most respectable of men. The farm was now held by a brother-in-law of Job, a man named Nathan Orchard, to whom the family reputation clung tenaciously, and not, perhaps, without reason. He was a hard-drinking, hard-swearing, money-grasping old reprobate, this Nathan Orchard; disliked and feared at every market and country fair which he attended; and although no overt act of dishonesty could fairly be laid to his charge, there were whispered rumours in plenty, among those of his own station in life, of acts that any honest Monksore farmer would have blushed to own: of sorry, spavined hacks doctored up and sold at distant fairs as sound young horses; of mildewed wheat, with a covering of wholesome grain, sold under a fictitious name and address; of a forged Bank of England note for fifty pounds traced home to him, which he swore to having received from some unknown man in part-payment of an account; together with other trifles needless to specify here. Nathan's household consisted of himself and four children—two sons and two daughters, all grown up; together with an old crone, who acted the part of domestic drudge. A rough, ignorant, hard-living crew they were, the sons following closely in the footsteps of their father, and the two girls being duplicates in softer clay of their brothers.

In a room on the upper floor of White Grange, two women were seated one wintry afternoon. It was a room with a wide, old-fashioned fireplace, and a stout oaken door, and a thick beam across the ceiling—a beam with a strong hook in it, from which depended a fragment of rope, darkly suggestive of a foregone suicide—a room with two diamond-paned windows, across each of which, on the inside, ran two stout iron bars, and in this respect different from any other windows in the

house. Why the windows of this room should be barred, rather than those of any other room, was one of the mysteries of White Grange, which Nathan Orchard himself would have been quite unable to explain.

The younger of the two females, a stout, ruddy-cheeked lass, was seated at one of those old-fashioned spinning-wheels which are becoming rarer every day, and crooning some country ditty to herself, as she worked. She was Nathan Orchard's youngest daughter. The elder of the two females is known to the reader already, she being, indeed, none other than Madame Marie, Jane Garrod's sometime lodger at Kingsthorpe Station, and the woman of whose murder Mr Duplessis had been wrongfully suspected. But she was much changed since we saw her last. In the first place, there seemed nothing left of her but skin and bone, so thin and fleshless had she become. Her long black hair had all been cut off during the fit of raving madness which supervened upon her abduction and forcible confinement at White Grange; and although it had grown somewhat since that time, it was still as short as that of a man. Her dress, too, was rather out of the common way, consisting outwardly, as it did, of a red flannel dressing-robe, which, although it reached to the ground when she walked, did not hide, as she sat there, her bare feet, thrust loosely into a pair of old slippers. It was her whim to be dressed thus, and neither persuasion nor threats could induce her to alter the style of her costume. Just now, she was painfully and laboriously busy with her needle, stitching a doll's clothes: that was her occupation day after day, the dressing of dolls, and instructions were given that her whim in this respect should be gratified. A quiet, harmless form of madness that expends itself on such trifles, is infinitely preferable to the vagaries of a raging lunatic. So she dressed and undressed her dolls, of which she had about a dozen in all; and talked to them, and scolded them, and caressed them, as any child of six might have done. She had a sweet voice; and sometimes, in the twilight, she would sing little French love-songs to her dolls, trifles which had in them a pathos all their own, such even as touched sometimes—although she did not understand the words—the unsusceptible heart of Peg Orchard, her youthful jailer. Sometimes she would fall into a fit of sullen brooding, which would last for a couple of days, during which time she neither ate nor spoke, but would pass hour after hour crouched on the old-fashioned window-seat, staring out through the barred panes with such a hopeless, far-away look in her eyes as might have moved any one to pity. What she thought about at such times, no one ever knew. Perhaps, in her disordered mind, pictures of happy days long past, mirrored themselves brokenly, as in a troubled pool; perhaps she was brooding darkly over her wrongs, and striving to piece together some wild scheme of revenge. These sullen moods always ended in an outburst of hysterical sobs and tears, which did not cease till her little strength was utterly exhausted, when she would lapse into a deep, deathlike sleep as she lay on the floor, a sleep which would last for twelve or fourteen hours; after which she would awake as light and happy as a child, and call for food and brandy, and begin to dress her dolls again, and to sing her little love-songs, as though she had not a cure in the world.

Peg and Madame had not been together all this time without learning to like one another, each in her own peculiar way. Peg, while being the most faithful and incorruptible of jailers, still contrived to secure for her charge many little indulgences, chiefly in the way of food; for Madame had always been nice in her eating, and the fare at White Grange was ordinarily of the coarsest kind. Madame was not ungrateful; and in her calmer and saner moments, would do her best to reciprocate the girl's kindness. Thus she taught Peg to improve her appearance by compressing her waist, and keeping her shoulder-blades in their proper place, thereby necessitating an upright carriage of the person; and as Madame prided herself on her taste, and was dexterous with her needle, she so altered and improved Peg's Sunday frock—lengthening the body, and puffing the sleeves, and imparting to it such a graceful fall behind—that that young person felt she had never cut such a fashionable figure before. Then she taught Peg how to dress her hair in a more elegant style, and gave her the recipe for a wash that was warranted to beautify the complexion, however tanned or freckled it might be. Peg's heart was finally won when Madame presented her with the rings out of her own ears; only Peg was afraid to wear them, lest her greedy old father should force her to give them up, that he might pawn or sell them.

Sometimes, in mild, open weather, there would come over Madame a desire to exchange her close shut-up room for the fresh air outside. At such times, she would induce Peg to ask permission from the old man for them to walk in the orchard for half an hour. Sometimes the permission was given, sometimes it was not. When the answer was favourable, Madame would wrap a thick shawl round her, and taking Peg's arm, would pace till she was tired the gravelled walk which ran from end to end of the neglected strip of ground which, by some strange perversion of terms, was known as 'the orchard.' Mad though Madame might be on some points, she was never mad enough to attempt to escape while taking her outdoor exercise. In a personal encounter, she would have stood no chance against the stalwart Peg; and the fleet-footed farmer's daughter would have run her down before she had got twenty yards away.

It was while taking one of these quiet walks in charge of Peg that Madame's sharp eyes caught sight of something unusual lying half-concealed among the thick grass. She repassed it again and again before she could make out clearly that it was nothing more than a rusty old knife, and then she could have screamed aloud with all a maniac's fearful joy at sight of such a priceless treasure. But how to secure it without being seen? Disengaging her arm suddenly from Peg's, she seated herself on the grass close to the knife, so that a fold of her shawl hid it from view. After that, it was easy to push it unobserved up her sleeve. When she got back to her own room, and the key was turned on her for the night, she brought forth her treasure, and kissed it, and stuffed her handkerchief into her mouth to smother the wild bursts of laughter that would not be kept back when she thought how cleverly she had deceived them all, and what pretty things it was possible to accomplish even with such an ugly weapon as a rusty knife. There was a little bit broken away from the under-part of one of the window-seats, leaving a small cavity between the wood-work and the bricks; and

there, after much painful cogitation, she hid her treasure.

Madame was in one of her better moods this wintry afternoon, but hardly as talkative as usual; and as the shadows outside grew deeper, Peg, too, became mute, and the silence was broken only by the whirr of the spinning-wheel, or the weird muttering of the wind in the wide old chimney. At length Marie flung down her sewing with a petulant air. 'There! I can see no longer,' she exclaimed. 'So Elise, poor darling, will have to go without her petticoat to-night, for I can't bear stitching by candle-light. Do, my dear child, go down stairs, and bring me up a cup of tea and a candle.' She listened intently without stirring till Peg's footsteps had died away down stairs; then she rose, and crossing the floor with quick, noiseless steps, drew the knife from its hiding-place. 'A few more nights, and I shall be free,' she muttered to herself. 'The bar is nearly through, and soon the cage will be empty and the bird flown. Another windy night,' she added, peering with white face and straining eyes into the gathering gloom outside. 'The wind is Marie's friend. I like the sound of his rough voice; I like to hear him rattling the doors and windows, and shaking the crazy old house in his burly arms. He comes across the waste at midnight to summon me to my task. Then, when everybody in the house is fast asleep, and they think I am asleep too, I slip quietly out of bed, and begin my work; and oh! what weary work it is, sawing away, all in the dark, at the rotten old bar with my trusty friend here. But when the first streak of gray shews across the moorland, then I put my knife away, and creep back to bed with such aching bones, and such feet of ice; and when Peg comes in with my cup of tea, looking so fresh and innocent, I hide my head under the clothes, and laugh to myself to think what a simpleton she is, and how I am deceiving them all. And he is here! I know it. Sometimes I hear his voice. Black-hearted monster! I will be revenged—revenged—revenged on you before I go! But when I try to think how this must be, my head begins to ache, and moans, like drops of blood, dance before my eyes. But it will all come to me suddenly, like a flash of lightning, at the right moment. Yes, a few more nights, and the cage will be broken, and the bird flown. Oh, what fun it all is!'

CHAPTER XXXIV.—THE READING OF THE WILL.

A wintry night, starless and lowering, with a bleak wind moaning drearily through the woods of Belair like a voice of sorrowful warning. Eight o'clock is striking by the turret-clock as the great doors of the Hall are flung wide open to let out for the last time him who had so long been master of that stately home. His pleasant voice and genial laugh, never more to be heard within its rooms; never more his tall, slender form and white head to be seen by tenant or farm-labourer in field or coppice, or at friendly rent-day feast. All that is left on earth of Sir Philip Spencelaugh is about to cross the threshold of his home for the last time; and to-morrow a new master will reign at Belair.

One by one, from a side-door, dark-cloaked figures to the number of thirty or forty come quietly out, each of them carrying a lighted torch; and range themselves in front of the main entrance. Presently the coffin makes its

appearance, borne on the shoulders of men who have worked on the estate all their lives—men who have loved and respected him they are carrying, as their greatest earthly benefactor. Slowly and tenderly, down the wide, shallow steps, they bear their solemn burden, over which a great pall is thrown. Close behind, in solitary state, comes the son and heir, a tall, slender young man, with a worn, effeminate face; genuinely sorry for the loss of the kind-hearted old man he is following; half angry with himself because his eyes *will* remain so obstinately dry; with yet a lurking feeling of satisfaction in one corner of his heart, which will not be quite trampled out, that he is now really and veritably Sir Gaston Spencelaugh—that he may now clear off those confounded post-obits, and be his own master, with plenty of ready money for the future.

So down the main avenue of the Park the long procession slowly moved, lighted up by the lurid blaze of the torches, which shewed from a distance like gigantic fire-flies among the trees. Behind Sir Gaston, at a respectful distance, came a numerous array of the personal friends of the dead man: magnates of the county; friends of the cover-side and the stubble-field; men who not seldom had sat at his table; men at whose houses he had visited, and to whose wives and daughters he had been well known. Behind these, again, came a long string of humbler friends—small farmers and labourers on the estate, whose grief for the loss of the man they were following was probably quite as genuine as that of more aristocratic friends.

Little groups of country-people, women and children mostly, whose husbands and brothers took part in the procession, were scattered about the Park close to the line of march; and many a tear was shed, and many a blessing invoked to the memory of the benefactor they would never see again. With such accompaniments was Sir Philip Spencelaugh borne to his grave.

Never had the little church of Belair been more densely crowded than it was on the night of the baronet's funeral. The first to enter it, and the last to leave it, were two women, who sat in an obscure corner of the gallery, and the hoods of whose black cloaks completely hid their faces from observation. When the solemn service was at an end—when the body had been lowered into its resting-place in the vault underneath the chancel—when the vicar's last Amen had been said, and the last notes of the choir had died away into silence, these two hooded women were the last of all there to lean over the dark cavity in the floor, and bid farewell in tearful silence to him who slept so soundly below. Then homeward through the already deserted Park by near ways well known to themselves.

These were Frederica Spencelaugh and Jane Garrod.

Frederica had passed only one night at Belair after her return from town. Now that its master was dead, she felt that not without derogation to herself could she stay there any longer. As the antagonist of Lady Spencelaugh in the course which she, Frederica, was fully determined to pursue, she felt that for the future her home must be elsewhere; so she went to her friend, Mrs Barber of Ashleigh Park, and there took asylum for a week or two. She had telegraphed for Mr Penning on the day following her uncle's death; and that gentleman, acting on her instructions,

had intimated to Mr Greenhough, the family lawyer, that he would be prepared, on the reading of the will, to offer certain evidence which would go far to prove that Gaston Spencelaugh was not the rightful heir to the entail and title of his father.

The reading of the will was fixed to take place in the great drawing-room of Belair at ten o'clock on the morning after the funeral. Mr Greenhough, instructed by Lady Spencelaugh and Mrs Winch as to the nature of the evidence which was likely to be put in by Mr Penning in opposition to the natural and lawful claim of Sir Gaston, pooh-poohed the whole affair cheerfully; and hinted delicately how sorry he was to find that a lady for whom he entertained so profound a respect as he did for Miss Spencelaugh, should have lent herself so credulously to the schemes of an impostor. Under the influence of this mild tonic, and the exordiums of her stanch friend Mrs Winch, her Ladyship's drooping courage revived in some measure; and it was with tolerable composure both of mind and body that she took her seat, on the eventful morning, in the great chair of carved oak, which had been brought from the library on purpose, and so sat, with Gaston on her right hand, to hear the reading of her husband's will. Her mourning became her admirably. The style of her corrage, and the cut of her sleeves, had been a source of some anxiety to her; but little Miss Penny, assisted by a hint now and then from Clotilde, had overcome all difficulties admirably; and nothing could have been more becoming, and at the same time more pensively stylish, than her Ladyship's toilet on this her first appearance in public in her new rôle of widow.

At the opposite end of the long table sat Frederica, looking very pale, but very lovely. The executors named under the will were Sir Michael Casey, a middle-aged Irish baronet, who resided a few miles from Belair; and Dr Allen, the vicar of Normanford, and one of Sir Philip's oldest friends. Both these gentlemen followed Lady Spencelaugh into the room, and sat down opposite Mr Greenhough the lawyer. There, too, were assembled Mrs Jones the housekeeper, and Mr Bellamy the steward, and a few of the older domestics, whose grief for the loss of their master was probably tempered by some natural anticipations of a legacy. Discreetly in the background sat Dr Roach, the great medical luminary of the district, blandly unconscious, to all outward appearance, that his name was mentioned in the will of his late esteemed patient, although his friend Mr Greenhough had whispered that pleasing fact in his ear as they drove home from the funeral together on the preceding night.

A very brief abstract of the contents of Sir Philip Spencelaugh's will, as read slowly and distinctly by Mr Greenhough, is all that need be given here. The Belair and Hillgrove estates were both entailed, and beyond these, the amount of property left for division was not very considerable. The savings of the baronet's later years, consisting chiefly of securities in various public undertakings, amounting in the aggregate to about fifteen thousand pounds, together with a small banker's balance, were all left to Gaston, burdened only with a few legacies to certain old servants, and the cost of a few mementoes to the executors and other friends. To Lady Spencelaugh was left, for her own absolute disposal, the small Norfolk estate of Dene Towers, of the value

of five hundred pounds per annum; with the further addition of a life-charge on the general estates of four hundred a year more. Frederica's name was mentioned last of all. We give the extract relating to her in its entirety:

'To my well-beloved kinswoman, Frederica Mary Spence-laugh' (so ran the will), 'I give and bequeath the necklace and coronet of diamonds formerly the property of my mother; together with the miniatures, painted on ivory, of her father, my dear cousin and companion-in-arms, and myself, which will be found in the top left-hand drawer of my private bureau. These (knowing her to be in no need of worldly goods), together with an old man's love and blessing, are all that I have to bequeath to the aforesaid Frederica Mary Spence-laugh; but they will be enough for her to remember me by.'

Mr Greenhough took off his spectacles, and proceeded slowly to fold up the will. Mrs Jones took the hint, and rising, dropped a stately courtesy to my Lady, and sailed out of the room, followed by the other domestics. An uneasy brooding sense, as of a moral thunder-cloud about to burst close over their heads, rested upon the majority of those now left in the room—for it had been whispered about that something strange would follow upon the reading of the will. Mr Greenhough proceeded in the midst of profound silence to rub his spectacles deliberately with his pocket-handkerchief, then to adjust them carefully on his nose, and then to select a letter from a bundle of other documents all labelled and tied together with red tape.

'Your Ladyship and gentlemen,' began Mr Greenhough, 'I have here a communication of a very singular character, received by me five days ago, and signed by a gentleman of the name of Penning, who is, I believe, like myself, a lawyer, and who, in this matter, is acting under instructions from Miss Spence-laugh. Before laying this document before you, Miss Spence-laugh will perhaps allow me to ask her one question?'

A slight motion of Frederica's head gave Mr Greenhough the required permission.

'Is it your deliberate intention, Miss Spence-laugh, may I ask, to persevere in this matter? There is yet time to draw back. Those blazing embers would destroy this letter in a few seconds. No eye but my own has seen it, and I would forget that it had ever been written.'

'It is my deliberate intention to proceed with this matter,' said Frederica in a low, clear voice.

'Then I have no alternative but to read the letter,' said Mr Greenhough.

'Before you begin, I should like Mr Penning to be present,' said Frederica.

Then when Mr Penning, who had been waiting in an ante-room, was seated, and had been duly scrutinised by the assembled company, Mr Greenhough proceeded to read the letter, which, as before stated, was simply an intimation that Miss Spence-laugh was prepared with certain evidence to dispute the right of Gaston to the title and estates of his father.

The Irish baronet took snuff nervously; family disagreements were his especial abhorrence. The vicar looked very grave; he could scarcely believe the evidence of his own ears. It sounded to him like the assertion of a lunatic to state that Gaston Spence-laugh, who had grown up among them all from childhood, was not his father's heir. And that such an assertion should emanate from Frederica, of all people in the world! But that he had

known her intimately for years, and had long recognised her as by far the cleverest and most able of the female coadjutors whom he had enlisted under his banner, he felt that he should really have had cause this morning to doubt her sanity. In such a case it was evidently his duty to remonstrate with her, and the vicar was a man who never shrank from a duty however unpleasant it might be. So he crossed the room, and leaned over her and spoke to her in a low voice. Frederica listened quietly to all he had to urge, but only shook her head when he had done, and laying her hand gently in his, said: 'You are prejudging me. Wait till you shall have heard everything. Heaven knows, this task is not of my seeking. It has come to me unsought; and I should be doing foul wrong to the memory of the dead, and the rights of the living, were I to abandon it now.' After this, the worthy vicar could only go back to his seat, wondering more and more.

Lady Spence-laugh was sitting near the fire, with her face so far turned away from the company that nothing of it was visible but the profile. Gaston, chafing inwardly, was seated near her. What was all this bother about, he should like to know? Dispute his title, indeed! Was he not Sir Gaston Spence-laugh, owner of Belair, and of all that fair landscape which could be seen through the windows stretching far into the dim distance? He had half a mind to ring the bell, and order Green to shew these old fogies the door. It was high time they remembered who was master now. He was touched a little to think that Freddy, whom he had always liked and loved in his own careless fashion, should be turning against him at such a time with some trumped-up story of another heir; but he felt so secure in his new position that he could afford to let her have her fling, and then be magnanimous, and forgive her.

'The evidence of which you speak in this letter,' said Mr Greenhough to Mr Penning, 'will be, I presume, forthcoming without difficulty.'

'We are prepared to go into the question at once,' said Mr Penning.

'Before entering into particulars,' returned Mr Greenhough, 'you will perhaps furnish us with the name of the individual in whose favour these extraordinary proceedings are taken.'

'Willingly. The gentleman to whom you allude is known at present as Mr John English.'

'I should like to ask this Mr John English a few questions. Oblige me by producing him.'

'We are unable to do so just now,' answered Mr Penning, not without hesitation.

'Do you, in fact, know where this Mr John English is living at the present time?' asked Mr Greenhough.

'We certainly do not,' answered the London man of law.

'Precisely so,' said Mr Greenhough, rubbing his hands with an air of satisfaction.—'Gentlemen,' he added, turning to the baronet and the vicar, 'from information received, as the detectives say, I am able to throw a little light upon the history of the individual in question. By occupation he is a wandering photographer, and in this capacity he seems to have knocked about the world for several years. Chance or design brought him at last to Normanford, and he had not been there many days before he obtained an introduction to Lady Spence-laugh, who, with her customary liberality and kindness of heart, at once gave him several

commissions. The privilege of *entrée* to Belair which he thus obtained, he systematically abused by ferreting out, from the domestics and others, all the information they could give him respecting the private history of the family, supplementing the same by further insidious inquiries among the old people of the neighbouring villages; till having, as he thinks, picked up sufficient information to serve his vile purpose, he deliberately sits down and writes out a statement in which he claims to be heir to the title and estates of Belair. The whole affair would be no more than a piece of wretched absurdity, unworthy the attention of any sane man, were it not for the annoyance which, at a period of deep domestic affliction, it has caused a most estimable lady. But, gentlemen, the comedy, if I may call it such, is not yet played out. This individual, in consequence of an accident, is obliged to take up his residence for a while at Pevsey Bay, from which place he sends his Statement to Miss Spencelaugh, and is so far successful that he induces a lady of whose good sense and discernment I had hitherto had the highest opinion, to espouse his cause. But, gentlemen, the climax is yet to come. The very day after that on which he sends his Statement to Miss Spencelaugh, this man, this impostor as I ought rather to call him, disappears, and has never been heard of since. But shall I tell you why he disappears? Because he is afraid of being arrested and taken to task for previous attempts of a similar kind. Yes, gentlemen, the man himself has gone, no one knows whither—has neither been seen nor heard of for eight weeks; and yet we are seriously called upon to-day to test the validity of his ridiculous pretensions! The whole affair is really too absurd for belief! And Mr Greenhough leaned back in his chair, and glanced at Mr Penning with an air that seemed to say: 'I think, my friend, your case has not a leg to stand on;' at the same time refreshing himself copiously from the baronet's box.

'Then I suppose we may consider this little unpleasantness as at an end?' said the vicar with a genial smile.

'That's right: let's make everything pleasant,' said the baronet encouragingly.

'I beg, gentlemen, that you will not put us out of court in such a summary manner,' said Mr Penning, with a deprecatory smile. 'What Mr Greenhough has just urged sounds very plausible, I must admit; but, pray, remember that as yet you have only heard one side of the question. We at once confess that the disappearance of Mr English is a circumstance for which we are unable to account, and one which, at the first glance, may seem to prejudice our case. But putting this fact for the moment on one side, I beg to state seriously and earnestly, on the part of Miss Spencelaugh, that we are prepared with evidence which will go far to prove that many years ago, under this very roof, a heinous crime was perpetrated—by whom, we do not say—and a good man most foully deceived; and if right still be right, and wrong still be wrong, then does it most certainly rest with you two gentlemen, whom the dead master of this house appointed executors of his last will and testament, to do what he himself would have done, had he lived—to mete out, so far as in you lies, simple justice to the living and the dead.'

'I really don't see,' said Mr Greenhough with emphasis, 'that in the absence of the chief—what shall I call him?—conspirator, we can proceed any

further in this business. Let this Mr English come forward in proper person, and we shall then be prepared to hear what he may have to say for himself.'

Mr Penning shrugged his shoulders. 'Do you really wish to force us into a court of law?' he said. 'Miss Spencelaugh thought, and I quite concurred with her, that it was advisable, in the first instance at least, to sift this affair, which deeply concerns the honour of an ancient and reputable family, before some tribunal of private friends; and not make a public scandal of it, unless after-circumstances should render such a course imperatively necessary.'

'You are right, sir,' said the vicar with dignity. 'In the position in which I and my colleague are placed by the will of the late Sir Philip Spencelaugh, we cannot do otherwise than lend an attentive hearing to what you may have to say, and either nip this matter in the bud, if it be based on a lie; or if it have truth for its foundation, see that justice be done to all whom it may affect. Before entering, however, upon any of your proofs, I wish to know, and I daresay my curiosity is shared by others, whom this Mr John English asserts himself to be.'

There was a general stir and movement in the room as the vicar ceased speaking. Lady Spencelaugh's cheek paled perceptibly, but she shaded her face with a hand-screen, and gazed more intently into the fire. Gaston unfolded his arms, and lifted himself for a moment out of the state of moody irritation into which he had fallen. Vague fears of some impending disaster were beginning to coil themselves round his heart. What was the meaning of this dark conspiracy which was gathering so ominously about him at the outset of his new career? The Irish baronet paused, in the act of opening his snuff-box, to listen; and the vicar himself drew up closer to the table, and leaned forward with one hand to his ear.

Then Mr Penning spoke. 'Mr John English,' he said, 'asserts himself to be the eldest son of the late Sir Philip Spencelaugh by his first marriage.'

'But,' said the vicar, recovering from his surprise, 'the late baronet had only one son by his first marriage, Arthur by name, who died in infancy, and lies buried in the family vault.'

'Mr English asserts that he is the child in question,' said Mr Penning; 'and if this be true, he is now Sir Arthur Spencelaugh, and the owner of Belair.'

'Produce your proofs,' said the vicar.

'Things are not looking so pleasant as they might do,' thought the baronet. 'I wish I was well out of this.'

THE MONTH.

SCIENCE AND ARTS.

THE meeting of the British Association, and the successful laying of the Atlantic Telegraph Cable, have been for some time past the principal topics of talk in scientific and engineering circles. We have been so much accustomed of late years to great mechanical exploits, that now that we have daily telegrams from the United States in our newspapers, we accept the result as a matter of course, and the rising generation, as it is called, sees nothing therein particularly remarkable. Nevertheless, the laying of the cable, and the hooking up of the former cable from its bed two miles deep,

are to be regarded as among the greatest achievements of the present century ; and to watch their results will be especially interesting to those old enough to remember when heavy ships and sailing-packets were the only means of communication with New York, and the letter-bag was at times six weeks on the passage.

It would not be easy to point out a Presidential address to the British Association which has occasioned more talk or attracted more attention than that of Mr Grove, delivered at Nottingham. Gifted with eloquence in addition to his philosophical and scientific attainments, Mr Grove made an impression which will not soon be forgotten by those who had the good-fortune to listen to his address. He signalled the most striking facts in the progress of physical science which had taken place during the previous year, and shewed where they supported the theory of the *Correlation of Physical Forces*, on which he has himself written so ably. Touching upon a question much debated of late, he expressed an opinion, which, because of its importance, we give in his own words. 'What changes may take place in our modes of applying force before the coal-fields are exhausted, it is impossible to predict. Even guesses at the probable period of their exhaustion are uncertain. There is a tendency to substitute for smelting in metallurgic processes, liquid chemical action, which of course has the effect of saving fuel; and the waste of fuel in ordinary operations is enormous, and can be much economised by already known processes. It is true that we are, at present, far from seeing a practical mode of replacing that granary of force, the coal-fields; but we may with confidence rely on invention being in this case, as in others, born of necessity, when the necessity arises.'

The Board of Trade has adopted the recommendation of the Council of the Royal Society, whom they consulted on the question of meteorological observations; and the Observatory at Kew is to be enlarged, and constituted as the central meteorological observatory for the kingdom, with subordinate observing stations at Falmouth, Stonyhurst, Armagh, Glasgow, and Aberdeen. At all these stations, self-recording instruments of the most approved construction are to be employed. Observations are also to be taken at about sixty other stations, light-houses, and so forth, around the coast, which will afford means of comparison. In this way there will be collected every day a large mass of observations, which will be tabulated and made to give up all they can shew concerning the phenomena and laws of the weather; and following the example set by the Imperial Observatory at Paris, outline maps are to be published every day, shewing the direction of the wind at all the stations. This is a promise of systematic work, which will be hailed with satisfaction by every meteorologist.

The forecasts are to be discontinued as untrustworthy, but the storm-warnings are to be kept up; but the Board requires that the officer who hoists the signal 'shall note down at the time, and reduce into exact shape afterwards, the maxims or principles which have guided him in making the signal of force, or prediction of direction; the facts to which these maxims are applied; the mode in which he has applied or combined them; the value he has attached to each of them, and the value of the probability he has thus obtained.' We gather from these instructions, that if they are conscientiously

obeyed, there will be obtained, in course of time, a set of rules or principles which will in future impart more of certainty to storm-warnings than they at present possess; and that if the weather phenomena of the British Islands are periodic, this interesting fact will be ascertained.

As in 1860, meteorologists, and, indeed, most other folk, are talking of the present as a rainy year; and since July it has certainly justified the epithet. Even in the first six months, January-June, which were considered fine, there fell 17.08 inches of rain: more than in the whole of 1865. After all, may we not say, notwithstanding the complaints of farmers and others, that if there be an excessive quantity of rain in the present year, it is Nature's way of restoring the balance, and of making up for the deficiency of former years. The rain-fall in Ireland for the quarter ending in June last was 7.796 inches, being respectively 2 inches and 34 inches more than in the same quarter of 1865 and 1864.

Another Irish fact is worth mention, inasmuch as it involves a state of things which some political economists have indicated as likely to prove of permanent benefit—namely, a decrease of the population, as shewn by the Report of the Registrar-general. In the three months, April-June of the present year, the number of births registered in Ireland was 38,816; of deaths, 24,763; while in the same period 41,124 persons left the country as emigrants. The result is, that at the end of the quarter, the population decreased by 27,071. It has been often complained that Ireland cannot prosper because of the Irish; and now the occasion of complaint seems to be disappearing—not, however, in quite a satisfactory manner—of its own accord.—Another noteworthy fact is, that in a mountain by Lough Owel, near the line of the Midland Great Western Railway, good iron ore has been discovered, and is being worked with encouraging results.

The visitation of cholera has not only set parish authorities busy with house-to-house inspection, to the discovery of abominations which would disgrace even a heathen community, but it has demonstrated that the good or bad quality of drinking-water has very much to do with the prevalence or non-prevalence of the disease. One of the consequences is, that a committee has been formed of scientific and medical men, who are to stir up parliament to require that the Companies which now furnish water to London shall give a constant instead of an intermittent supply, that they shall get the water from the best possible sources, and filter it before distribution. If this can be accomplished, we shall at least have the satisfaction of drinking wholesome water, while waiting for the grand supply of pure soft water which Mr J. F. Bateman is to bring from the mountains of Wales.

We have all heard from time to time of the endeavours made to utilise the enormous quantities of beef which for years past have been wasted in South America, where thousands of wild cattle are slaughtered every year for the sake of the hides. Hitherto, these endeavours have not been attended by satisfactory results, for concentrated beef proved too dear for working-people to buy, and jerked beef they disliked because of its unpleasant flavour. But a City firm have now announced that they will ere long bring beef from the river Plate as fresh and good as when killed, and sell it in London at

surpence or fivepence the pound. They have ascertained, by a series of experiments made on the spot, that the meat can be preserved without deterioration of quality and flavour; and by way of demonstration, specimens of the beef, fresh from *uenos Ayres*, have been exhibited at a meeting held at the *London Tavern*. If good beef can be applied thus cheaply, we suppose that by the same process the thousands of carcases of sheep now wasted in Australia could be made available for food.

We hear from Paris that rapid progress is making with the works for the grand Universal Exhibition of 1887. Some parts of the huge building in the *champ de Mars*, in which the display is to be held, are finished. Some idea of its magnitude may be inferred from the dimensions of the outer gallery, the *grand nef*, as it is called, which is nearly a mile in circumference, more than a hundred feet in width, and eighty in height. Thus it will be the most spacious exhibition court ever constructed, and we can easily imagine that it has room enough for all the machinery and processes which manufacturers may desire to exhibit. Within this great gallery are the other galleries or zones, ranged concentrically round the centre of the ground, which will be laid out as a garden. The gallery intended for the Fine Arts will be of ample dimensions, and near it will be a smaller one, in which the History of Labour is to be illustrated by an exhibition of tools, machines, and implements, ancient and modern. This part of the show will be as interesting to the antiquary as to the artisan, and it may be expected that even ordinary sight-seers will be able, by comparing the tools of the middle ages with those of the present day, to form a notion of the progress made in the appliances of labour. For exhibiting ecclesiastical furniture, a church has been built, in which the articles will appear with proper effect; and as the Sultan is expected to visit the Exhibition, a kiosk is to be erected for his especial use. The supply of water will be ample enough for cascades and fountains, or the steam-engines and hydraulic machines, and for drinking purposes; and in one corner of the ground considerable spaces are to be prepared for an exhibition of progress in horticulture and in pisciculture. While such are the preparations, we are not surprised to hear that the number of intending exhibitors is already more than ten thousand; but probably some of these will be disappointed, as the Commissioners of the Exhibition are resolved to be strict in their admission of articles for show.

One very important class in the Exhibition series will be that which is to illustrate 'the improvement of the physical and moral condition of the population.' This class will comprehend seven subdivisions, an enumeration of which will give an idea of its nature and scope: 'Materials and methods of infant education; books and materials for adult education; furniture, clothing, and food, combining utility with cheapness; popular costumes of various countries; specimens of cheap, convenient, and healthy houses; productions of all kinds manufactured by working-men, having their own shop, and assisted only by their own family or one apprentice, together with the tools and methods employed by those little masters.' It is easy to perceive that this will not be by any means the least interesting part of the Exhibition.

Besides all this, the Imperial Commission have

announced that they offer ten prizes of £400 each, 'in favour of the persons, establishments, or localities which, by a special organisation, or special institutions, have developed a spirit of harmony among all those co-operating in the same work, and have provided for the material, moral and intellectual well-being of the workmen.' In other words, any tradesman or manufacturer who has striven to do the best for his 'hands' as well as for himself, may become a competitor for one of these prizes. And in order to reward any 'person or establishment distinguished under this head by a very exceptional superiority,' there is to be one grand prize of 100,000 francs = £4000.

AN OCEAN WAIF.

IN NINE CHAPTERS.—CHAPTER VIII.

I CONTINUED an awning this day, and on we still bounded before the wind, for the breeze held good, keeping as steady as could be. The ladies slept by turns, and watched by turns poor Tom, who seemed, poor fellow, to be getting worse and worse, and we unable to do more than tend him lovingly; and we did, too, for he had been like a brother to me; but all seemed no use, and the poor fellow lay at last quite light-headed. It was no use; I could do no more. I kept up to the very last, and until I felt myself going to sleep every minute, when Miss Mary took the tiller out of my hand, and declaring she could steer, ordered me to lie down.

I didn't want to do so, but I knew I must sleep sooner or later, so I gave her a word or two of instruction, and she promised to call me if there was the least need; and then, with the sun just sinking, I lay down, to be asleep in an instant—a deep sleep, for I was worn out; but I only seemed to have just lain down when I opened my eyes again to see the sun rising, Miss Mary pale and quiet-looking, with her white hands clasping the tiller, and the little boat still going free before the wind.

I jumped up, for I was savage and ashamed of myself, and asked her why she had not woken me.

'I was only too glad to have been of some use,' she said; and then she gave up the tiller; and after Miss Madeline had brought out some of the provision, they both lay down, and had a long sleep.

And so we sailed on for days and days, steering nearly due north, in the hope of making land, or crossing the path of some vessel; and then it fell calm. Poor Tom had been tended with all the care we could give to him, but in spite of all we did, he grew worse and worse; and at last, when he recovered his senses a bit, he was so weak and feeble that we could scarcely catch his words. He talked to us, too, a good deal, and did not seem sorrowful or unhappy, though he said he knew he was going.

'I've been no good to you!' he said to Miss Mary as she was kneeling down weeping by his side one evening when there was not enough air to make the sail flap—'I've been no good to you, but I did what I could.—Put her head a bit more to the west, Jack,' he added, and just managed to take hold of Miss Mary's hand, and put it to his lips; and then, 'Jack,' he says, 'you've had it all

to do, mate, and you've got it to finish; and I won't ask my old mate to swear, but you'll do what's right by them both, won't you?

'Ay, lad,' I said, 'I will,' and the water came in my eyes as I said it; for he spoke so that I was afraid something was very nigh indeed.

'Then I shall go easy, Jack, mate, for I am going to give up the number of my mess; and then he was silent for a bit, till Miss Mary sobbed quite aloud, and said she was going to lose a dear, true friend.

'No,' said Tom smiling sadly; 'only a poor sailor, miss, as tried to do his duty by you, and broke down; but Jack here will take my watch for me; and God bless you all, for I don't think I shall see the sun go down again.'

'Come, Tom,' I says, 'try and look up, mate; but it was done in a cheerless way, and the poor fellow only smiled sadly.

'It was that chap Hicks as did for me, mate,' he said; and then he looked hard at me, and we understood one another, for he looked as he did that morning when he told me to wash the blood off my face; and somehow or other I could not help feeling glad I had made an end of the villain who gave my poor mate his death-blow.

And poor Tom lay half-sleeping, half-waking, all that calm night, and I watched by him till just as the sun was beginning to rise, when he seemed to quite wake up, and stared out towards the east, as if he had been called.

'What is it, mate?' I says, lifting his head on my arm, and taking his hand.

'Tell 'em I'm ordered aloft, Jack,' he whispered; and then, with quite a smile upon his face, my poor mate closed his eyes, and dropped off into his long sleep; and there, with the sun shining upon his face, I didn't know it, he went off so quietly, till I heard the young ladies sobbing behind me, when I gently laid his head down, and sat at his side with my face in my hands for some time, for Tom Black and I were old shipmates.

It was a sad blow that to fall upon our little ship's company; but I did all as I knew my poor mate would have liked, and as I know he would have done by me. I lashed him up in one of the sheets, with a shot at his feet—one that had been in the boat for ballast—and at sundown, Miss Mary said some prayers over the poor fellow, and then, with a more sorrowful heart than ever I felt before, I hove my poor mate overboard, and then sat down in the bows, feeling as if I didn't mind how soon it was me as was called, till I thought of what I had promised poor Tom, which was to do my duty by them as was in my charge; when I roused up, tried to make all ship-shape, and waited for the wind, which soon came; and away we dashed again all that night.

CHAPTER IX.

'Put her head a bit more to the west, Jack,' said poor Tom, and I did; and taking turn and turn with me, Miss Mary gave me a watch below, or, of course, I could not have held up; and one day—the second after poor Tom went—I was dreaming about what was the case, namely, that our supply of water was out, when I felt my arm shook, and waking up in a fright, I found that Miss Mary had thrown the wind out of the sail, and there she was, looking frightened and horrified-like at a vessel standing right across our course.

'Oh, what shall we do?' she cried.

'Frigate,' I says, 'man-o'-war,' as I took a good look at the stranger.

'What! not the *Star*?' she exclaimed, clasping her hands.

'No,' I says, taking the tiller, and running down towards the stranger; but though we were out of water, I could not help doing it with a heavy heart, for it seemed that a great change was coming. But those two loving hearts were together, and when I saw them praying, I kept my eye upon the frigate, and would not shew what was passing in my own mind.

In a couple of hours, we were alongside, and our boat was hoisted on board, and the ladies had a cabin given up to 'em; but it fell to my lot to tell the story of our sufferings, and I did to the captain and some of the officers, for it was a Queen's ship. I saw the captain frown more than once, and he got up in a hasty, fretful way, and began to march up and down the room till I'd done, when he says: 'My man, we must have you, if you'll stay with us.'

A few days after, we were at the Cape, where the captain stopped to land the ladies, of whom I had seen but very little since we went on board the frigate, for they hardly left their cabin, though it was wonderful what respect the officers paid them, and how kind every one was to me, specially when they saw how them two ran to speak to and shake hands with me when they did come on deck.

I thought it all over; what the captain had said, and all about it; and I went to see the ladies once, by their own invitation, while they were staying at a gentleman's house; and I felt more low and sad than ever when I saw them dressed in deep mourning, for it brought all the scenes up again of that unlucky voyage; but I tried to rouse up, for though no scholar, and only a sailor, I knew as it was now time to wake up from a sort of wild dream as I had been in.

So I said 'Good-bye' to them, and they both cried at our parting, and made me promise that I would go to see them when I was in England; for I knew that their passage home was taken, and I had made up my mind what was best; and I told the ladies I was going to join the frigate. It was a sad afternoon that, and they seemed both of them cut to the heart to say 'Good-bye,' and I was too. But the words were said at last, and they each gave me a little ring to wear upon my handkercher for their sake; and then, when I was coming away, Miss Madeline first put both her hands in mine, and put her face up as naturally and tenderly as a little child would, and kissed me; and then Miss Mary put both her hands in mine—little white soft hands in my rough horny palms—and she, too, with a childish, loving innocence, and with the tears running down her cheeks, said 'Good-bye,' and she, too, kissed me as a dear sister would a brother.

There was a feeling as of something choking in my throat as I too tried to say the parting words, for I was now quite awake from the sort of dream that of late had come on me at times, and I hurried away.

We did not return to England for two years after that; but before I had been ashore—a most as soon as we were in port—there was some one on board as wanted to see me, and I was soon standing face to face with a tall, sharp-eyed, officer—

looking gentleman, who told me his name was Captain Horton; and he shook hands heartily, and thanked me for what he called my gallant behaviour to his sisters. He said I was to go and see them, and left the address; and when he went away told me, and gave it me on paper, that there was fifty pounds for me in one of the banks whenever I liked to draw it; and also, that I was never to want for a friend while he and his sisters lived; and then he shook hands, and left me standing thinking of the bygone, and looking at the packet he left with me.

I took and opened that packet, and there was a handsome silver watch in it, and a five-pound note inside a letter, which was written and signed by Miss Mary; but there was a great deal in it as coming from her sister. It was a letter as I didn't feel it a disgrace to drop a few tears on; and it was like that kiss, such a one as a dear sister would write to her brother. It said I was to go and see them; and there was a good deal in it about the sad past, and what she, too, called my gallant behaviour, when it was nothing more than my duty. She said, too, that they would ever pray for my welfare, and begged that I would wear the watch for their sake, while I was not to think the less of it because it was not of gold, for their brother thought that a silver one would be the more suitable present.

And that part somehow seemed to hurt me, for it was like saying a silver one was more suited for a man in my station, which was quite right; but for all that, it seemed to rankle, though I knew at heart as the letter was all tenderly and lovingly meant. But all that went off again; and the letter, and the note in it, and the watch, lie together in my chest; and so sure as I take 'em out and look at them, I get in that dreamy way again; and at times, in the long watches far away at sea, there's a bright face with golden hair floating round it, which seems to smile on me, and it's there too in calm or storm; and when I've hung over the bulwarks thinking, and calling back all the troubles of that sad voyage, I've thought, perhaps, that if I had been something better than a common sailor, what I felt might have been Love.

And now you have it all down, sir, though I can't tell you what became of my old ship, though I've always thought as she went to the bottom, from being badly handled.

THE CLIFF SWALLOW.

O'er eddy pool, and swift wide reach
Of river, flits a speck,
Darts through the rain-squall, skims o'er meads
Which dancing shadows fleck—
My pet cliff swallow! yet their charms
How little dost thou reck!

Five hungry bills, ten beaded eyes
Peer from their airy dome—
That bright red cliff where sunshine sleeps,
And purest breezes come;
Thy hurried flight is all to feed
These little ones at home.

And yet, methinks, at eve's soft glow,
When wakes the vivid green
Above thy colony, that glee
May in thy flight be seen—
That winged with lighter motions then
Thou cleav'st the blue serene!

Or when beneath the vast chalk bluffs,
Daring the crested waves,
Thou sweetest, snatching ocean-joy
Where most the full tide raves;
Surely thy heart within these leaps
To thread those dripping caves.

A sudden curve—a flash of gray—
Thy merry pinions rise,
O'erleap the cliff, sail down the comb,
Chase burnished dragon-flies;
How sweet to float where willow-weeds
Bend to the brook's low sighs!

Unlike thy kith and kin, no thought
Of man resides in thee;
No partnership of home with us
Thou chooseth, but to be
Alone with nature all thy days,
And as the wild winds free.

We men must slowly change our place;
We live too near the earth,
And yet our souls can rise and claim
Than thou still higher birth;
Can live and work by reason's rule,
And smile with truer mirth.

What brings thee to our northern lands,
In paler sunshine clad?
Cannot the rich-spiced Indian air
Suffice to make thee glad?
Or doth the East's magnificence
Oppress and leave thee sad?

We ask; but thou art silent; e'en
That clime we may not know
Which every autumn thou dost seek,
Where wintry winds ne'er blow;
But lo! next spring our well-loved streams
Thy swift reflection shew.

And though thou wilt not trust thy nest
To men, nor near their homes;
Thou fittest closely by him, when
Beside thy haunts he roams;
Thou fittest gently, as might one
To whom no ill thought comes.

The swift may circle round the spire;
The martin hang her nest
Beneath my roof-tree; overhead
The swallow sun his breast;
Yet dearer thy retiring ways,
Thy quick wing scorning rest.

Cliff swallow, ne'er shall hand of mine
Disturb thy silent flight;
I hold thee dear for happy days,
Cheered with thy presence bright;
I call thee friend, though 'neath my eaves
Thou never wilt alight.

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MARLOW AND SANDHURST, HALF A CENTURY AGO.

IN TWO CHAPTERS—CHAPTER I.

I HAVE often met, of late, with newspaper paragraphs about Sandhurst, which read unpleasantly to me, because I have a great regard for the old place. What amount of truth there may be in them, I have no means of knowing, or who is to blame; but well I know what the Military College used to be—more than half a century ago—and I should like to tell.

My first acquaintance with it was made while yet an Eton boy. Somebody came in and said: 'There's a lot of fellows in red down my Dame's Lane; they seem to be hiding in the ditch.' Now, it was war-time, and we were threatened with invasion; but the French could never have got so far as Eton without our knowledge, and red was the right colour—the national one. Curiosity prevailed; we went out and brought these red men to a parley. They proved to be a party of cadets who had run away from Marlow, didn't know what to do next, and were reconnoitring. Tired and hungry the boys were; and we boys welcomed them and sympathised with their grievances, though I quite forget now what they were. We fed them, and comforted them, and sent them on their way—not rejoicing, for they had twelve long miles to walk back—and began to suspect they had been making fools of themselves; of which they would soon be certified.

Not long after this, my father said to me: 'Boy, wouldn't you like to go into the army?' As soon as I could get my breath, I answered, in the bravest tone I could assume: 'O yes, sir.' Alferi won my heart by saying, as he does in his Autobiography, not that he never told a lie, but that he was less a liar than most of his acquaintances. That high character, I claim; and yet, on this occasion, I hardly spoke truth. I told the fib in utter terror—under the conviction that go I must, and had better do it with a good grace. So it was settled on the spot; and in due time my father handed me over to the authorities at Marlow. It was the monthly

examination for admittance; but on this occasion there was, besides myself, only one candidate—a sharp, black, little fellow. A man produced two very large slates, wrote a row of figures all along the top of one, and a row under them; then he told me: 'Multiply these, and prove your work by division on the other side.' Next he did the same for little blackee. I looked at my work; I knew how to do it; but it was so long that I might go astray and get bewildered in a forest of figures. I resolved, first, not to be frightened, and next, not to be in a hurry. Steadily I started, steadily I progressed, and was just beginning to think I should do in time, when, happening to look at my companion, I saw he had nearly filled both sides of his slate. 'Hullo!' I said, 'you get along fast.' 'Always do,' he answered, very short. 'Does it come right?' I asked, rather anxiously. 'Can't I make it, you fool?' says he. So he did, and took it up boldly. The examiner just looked to the end, saw that it fitted, and passed him. By and by, I brought up my slate; I had looked it carefully over, and knew there was not a wrong figure; but I did not get so much credit as the impudent monkey who had played such a trick, but taken so little time about it. He was a saucy one. Some time after, he fell dangerously ill. The college chaplain was sent to prepare him for death, but it was Mother Hubbard's case over again. 'When he got there, the dog was a-laughin'.' I know not what became of him: he should have made a successful soldier.

I was afterwards witness to a very different examination-scene at Sandhurst. The candidates were at work in the Board-room, the parents below, awaiting the result. Just before the Guard-room, in the midst of the lounging cadets, paced to and fro a hard-featured, widowed Minerva, of mature age. A little boy came down to her from his trial, and whimpered 'Spun!' (plucked). The only answer was such a box on the ear as sent him reeling among us, and away stalked the goddess.

I was admitted—a Marlow cadet—subject to military discipline. I moved by tap of drum. After a supper of unlimited bread and cheese and

bad beer, followed by prayers (witty ones, if brevity be the soul of wit), we marched off to bed. And now began my first soldier-like trouble. It was the practice to close the files to the utmost. You touched the one before you, and were touched by the one in the rear. Motion in this order was called the 'lock-step,' and having been brought from Prussia, was thought very fine; but, to execute it, you must move your foot in exact time with your leader, and plant it in the exact spot he had just left free. This, to a beginner, was simply impossible. If words and deeds corresponded, cadets, in answer to the question of the Catechism, 'What is your duty towards your neighbour?' should have said: 'To kick his heels when he doesn't keep step.' This duty they zealously performed, and, it must be owned, the success of this method of teaching the lock-step is almost miraculous. The only objection is its tendency to produce a sort of rawness about the heels and ankles of your juvenile neighbour. The leathern stock had a similar effect, at first, on the angles of his jaws. I had only to be kicked across the street; but one company slept at the very opposite end of Marlow, and this march had to be performed night and morning, in all weathers. It was done as a matter of course, and nobody was the worse for it. I was in the twenty-bedded room, quite full, and close packed. After a very short time allowed for undressing,* a sergeant took away the lights, and then began the row. A large dinner-party is apt to break up into little coteries, more or less pleasant; so did this large sleeping-party. And for their employments: well, I have not Milton by me; so I must refer you, at a venture, to his description of Pandemonium. I recollect, 'Some, apart, sate on a hill retired,' &c. For hill, read bow-window, and these were the great devils—lofty spirits—musing on war, and talking Spain. Taking advantage of the darkness, I slipped into bed; but my sleep (for I slept, in spite of all) was full of perils. Toe-ing and launching were always going on. I know not if modern refinement has substituted other entertainments. A band of little assassins would creep to the foot of a bed whose occupant was asleep, quietly turn up the clothes at the foot, pass a whip-cord noose round the great toe, carry off the line to a distance, and haul away till they pulled the victim out of bed. Launching was of various sorts, but what (in analogy with that other boyish torture, the Double Rule of Three) may be called the Double Rule of Launching, was thus performed. Two detachments would lay hold of the outer sides of two adjoining beds (we slept on very light X bedsteads, very close together), shoot the sleepers into the space between, throw over on them, first beds, then bedsteads, finally themselves jump on the top of the pile, and execute a war-dance. I can only compare this

infernal proceeding to that of the Indian Begum who buried her rival alive under her own bed, that she might have the pleasure of listening to her groans.

These were civil disturbances; but we had our foreign wars besides. A spy might come in, announcing that the fifteen-bedded room were going to make an attack to-night. This was the room immediately under us. Though inferior in number, our enemies were superior in age and strength, and generally got the victory. But between the two was a little passage-room which held only three beds. The unfortunate dwellers in them had no peace; whichever side attacked, this was sure to be the seat of war; the confined space made the fighting more severe, and the unfortunate three got it on both sides. All this time there was a sergeant sleeping on the premises—sleeping—and he, good, easy man, had no more idea of leaving his comfortable bed to keep the peace among us than had his good wife beside him. Well, bruises nobody cared about, and nothing worse came of this rough play, to which use (what will it not do?) pretty soon reconciled me. There had been, indeed, some little time ago, a fatal case of bolstering, and bolstering was accordingly prohibited, on pain of expulsion; but the devil lost little by that prohibition. It was the depth of winter. The drum did not, indeed, as at Linden, 'beat at dead of night,' but before daylight it did. One of our twenty had a monomania for drumming; he would turn out in the dark, a quarter of an hour before the time, slip down, and pay the drummer to let him beat the *revueillé*. The morning march and prayers followed in due course; and then came breakfast—bread and milk, good and abundant.

The college buildings, ill-suited to this magnificent age, did sufficiently well for us. We slept in three old hired houses, in different parts of the town. A fourth, with a large field in which temporary wooden buildings had been put up, as wanted, served for meals and studies, hospital, chapel, and house of correction for the whole college—consisting of nearly three hundred boys between the ages of thirteen and eighteen. In our own opinion, at least, we were rather soldiers than school-boys. There was no fagging. I had, to be sure, to clean my accoutrements, and to black my shoes—my own, but no one else's. I had no master, in the Eton sense. Save military discipline, and decent obedience to teachers, I was free. No flogging. At first, there had been an attempt to introduce this. The result was nothing less than a gunpowder-plot—discovered only just in time. No more ammunition was issued to such formidable soldiers. Their flints were removed, and the leaders expelled. To them, it was probably ruin, as far as the military profession was concerned. But their patriotism was soon forgotten, by those who reaped the reward of it, for flogging was abolished. No bullying—that is, no system of bullying; and any really bad case was likely to be summarily dealt with by lynch-law. I have known an offender of this description dragged through the deep mud of the college pond—rolled in it till he looked only fit for the Humane Society, and then universally shunned—the matter being never noticed by the authorities. Yet one case I do remember in which bullying was rewarded. At the bathing-place, a big fellow had just landed, and was standing on

* There was a military brevity about the toilet, but actual cleanliness was rigidly enforced by the boys themselves. At Sandhurst, a confirmed case of insufficient washing was treated by a public ducking in the water-supply where we filled our jugs. The size of the tap, and the powerful pressure, made this a severe punishment; but the ducking was a trifle to the disgrace. It was very rarely incurred. The contempt of effeminacy was as strongly marked as the respect for cleanliness. I will give an exception to prove the rule. A great lubber did once attempt to teach his fellow-soldiers dancing, and before he was found out, had actually enticed four pupils to learn quadrilles, then quite new things. He lived to be a general.

the bank. With the caprice of a tyrant, he called to a little boy: 'I say, you, sir, swim across the hole.' 'I can't swim well enough; I'm afraid.' 'If you don't do it directly, I'll lick you well.' This threat sent the little fellow on. But just in the deepest part, nervousness or fatigue disabled him, and he was sinking. The only swimmer present was the bully, who swam well. Finding the matter serious, he just jumped in, and pulled the other ashore. Among us, the story circulated as a great shame, and a narrow escape. But a very different version must have been carried to the higher powers—by whom, I know not. Next Sunday, on parade, we were astounded. It was usual for the governor to inspect the ranks on a Sunday, and to take the opportunity of saying anything to which he might wish to draw general attention. Stopping before the bully, Sir A. Hope addressed him in the most flattering language, called on us all to admire his noble conduct in saving his little comrade's life at the risk of his own; and informed him that it had been reported to the Horse Guards, and that the next *Gazette* would contain his reward in the shape of an ensign's commission. He listened to all this in silence that might have passed for modesty; but he did not blush. We all listened in silent indignation. The matter was talked over after parade. His parents were known to be very poor. Independent of the college, they had no means of providing for him. He had nearly completed his allotted time there, but had proved so idle and stupid, that it was most unlikely he would ever pass the requisite examination for a commission. Under these circumstances, it was determined to say nothing. He was duly gazetted; and I have met him, an officer in the army.

The college had been originally founded as a charitable provision for the orphans of officers, to be maintained and educated free of expense; and after passing an examination, to be presented with commissions. Gradually, these limits were passed. The children of living officers were admitted, on payment of a small sum proportioned to their rank. Finally, civilians' sons were taken, paying one hundred pounds per annum. But among the parents—while I knew Sandhurst—were no civilians greater or richer than plain country gentlemen. No luxury, no extravagance, was permitted. The food, on the whole, plentiful and wholesome, was quite simple. We had a weekly allowance, varying with the age, from one shilling to two shillings and sixpence; and out of this was deducted any damage to furniture, under the fine name of Dilapidations (shortened to 'Dildaps'). Like all barrack damages I ever knew, they were excessive. Debt, beyond very trifling amounts, was unknown. One pound was the most any boy was allowed to bring to college with him, and any money known to be sent during the half-year was taken away. The old drummer-postman had a never-failing knack of detecting a bank-note in a letter, and, according to orders, took it up to the captain, who, on parade, called out the name on the address. The cadet would step forward, looking foolish. His letter was handed to him to open in public, and the enclosure taken possession of by the captain, and duly accounted for to the parent. So simple were we, that the easy dodges for evading this difficulty, which would occur to any modern boy of the meanest capacity, were inventions of later and degenerate days. Even dainties of any

kind brought in to meals were rigidly confiscated as soon as discovered. No fox ever had a sharper eye for an egg than my good old captain, Jack Otter.

I was too young to moralise on this state of things; I simply enjoyed it. The finery of Eton suited me ill. My dress was always shabbier than my neighbours', and the shabbiest part of my dress was my breeches pocket. Exposed to temptations in this condition, my morals were giving way. There are passages in this part of my life which I do not like to think of. In the healthier atmosphere of the Military College, honesty and manliness revived. Out of my small income, I could, and did, save; I paid, by instalments of a few shillings, little miserable Eton debts, and was thus relieved of a disagreeable load. As for my dress, I wore what every one about me did—the king's uniform (at that time a dress which every Englishman was proud of, and every foreigner respected; now-a-days, put off as soon as parade is over, as if it were a disgrace). If I wanted to be smarter than others, I had only to keep my dress cleaner. I went to drill, and, strange to say, I liked it. Plenty of grumblers it made. There was no pomp or circumstance about it—no firing, no music (we had one old drum for each company), no light movements. I wonder what I could find to like in it—except novelty. At dinner, we were in messes of ten. The head of the mess was indeed a potentate, and his patronage was much abused. I, a recruit, at the bottom, looked up to a fine leg of mutton, and waited patiently for my share. I might have waited till now. I got the bone, and was introduced to a dish of potatoes, and there was bread at discretion. Nobody minded me. But I was ogling a rice-pudding big enough for ten, and untouched. I inquired, timidly, if I might have a little. As much as I pleased, was the answer, with a contemptuous laugh. Oh, Fashion! the poet should have written thy name, not that of Happiness, when he spoke of 'our being's end and aim.' Here were a parcel of boys, with the rudest of appetites, and the humblest of fare; but Fashion had decreed that rice-pudding was vulgar, and not to be eaten; and they obeyed! I thanked my stars, and swallowed enough to plump up a sultana.

In games, Marlow was sadly deficient. One of the most popular was, I think, milking the captain's cows, which occupied the grass half of our playground. The rest was gravel—the Parade. But our bounds extended three miles from the college, including the town of Marlow, with which we had singularly little to do. Long runs (chevies) were carried to an extent that might have seemed making a toil of a pleasure, but was not so felt. Except for bathing purposes, we made no use of the Thames. I suppose we could not afford boating; but nobody seemed to miss it. Foot-ball was furious: I have known a leg broken by a fair straight kick. Fights, though hardly so frequent, were, I think, fiercer and more obstinate than at Eton. There were two very small champions, differing as a dwarf bulldog does from a Scotch terrier, continually going to law with their fiats. When not fighting, they were bosom-friends. I have seen them both in hospital, after a general action, taking sweet counsel together, with the leeches hanging to both their black eyes. Study I began to see in a new light entirely. The serious studies of Eton had been cricket and rowing; as to the rest, the weary Greek and Latin, there was a general feeling,

understood and acted on, if not expressed, in that classical metropolis, 'What's the good of it all?' Then, from first to last, it was a sham. The half-dozen lines got by heart, at random, and instantly forgotten; just chewed, and spit out. The books taken into school for no purpose. Yourself put to the question about three times in a half-year—flogged, and done with. And then the trade in old copies—as shabby a one as that in old clothes. But at Marlow, there was reality and earnestness in the work, which was, moreover, in itself varied and interesting.

The bill of fare comprised French, German, and Mathematics, Modern History and Geography, Military Drawing and Fortification. And we worked with a will—with a purpose always before our eyes—a purpose which looked bright to youthful eyes—to get a commission—to join the glorious Peninsular army. Idleness there was—the exception, not the rule—and idlers, though not flogged, were looked after, and got little peace. Their best chance was to get into hospital, where was nothing to do—a charm which did attract some. Your friends would contrive to pay stolen, and therefore pleasant visits; to smuggle in 'pamphlets'—the equivalent for railway novels—and 'stickjaw' (cold plum-pudding, light and wholesome diet for invalids!). It was a sort of club, but, like the best clubs, admission was not easy. The surgeon had learned the truth, and hardened his heart. The most successful sham was rheumatism; it aches, and makes no sign. Moreover, if the savage of a doctor threatened to apply spiteful remedies, rheumatism could always take to flight, dive like a duck, turn like a hare, and reappear like a defeated French soldier. Mustard-plasters, hot and hot, and kept on till the patient roared, proved, however, in the end too much for rheumatism. I began to take my slate out of study, and work at it in the long winter evenings, which we had to ourselves. What would Mr Babbage have given for the power I then possessed, of calculating in the midst of a crowd of noisy boys! The evening amusements were mimic war—every room was in a state of siege. I was laughed at and badgered, but I was obstinate. At last I concluded a treaty. 'If you'll let me work in my corner, I'll join every storming-party as soon as it's really going on; and you'll let me alone again as soon as it's over.'

This bargain was fairly kept on both sides. After a time, my slate became a thing of course, and I had even imitators. The professors were, with few exceptions, admirable—some, indeed, too good for the work. It was a pity to see such mathematicians as Wallace and Ivory teaching vulgar fractions and Euclid's *Elements*. French and German were taught, and very well taught, by natives. The French were, I think, all refugee gentlemen—some of high family. The military staff consisted of governor and lieutenant-governor, major and adjutant, chaplain, and two surgeons; besides a captain and a sergeant to each company. One-half were superfluous. What a good fellow my captain was! Whoever remembers old Jack Otter, must be an old boy himself now; but the remembrance will do his heart good. Plain in feature as Socrates, shabby in dress, slouching, in those days of Prussian stiffness, roughish in manner, but with a twinkle of fun in the corner of his eye, and a wealth of honest, manly good-nature. Talk to him, and you found your companion was a perfect gentleman, and a well-informed one too. Age had

made him almost too easy for his duties, but we did not like him the worse for that.

Ah, where is the boy with whom, arm-in-arm, I once strutted up the High Street of Maidenhead? We had run over five miles, and were exhibiting our laced jackets to the admiration of young Maidenhead. Oh, Lucifer! how we did swagger! Suddenly, a voice, as from the clouds, struck us like forked lightning. It was only from the box of a stage-coach, on which sat Jack Otter. 'Hullo! young gentlemen, what are you doing here?' We stood, stared, and saluted, in solemn and guilty silence. 'Why, you'll be late for study.' (We meant to have cut it for once.) 'O no, sir; we'll try.' 'Nonsense; you can't do it: jump up behind.' And we did, speculating on our fate, as we drove homewards. Just coming into Marlow, the coach pulled up. Otter pointed to a footpath, a short-cut to college. 'Run away, boys,' he said. And we heard no more of the matter.

The kingdom of holidays (the school-boy's heaven) was at hand. We were to take our leave of Marlow, and heard wonders about the grandeur of the new college at Sandhurst. Orders came out to send in the 'parties.' You formed, as far as might be, parties of not less than three, going to the same neighbourhood; and chaises were ordered accordingly. The trunks containing our plain clothes were brought out of store; but it was a point of fashion for all who could to appear in a new suit. If I could only put on paper the vision now before my mind's eye—the vision of a home-ward-bound cadet half a century ago, it would be a sketch worthy of an antiquarian Punch. You should have overalls, gray cloth trousers, the inside of the legs of wash-leather, for riding, and ending in little buckets of shining patent-leather. Enormous curb-chains, to keep them down, were looped up in festoons, when not on horseback; and large, sugar-loaf, metal buttons were sewn broadcast all over these overalls. But the point in which your taste and elegance were chiefly shewn—the test of your costume—were the under-waistcoats. Under a cloth one, I have seen as many as three of silk, and all of different colours, daintily peeping out, one within the other, and suggestive of circus-riding. Long dragoon spurs, fixed to high iron heels, lent their aid to make a man (and a guy) of the boy, who only needed an eye-glass. I don't think there was such a thing in college.

Long before daylight on that December morning, crowds of chaises were at the doors of the old houses in Marlow. Lanterns gleaming, straw rustling, cords knotting, uncouth trunks lumbering down (the varieties of patent marvels in the portmanteau line were then unknown), and away we went—the principal detachment towards Maidenhead, the road to London. About three miles from Marlow, was a long common; this was our race-course—a real chariot-race. As was then usual, there were at least half-a-dozen tracks on each side of the road, over and among the deep ruts of which chaises were making furious play. The winning-post was a gate at the end of the common—a real post of danger. As we galloped through, I saw the gate-post was down, a chaise and horses in the ditch, three cadets sitting disconsolate on the bank, and a post-boy carried away insensible.

My party had chosen a circuitous route, for the sake of driving through Eton. On the trunks in front of the chaise, was a wicker black-bird

cage, containing a game-cock, the property of one of us. The bird was very quiet, and seemed to enjoy the thing as much as if he had been coming home from some Royal Ornithological College; but as soon as we came into Eton, he woke up, clapped his wings, beat his breast like a gorilla, crowed his loudest defiance, and never ceased. 'Long Walk' happened to be crowded. His salute was acknowledged with cheers; and our passage was a triumph.

Where are my two companions now? Dead long ago, I hope, for the last I heard of them was—one, a ruined gambler in India (oh, what a pity! he was such a good fellow); the other, copying for a law-stationer in London, to earn bread for a wife and children!

BROUGHT TO LIGHT.

CHAPTER XXXV.—EVIDENCE FOR THE PROSECUTION.

'THE first evidence which I shall bring before you,' said Mr Penning, 'is that of Jane Garrod—a woman of excellent character, and well known, I believe, to several persons present.'

Jane Garrod was accordingly called. As the servant who had ushered her into the room was going out, Lady Spencelaugh said: 'If Martha Winch is there, tell her to bring me my salts.' Once in the room, Mrs Winch took care not to leave it again. She sat down on a low stool behind Lady Spencelaugh, and was an attentive auditor of all that followed.

Jane courtesied respectfully to Lady Spencelaugh, and then to the assembled company; and then seated herself in the chair indicated by Mr Penning, a short distance from the table. She was a firm-nerved woman, and neither her manner, nor her voice when she spoke, betrayed the slightest discomposure. After a few preliminary questions from Mr Greenhough, she began her narrative as under:

'My name is Jane Garrod, and I shall have been married eighteen years come next Lady-day. My father was a small farmer a few miles from Normanford; but he was too poor to keep all his children at home, and when I was old enough, I had to go out to service; and a few years later, I was fortunate enough to be chosen as lady's-maid to Miss Honoria Barry of Dean's Manor—close to where my father lived. Miss Honoria was just seventeen at that time, which was my own age. She was as beautiful as she was good; and it was impossible for any one to be near her without loving her. She took a liking to me, and was very kind to me, and treated me more like a humble friend than a paid servant. Wherever she and her papa went, I went with them; and we travelled about a good deal at different times, both in England and abroad. Miss Honoria had many friends and acquaintances, as was but natural to one in her position; but the friend that she loved above all others was Miss Eveleen Denner. They had been school-girls together, and now they were more like sisters than anything else, and far more devoted to each other than many sisters that I have known. Well, it so fell out, one Christmas, when Miss Eveleen was staying at Dean's Manor, that among other guests invited there for the holidays came Sir Arthur Spencelaugh of Belair—at that time a major in the army, and his cousin, Captain Philip Spencelaugh; both over from India on leave of absence. They had not been twenty-four hours

at the Manor, before Sir Arthur was head over ears in love with Miss Honoria, and his cousin was as deeply smitten with the charms of Miss Eveleen. There were ardent lovers in those days; and before two months were over, the double wedding took place.

My dear Miss Honoria was now Lady Spencelaugh, but that made no difference in her treatment of me; she was just as kind to me as she had always been. We lived here at Belair for eight quiet happy months, and then both Sir Arthur and his cousin were ordered back to India, in consequence of some frontier war that had just broken out. Well, nothing would serve the ladies but that they must go with their husbands; and I, of course, must go with my dear mistress. When we reached Bombay, the war had been snuffed out, and our soldiers were ordered to an up-country station, and we, of course, went with them; and so three or four years passed quietly and pleasantly away, marked with nothing in my memory beyond an occasional removal to a fresh station. But, after a time, Captain Spencelaugh's lady was confined of a son; and a little while afterwards, my dear mistress brought her husband a sweet daughter—no other, in fact, than Miss Frederica here. We had just been celebrating baby's second birthday, when cholera of a very bad kind broke out at the station, and among its first victims were Sir Arthur Spencelaugh and his poor wife. They were well in the morning, and dead, both of them, at sunset; and they were buried under the walls of the fort at daybreak next morning. The last words my dear mistress said, and they were all she had strength to say, were: "Take care of baby;" and I promised her solemnly that, with Heaven's help, I would do so as far as in me lay. The captain's wife was away on a visit at the time, but the shock nearly killed her when she heard the news; and as her health had been delicate for some time, the captain (now Sir Philip Spencelaugh, the late baronet's only child being a daughter) determined at once to send her back to England, together with his own child, and his cousin's orphan girl. So we all went down to Bombay, and everything was got ready for the voyage. But misfortune still followed us; for on what was to have been the very last day of our stay, as Lady Spencelaugh was riding out, her horse shied suddenly, and threw her. Her leg was broken by the fall; and although everything was done for her that could be done, fever set in, and she was dead in less than a week. I thought for a time that Sir Philip would have gone crazy, but it takes a deal of grief to kill; and he, besides, he had his little son to live for; so he got leave of absence, and we all came over to England together—the baronet, his son, little Miss Frederica, myself, and an ayah, or native nurse, who was in charge of the little motherless lad, with me to look after them both. This ayah, who was never any favourite of mine, was sent back to India a few months after our arrival, the climate of England being too cold for her. We came to Belair, and I and the children settled down here; but Sir Philip soon left us, and went to London, for his melancholy got the master of him in the country. At the end of about eighteen months, we heard that he was going to marry again; and presently he came down to Belair with his bride, the present Lady Spencelaugh. As it had happened after his first marriage, so it happened now: scarcely was the honeymoon over, when he was summoned back to India. This time,

he went alone. A short time after Sir Philip had left England, Miss Frederica's health became delicate, and the doctors recommended change of air; so we went to Pevsey Bay, she and I, and were away for about six months. This was two or three months after Mr Gaston was born. Lady Spencelaugh drove over every fortnight or so, to see how we were getting on, besides which, I had instructions to write to her Ladyship every few days, so that she might know how Miss Frederica's health was progressing. It was while we were staying at Pevsey Bay that news came to us of Master Arthur's illness and death; and I remember as if it was only yesterday, my mourning things being sent over by the Normanford carrier; and after we got back home, the first place Miss Frederica and I went to was Belair church, to see the marble tablet which had been put up to the memory of the dead child. I stayed with Miss Frederica a year or two longer, till she was taken out of my hands, and put under the care of a governess; and I was then free to marry, for I had been engaged many years, and Abel Garrod, my present husband that is, was getting tired of waiting.

'A very interesting piece of family history,' said Mr Greenhough testily, as Jane paused for a moment; 'but really, I don't see in what way it bears upon the case now under consideration.'

'Mrs Garrod, I believe, has not quite finished yet,' said Mr Penning drily.

Mr Greenhough shrugged his shoulders, glanced at his watch, and began to bite the end of his quill viciously.

'Captain Spencelaugh—that is, the late Sir Philip'—resumed Jane, 'on his visits to Dean's Manor, was sometimes accompanied by a younger brother, named Reginald, who had been brought up to be a barrister, but who afterwards went out to Canada, and died there a few years later. I saw Mr Reginald many different times, and had often occasion to speak to him, and have had presents from him, so that I could not possibly be mistaken as to his appearance. One evening last autumn, as I was walking through the waiting-room at Kingsthorpe Station, I certainly thought that I saw his ghost before me. I was quite scared, so striking was the likeness between the man I saw before me and my late master's youngest brother. I never thought of asking who the stranger was, but set it down as a mere chance likeness, and forgot all about it after a few days; that is, I forgot all about it till I saw the stranger again. The next time I saw him was when he was brought to my door by the Kingsthorpe carrier, who had found him lying wounded and insensible in the high-road. I recognised him again in an instant as the stranger I had seen for a moment one evening about two months before; but, gentlemen, I should quite fail in expressing to you what I felt when the doctor, on stripping the wounded man's shoulder to examine his hurt, pointed out to me a strange mark on that shoulder, exactly similar to the mark which I knew to have been on the shoulder of Master Arthur, who had died twenty years before: there it certainly was, line for line, as I so well remembered it.

I have already said that we brought an ayah with us from India, who had charge of Master Arthur, under me, and who was sent back home after a very short stay in England. This woman was passionately fond of the boy, and before she left Belair, while I was away for a few days

burying my mother, she contrived, by some means best known to herself, to mark him on the left shoulder with the figure of a coiled snake holding a lotos-flower in its mouth, done in faint blue lines, which nothing could ever rub out. I was sorely vexed when I got to know about it; and I scolded the woman rarely; but you see it was done, and couldn't be undone. I mentioned it privately to Lady Spencelaugh, but I never spoke of it to Sir Philip—I was afraid of his anger. Both the lotos and the snake, as you gentlemen are perhaps aware, are sacred symbols among the Hindus; and the ayah said the mark was a charm which would carry the child safely through many dangers, and that would bring him back to life when everybody thought he was dead. Of course, I set no store by her gibberish; but I must say, I was startled when I saw on the shoulder of Mr John English an exact counterpart of the mark which I knew to have been on the shoulder of Master Arthur Spencelaugh, dead twenty years before. And I think, gentlemen, that is all I have to say at present.'

'And quite enough, too,' muttered Mr Greenhough.

The vicar had been taking copious notes; and the baronet had tried to follow his example, but had got the tail of one sentence so inextricably mixed up with the beginning of another, that, after several vain efforts to make some sense of what he had already written, he gave up the task in despair. Said the lawyer to the vicar: 'You do not, I hope, my dear sir, attach much importance to the evidence of this woman?'

'Not much, certainly, as the case stands at present,' returned the vicar. 'Her evidence seems to rest on nothing stronger than one of those coincidences which are by no means so unfrequent in real life as some people imagine. Still, I believe Jane Garrod to be a strictly honest woman; one who would speak the truth conscientiously, as far as she knows it.'

'Just so—as far as she knows it,' said the lawyer drily. 'Half-truths are always dangerous things to handle.'

'Well, let us proceed a little further, and see what more we can elicit,' said the vicar. 'Who is your next witness, Mr Penning?'

'What I propose to do next,' said Mr Penning, 'is to read to you the evidence of one James Billings, formerly a footman at Belair, afterwards transported for burglary, and now just released from Portland, after serving out a second sentence.'

'Oh, ho!' said Mr Greenhough grimly. 'Pretty company you are introducing us to! I wonder what value any jury would attach to the evidence of such a double-dyed scoundrel. But why is not the fellow himself here?'

'I did not think it necessary to produce him in person on such an occasion as this,' said Mr Penning. 'I can, however, have him here for you by to-morrow morning, if you wish it. Meanwhile, I will, with your permission, read this statement, which has been drawn up by Billings himself without any assistance.'

'Pray proceed, sir,' said the vicar; whereupon Mr Penning read as under:

'According to promise made and given, I, James Billings, otherwise known as "Jim the Downy," now proceed to put down on paper some Recollections of my Early Life.

'To begin at the beginning. You know already

that I was footman at Belair, but you don't know how I came to fill that situation; and I must add a few words of explanation, so that you may understand better what follows. My father was a well-known begging-letter writer, which accounts for my education; and all my family were more or less mixed up with the profession. But my governor got lagged at last, and my two brothers came to grief in another way; and I got such a sickening of the whole business, that I determined to try what honesty would do towards making my fortune. Not to bother you with what you wouldn't care to hear about, I got a footman's place at last; and two or three years later, I went into the service of Lady Spencelaugh on her marriage; and so, in course of time, found myself at Belair. I liked a footman's life well enough for some things—there was no hard work to do, and plenty of time for reading the newspapers; but, on the other hand, I seemed as far as ever from making my fortune. It was about this time that I fell in with Nance Fennell, who was living with her mother at White Grange, and I used to go there to see her as often as I could find time.

'I ought to have told you that one of my sisters was married to Charley Wing, a noted cracksmen or housebreaker. Charley often professed to be sorry that I had taken to such a duffing way of getting a living; and said that a young fellow of my abilities, with proper instruction, might have done something splendid in his own line; and would often invite me to join him. One day Charley met me, and said: "Your people often go to Sedgeley Court, and you go with them." "Yes," said I. "Well," said he, "me and my pal, Bill Stuckley, have got a plant on there. There's no end of plate in the house; and just at this time of the year, while they are having so much company, the old dowager keeps all her diamonds at home. Now, I want you, next time you go there, to make me a careful plan of the house, and to ascertain all you can about the position and strength of the plate-chest; and if the crack comes off all right, you shall have a fair share of the swag, and then you can marry that girl that you are so sweet on, and hook it to Australia." I took the bait after a while, and agreed to do as he wanted. Perhaps Charley would have wanted to crack Belair, only he knew from me that while Sir Philip was away in India, all the family plate was kept at the banker's.

'At this time there was living at Belair, Lady Spencelaugh and her baby son; Master Arthur Spencelaugh, the baronet's son by his first marriage, a lad about five years old; and Miss Frederica Spencelaugh, the daughter of the last baronet, both of whose parents had died in India. After a time, Miss Frederica was sent away with her nurse to some sea-side place for the good of her health; and a few weeks after that, it was reported among us servants down stairs that Master Arthur was lying very ill up-stairs of some catching fever; and orders were given that nobody was to go near the room except the doctor, and the woman who had volunteered to nurse him. This woman was a Mrs Winch, the landlady of the *Hand and Dagger* at Normanford, and my Lady's confidante in everything (it seems they had known one another when girls); and everybody said it was very good of her to run the risk. The doctor who saw the boy was Mrs Winch's brother; his name was Kreefe—a lame, squint-eyed man, and not one of your swell

doctors by any means. Well, Master Arthur got worse and worse, and in a few days he died—at least we were told so; and so particular was Mrs Winch that nobody should run the risk of catching the fever but herself, that when the undertaker's men brought the coffin, she made them leave it outside the room, and said she would do the rest herself. So we were all put into black, and there was a quiet funeral one morning; and everybody thought they had seen the last of poor Master Arthur.

'On the second night after the funeral, I had an engagement to meet Crack Charley at twelve o'clock in the east plantation. We kept early hours at Belair; and at that time of night I was obliged to let myself out and in again unknown to anybody; but that wasn't difficult to manage. I had seen Charley, and was coming back along the gravelled path that runs round the east wing of the Hall, when what should I hear but a child's thin voice, that sounded close by me, but whether above or below, I couldn't tell, crying: "Help—help! Please ask them to let me out." I looked round, but could see nobody, and my blood ran cold all over me. I called out: "Who the d— are you? and what place do you want to be let out of?" "I am Master Arthur," said the child's voice, "and I have been shut up here ever such a long time. Oh, do please beg of them to let me out!" I swear you might have knocked me down with a sneeze when I heard these words. I had watched this lad's funeral only a few hours before, yet here he was, still alive, and speaking to me! With a good deal of bother, I made out where he was; and then I got one of the gardener's ladders, and planting it against the wall, which just there is thickly covered with ivy, I climbed up it, and so found the spot where the voice came from. It was a long narrow slit in the thick wall of what is the oldest part of the Hall, lighting a small room, which no doubt had often been used as a hiding-place in the old troubled times. This opening, as I afterwards found, was entirely hidden from the outside by a thick curtain of ivy. "Who shut you up here, Master Arthur?" I said, speaking to him through the slit in the wall. "My Lady, and that woman with the cat's eyes," he said—meaning Mrs Winch. "How long have you been here?" I asked. "I don't know how long, because I always feel so sleepy here; but a very long time," he said. "That's you, Billings, is it not? I know your voice. Will you please to shake hands with me?" I squeezed my hand into the slit as far as I could, and then I felt his cold little fingers grasp mine. "Thank you," he said, in his sweet, melancholy way, as he let go my hand again; and I had a very queer feeling round my heart for some minutes afterwards. I talked to him a little while longer; then he said: "I think I must get down now, Billings—I am standing on two chairs placed on the table—as I am getting very sleepy again, and I might fall, you know. You will ask them to let me out, will you not? Good-night, and God bless you, Billings!"

'On my soul, I don't like to put it down! but I betrayed my promise to that child, and never mentioned to any one what I had seen and heard. I have done many a rascally trick in my time, but that was the wickedest of them all. Instead of doing what I ought to have done, I said to myself: "My Lady has got a little private game of her own on here. If I can only make myself master of it, she will pay me well to keep

the secret." So I determined to keep my eyes open. I had not long to watch, for the very next night, about 11 P.M., a little covered cart, driven by Kreefe, came up to one of the side-doors; and presently Mrs Winch came out, carrying the child in her arms, fast asleep. She got into the cart with him; the cover was tied down, and the doctor drove off with his load. I heard them say something about White Grange, so I stole away by a near footpath across the moors, and was there, hidden in the thick thorn-tree that grows just inside the boundary-wall, when Kreefe drove up to the door. Old Job Sandysen came out with a lantern, and himself carried the lad, still asleep, into the house; and there he was hidden away for six weeks in one of the top rooms of White Grange. Nance Fennell told me all about it afterwards. At the end of that time, Mrs Winch and the doctor went one night to White Grange with the same little covered cart, and took the lad away; and as to what became of him afterwards, I know nothing, only Nance said that she happened to overhear that they were going to Liverpool. But I do happen to know that just at that very time Kreefe and his wife left Normanford; and it was given out that they had gone to America.

'Well, I thought after this that I had got a clear case against my Lady, such a one as ought to bring me in something handsome; and so it would have done, had not other things turned out badly. Sedgeley Court was safely cracked, and I got my share of the plunder; but unfortunately the police got hold of Bill Stuckley for it, and he peached when in prison; besides which, my plan of the house was found on him; so one fine morning, he and I and Charley had the pleasure of hearing that we were to be sent on our travels into foreign parts for several years to come. Before sailing, I sent a message to Lady Spencelaugh, telling her I wanted to see her on important business; but either she never got the message, or else she wouldn't come. But the secret was one that would keep, and I determined to keep it till I got back home. At the end of ten years, I found myself in the old country again, hard up. I had made up my mind that as soon as I got the means, I would run down to Belair, and pay my Lady a visit. Before I could do this, however, I fell in with an old friend of Charley's, and was persuaded to join him in a little affair, for which we both got into trouble; and the rest you know.

'And now you've got the whole boiling out of me; and my opinion is, that I'm a cursed fool for my pains. I ain't a superstitious cove, but I can't help thinking that if I had acted square by the lad, as I promised him, things might have gone more square with me. But, what can't be cured must be endured. One thing I do know—that writing is deuced dry work; so, now that this job is well out of hand, I'm dead nuts on to a tumbler of old rum, and a pipe of choice negro-head.—Yours to command,

JIM BILLINGS.'

'P.S.—I haven't bothered you with any dates in my letter, but I can give you them all as pat as nippence, whenever you may want them.'

CHAPTER XXXVI.—MR PENNING'S PROPOSITION.

'A very characteristic production!' said Mr Greenhough, as Mr Penning finished reading the ex-convict's statement. 'Mr James Billings's old skill as a begging-letter impostor has stood him in

good stead in that ingenious piece of composition. Faugh! The whole narrative is redolent of the Old Bailey!'

The baronet chuckled, and then instantly became grave again, as though he had been caught in some dereliction of duty. The vicar, too, looked very grave, and was conning his notes seriously. Mr Greenhough had a strong opinion of the vicar's clear good sense, and he felt vaguely uneasy at the expression of that gentleman's face; for the lawyer himself was quite serious in believing that the whole affair was nothing more than an ingenious conspiracy got up to defraud the rightful heir.

Lady Spencelaugh said no word, but sat quite still, with one hand clasped in that of her faithful friend, Martha Winch; and with her eyes bent mostly on Gaston—that son for whose sake she had risked so much. Gaston himself sat biting his nails moodily. The olive of his cheek had paled somewhat during the last half hour. Title, houses, and lands seemed to be slipping from under his feet in some incomprehensible way, just at the moment when he had begun to realise them as being all his own. If he were not Sir Gaston Spencelaugh, the richest baronet in all Monksshire, what would become of him, by Jove! with that threatening array of bills, and duns, and post-obits hemming him in, and stopping up every avenue of escape; and ready to swoop down upon him the moment his misfortune should get wind, and crush him remorselessly, as by the *peine forte et dure*! He would shoot himself; by Jove! that's what he would do—it was the most gentlemanly mode of writing Finis to one's Memoirs—and give them all the slip that way.

'What further evidence have you to offer in support of this extraordinary charge?' said the vicar at last, breaking a silence that was becoming oppressive to every one.

The next evidence put in by Mr Penning was that of Margaret Fennell, at present a resident in Grellier's Almshouses; who deposed, that in a certain month of a certain year, Martha Winch, and her brother, Jeremiah Kreefe, took to the house known as White Grange a boy, apparently about five years of age; which child, after being kept locked up in the said White Grange for the space of six weeks, was taken away one evening after dark by the two before-named persons, and never seen by her, Margaret Fennell, afterwards.

Mr Penning next brought forward the evidence of Mr Edwin, ex-master of the Foundation School at Normanford; who deposed to having been at Liverpool on a certain day of a certain year, and to there seeing Dr Kreefe, his wife, and Mrs Winch, accompanied by a boy, apparently about five years old, alight from a cab at one of the docks. Mr Edwin further deposed to seeing Mrs Winch bid farewell to her brother and his wife; and to seeing the two latter, accompanied by the child, go on board a vessel named the *Lone Star*, which vessel, as he found from after-inquiry, was advertised to sail for New York at high-water that very day.

The next piece of evidence put in by Mr Penning was the Statement written by John English at Pevsey Bay, and sent by him to Miss Spencelaugh. Mr Penning read this Statement aloud, as he had done the previous evidence. In it, as may be remembered, John English spoke of his early life in America with the Kreefes; and how the lame doctor had at last contrived to get rid of him. He mentioned his recognition of the doctor's portrait

at the *Hand and Dagger*; and how he became acquainted with the contents of the note intended for Lady Spencelaugh; and of his sudden dismissal from Belair the day after Mrs Winch's return to Normanford; together with various other minor matters, some of which had been brought out more strongly in the previous evidence, but all tending to establish the truth of his story.

'This concludes our case as it stands at present,' said Mr Penning as he refolded John's manuscript.

'In the absence of Mr English, as I must still continue to call him,' said the vicar, 'I really don't see what further steps can possibly be taken in this matter. But perhaps Lady Spencelaugh may have something to say to all this?'

Mr Greenhough was whispering earnestly with my Lady and Mrs Winch, and presently he came forward, and addressing the vicar and the baronet, said: 'Lady Spencelaugh desires me to deny most emphatically the truth of the allegations contained in the statements just read to you by Mr Penning, so far as they affect her Ladyship. The evidence of the convict Billings she states to be without the shadow of a foundation in fact—at least that portion of it which relates to the late Master Arthur Spencelaugh: whether the rest of it be true or false, is a matter of no moment. Mrs Winch, the respected landlady of the *Hand and Dagger*, is quite willing to admit that there was a child taken to White Grange by herself and brother, and that the same child was afterwards taken by Dr Kreefe to America; but that the child in question was Master Arthur Spencelaugh, she most positively denies. At the proper time and place, Mrs Winch will be prepared to prove who the child really was, and explain why it was found necessary to get him out of the country in such a surreptitious manner. For the rest, until this Mr English turns up, and proves his own case more completely, and to better purpose, than his advocates have done for him, we shall sit down contented with the nine points of the law which we have in our favour. We don't think that this Mr English ever will turn up in this neighbourhood again. We believe him to have been wise in his generation, and to have "made tracks," as the Yankees say. Should he, however, have the rare impudence ever to shew his face in this part of the country again, we are quite prepared to have him arrested as a common impostor. Six months' oakum-picking would, I opine, go far towards checking his ambitious proclivities for the future. I may add that Lady Spencelaugh cannot but feel intensely grieved that any one for whom she has felt so warm an affection as she has for Miss Spencelaugh, should have taken a course so unwarranted, so opposed to sense and good-feeling.' Here Mr Greenhough caught the vicar's eye fixed on him, and there was something in it which told him he had better stop. 'But the subject is a painful one, and I refrain from adding more,' he said, and then sat down.

Mr Penning rose. 'We are not here to bandy accusations,' he said, 'but to set right, as far as in us lies, a great apparent wrong. As stated by me before, I am quite at a loss how to account for the absence of Mr English; but I have no doubt that when that gentleman does return, he will be able to furnish a satisfactory explanation of what at present seems so inexplicable. It is easy to call any man an impostor; but in the present case the term is a simple absurdity, as no one knows better

than Mr Greenhough himself. The facts which have been laid before you to-day having come to Miss Spencelaugh's knowledge, too late, I am sorry to say, for Sir Philip to be made acquainted with them, Miss Spencelaugh felt that this occasion, more than any other, was the one on which she ought to relieve herself of a responsibility which she was no longer prepared to carry alone. On you, reverend sir, and on your colleague, as executors under the will of the late lamented head of this family, that responsibility must now devolve; and in the absence of the person chiefly concerned, it will rest with you to decide, from what you have heard, as to what steps, if any, you may deem it requisite to take in the present contingency. Whatever decision you may arrive at, Miss Spencelaugh will abide by; but to say, as my legal friend has said, that the lady in question ought to have kept back the evidence which you have heard this morning, is equivalent to saying that she ought to have made herself accessory after the fact to what, if our case be a genuine one, is one of the most base and cruel conspiracies that ever came within the range of my experience. I say this without the slightest imputation on any person or persons here present. We can, however, go one step further in this extraordinary business, and one only; but that step, if you are willing to sanction it, may prove a most important one in testing the value of the evidence which has been brought before you to-day—that evidence which my legal friend has denounced as a wholesale piece of imposture. Gentlemen, *we can open the coffin which is said to contain the body of Master Arthur Spencelaugh.*'

At these ominous words, a low cry of agony burst irrepressibly from the lips of Lady Spencelaugh, and a deathlike whiteness overspread her face. Gaston, thinking she was going to faint, sprang to her side; but she waved him impatiently away, and straightened herself presently, and summoned back a little colour to her cheeks, as though she were afraid lest any one should see how powerfully Mr Penning's last words had affected her. They had taken every one in the room by surprise. Mr Greenhough was fairly puzzled. His scepticism was beginning to be shaken in spite of himself. Up to this moment, he had really looked upon the whole affair as a cleverly concocted conspiracy; but his observant eye had not failed to note Lady Spencelaugh's evident agitation; and the audacity of Mr Penning's proposition almost took his breath away.

Mr Penning resumed. 'You, Sir Michael, are, I believe, a county magistrate; and, unless I mistake, you, reverend sir, are vicar of the parish in which the church of Belair is situate; besides which, the family vault is private property; and, as the executors of the late baronet, you have, I opine, full power in that capacity to act as I have indicated, should you think well to do so.'

'Really, Mr Penning,' said the vicar, 'this proposition of yours is a most extraordinary one, and one on which I and my colleague are not prepared to decide without some consideration. But, in any case, we certainly could not think of proceeding in such a matter without the concurrence of Sir Gaston Spencelaugh, whom, notwithstanding all that has been said this morning, I must still consider as the head of the family, and the owner of Belair.'

'It would be rank sacrilege!' exclaimed Lady Spencelaugh, addressing herself to the company

for the first time that day. All present were struck by the change in her voice, ordinarily so low, honeyed, and courteous, now so husky, and with an ill-concealed anxiety in its tones.—'Gaston, my dear boy, you must not allow this thing to take place. Your father's bones will rise up in judgment against you if you do! No—no—for my sake, you must not allow it!'

'What have we to fear, mother?' said Gaston, his pale olive face looking more haggard than ever, and his under-lip twitching nervously as he spoke. 'You have already stated, or rather Mr Greenhough has for you, that the evidence we have heard this morning is a tissue of falsehoods, as far as you are concerned. Do you still adhere to that assertion?'

'I do, I do!' said the miserable woman eagerly. 'All lies, Gaston dear, as far as I am concerned.'

'In that case, mother, we have nothing to be afraid of,' said Gaston. 'To open my poor brother's coffin, under such circumstances, cannot be any sacrilege.—Gentlemen,' he added, coming forward to the table, 'whatever permission you require from me in this case, I grant freely and fully. Act as seems best to your own judgment. For my mother and myself, I state emphatically that instead of shunning inquiry, we court it. Let your perquisition be as searching as possible; we have no fear of the result.'

'But Gaston, Gaston,' implored Lady Spence-laugh in a tone of agony, 'I tell you this must not be allowed! Oh, it is horrible! For my sake, Gaston, you must not allow this!'

'Mother, in such a case as this it is necessary,' said Gaston firmly. 'The permission I have given I cannot retract. Besides, such a proof will go far to shew the utter worthlessness of this base scheme of imposture. Come; take my arm. For the present, our business here is at an end.'

She gave one look into his face, and then seeing that his resolve was not to be shaken, with a low, bitter sigh, she took his arm, and allowed herself to be led from the room, Mrs Winch following meekly.

After a long consultation with Sir Michael, the vicar announced that Mr Penning's proposition would be acceded to; and appointed the hour of six that evening as the time for the gentlemen there present to meet at the church.

To Frederica the day had seemed a long and terrible one. She thanked Heaven fervently that it was over at last, and that the weight of the dark secret which she had carried about with her for so long a time would rest on her feeble shoulders no more.

AUCTIONS.

THE famous proposal of Mr Thackeray's with regard to the utilisation, or (if that should be found impossible) the employment of our junior nobility by making them Auctioneers, has never been carried into effect. Several reasons have been advanced to account for this. Some have urged that these young aristocrats are too proud to turn an honest penny in a business-like way. They are not unwilling, it is whispered, to enter the ring and have transactions with Welchers; but they will not demean themselves by having anything to do with orthodox trade. They will marry a millionaire's daughter, though he may have made

his money by it; but they will not make any in the same legitimate manner for themselves. This explanation, however, is shrewdly suspected to emanate from the Radicals, who delight in proving persons of title to be illogical and inconsistent. If the *Rostrum* were fine old oak, and carved with the crest and motto of the young nobleman who filled it, and the ivory hammer surmounted with the similitude of his elder brother's coronet, we can fancy nothing more appropriate to high rank. Then, instead of an auctioneer, let us term him a Professor of the Art of Persuasion, and the calling would be among the professions at once. Our junior nobility have no objection, or, if they have, they manage to get over it, to fill a pulpit; and we all know that 'going, going, going' is what the clergyman is always preaching from that coigne of vantage. Nor, again, do they hesitate to join the bar. Now, I do not suppose that any one will have the hardihood to contend that an auctioneer is liable to be brought into worse company than a barrister, who, by the etiquette of the law, is forbidden to open his mouth except at the personal instigation of an attorney.

How these miserable prejudices of society crumble into dust at the touch of the finger of common-sense!

The simple truth is, that the reason why our junior nobility are not provided for in the manner so hopefully suggested by the great satirist of the nineteenth century, is the same which prevents my rivaling Herr Joachim as the first-fiddle in Europe. They are altogether incompetent for such a calling. Is it supposed that an auctioneer has only to repeat his monotonous cry three times, and then strike a blow with his hammer? A cuckoo and a woodpecker could, in that case (if trained to act in unison), perform all he has to do. A man may be a sound divine, a popular physician, and even a good lawyer, without being many degrees removed from a fool in everything which does not relate to his own profession; but it is impossible that a successful auctioneer should be less than a sagacious man. There is perhaps no calling in which every sort of learning may be made so useful. To-day, he has to sell an estate, and it is his duty to descant upon territorial affairs; arable and pasture; rods and perches (taking care not to confound them with his 'rights of fishing'); drainage and irrigation; leasehold and copyhold. If there is a Mansion with it, opportunities are afforded for persuasive eloquence, which a parliamentary barrister might sigh for till his wig grew bald; and now he assures the Practical that the roof is in complete repair; and now he hints to the Parvenu that he has only to purchase that ancestral abode, to secure for himself a position in the County.

To-morrow, he has to sell a library, and all that he knows of books is called into requisition. There is no language, living or dead, which on such occasions may not be useful to him. The very titles of the 'lots' require something of knowledge, lest his pronunciation of them should bring a smile to the lips of some old bookworm, whose only notion of humour, perhaps, is a false quantity. Besides the books, there are very likely some Antiquities. Our Professor of the Art of Persuasion should have something germane to the matter to say about every one of them. He is not a Cheap Jack, selling fifth-rate crockery to clowns at a fair; mere words will avail him nothing—rather

the reverse, indeed; it behoves him to be an illustrator of his subject, not reiterating, like the Priest and the Advocate, but being 'the abstract and brief chronicle' of the matter in hand. Or again, our auctioneer has to sell Pictures: he should in that case be a man of taste, or, at all events, must understand something of the relative value of such wares. The same remark applies to Wine and Jewels. In short, there is no calling extant in which Knowledge of all kinds is so obviously Power, or Learning so truly 'excellent' (even when 'house and land' are not 'gone and spent'—a very depreciatory addition to the eulogy, by the by), as the profession of an auctioneer.

Various, however, as are the descriptions of goods with which he has to do, and the opportunities for judicious display which they afford him, the people with whom he deals are still more heterogeneous and diverse. They range, in the first place, naturally from the highest to the lowest. The dilettante duke peers scrutinisingly through his double eye-glass at the same article of *virtù* which the old curiosity-shop keeper regards so sceptically through his horn spectacles; nay, which the penniless tout, out of elbows and employment, but clinging to the shadowy hope of a 'commission,' surveys with lacklustre eyes. The auction-room is almost as great a leveller as the grave; although, with respect to these touts, they are not to be found in such numbers, nor do they conduct themselves with such audacity as at private sales. If you approach a house where the furniture is being disposed of by auction, you will find a crowd of these curious people about the door, each with a catalogue of the effects in his hand, and a pencil, the wood of which is as black and polished, as is the lead within. They chatter in a friendly manner with one another until you approach, when they at once become the most determined foes. Irish car-drivers, when they catch sight of a fare, behave somewhat similarly, but do not inspire such alarm. These run at you in a body, with frightful cries, demanding custom, and at the same time depreciating their rivals. When, however, you have elected one to be your bidder, they leave you at peace, and amity is at once restored among themselves. There is not the least necessity for you to do this; the superstition about dealers not permitting you to bid against them is in most cases absurd; but if you are nervous, or a lady, you must pay the penalty of your misfortune in a small percentage to this unattractive go-between.

There are few sadder spectacles than a sale of goods by auction in a house where you have been a frequent guest, if at least, as usual, there is some peremptory necessity for the occurrence. Sad to see the once prized trinkets in irreverent hands, and gazed upon by eyes that only estimate their money value; harsh sound the tones of the auctioneer, ere he distributes with each fatal blow the objects so familiar to us among the greedy crowd; his hammer strikes upon our shrinking ears like the knell of doom. Something of this unpleasant feeling always seems to me to hang about sales in private houses, even though neither death nor unlooked-for poverty may have invoked the presence of the auctioneer; but fortunately it is not everybody who is troubled with such sentimental weakness. There is a large class of moderately ancient, large-bodied females, for instance, who frequent all auctions in their neighbourhood with the same regularity with which they go to

church, or (as I fancy is more likely) to chapel. They investigate every article on the 'view'-days with microscopic intentness, and upon the eventful morning come early, as to a gratuitous entertainment, in order to secure good seats: as every lot is sold, they carefully enter the price in their catalogues; and not until the last 'gone' has sounded, do they rise with important faces, and go home to tea. They have listened with all the interest and decorum which they evinced during a charity-sermon upon Sundays, but in neither case do they give way to impulse. They have not bid, nor did they ever intend to bid, one shilling. Not all the eloquence of Demosthenes, joined to the grace of an Admirable Crichton, could avail with them: but then it is always very difficult to extract money from the Gentler Sex. When the poet tells us that the proper study for mankind is Man, he seems to have had an eye to Auctioneering. The study of Woman, infinitely difficult as it is, would never prove remunerative in the Rostrum.

But even confining himself to the masculine portion of his audience (who, moreover, are as twenty to one when compared with the feminine), what a range of characters has this Professor of the Art of Persuasion to manipulate! What different treatment, to begin with, do the two vast classes who compose his hearers require: the dealer and the amateur, the Jew and the Gentile! For the one, he must have a gentlemanly address, conciliating manners, and a persuasive smile: for the other, a specious frankness, a ready, but not too subtle wit, good temper, and a decision not to be shaken by the loudest brawler. For both, he must possess the vigilant eye, that detects the half-formed wish of the possible purchaser, and the nimble tongue that straightway makes it blossom into a bid; he must be judicious, so as neither to hurry the bidding to the loss of his employer, nor to linger over it to the impatience of his hearers. It is his mission to watch the passion of emulation, and to flatter it to the height, but when that is done, to leave his victims to themselves, only glancing from one to the other, and interpreting their slightest gesture by a word. There is no oratory in the senate, nor in the law-courts, more capable of inflection, more instinct with suggestion and meaning, than are the brief but eloquent glances of the auctioneer. He must not only be a judge of mankind in the general, but must be acquainted with them individually, at least as respects the dealer, otherwise he would never credit the fact, that the snuffy, dirty, shirt-collarless, nasal person who has just bid five hundred pounds for a sapphire may be relied upon to redeem his pledge, even if it had been for double the money.

The behaviour of these gentry is very peculiar: it is incidental perhaps to the fact of most of them keeping curiosity-shops, that they are not only curious in their own personal appearance, but in their dispositions: the vehemence with which they struggle with one another, in order to more closely investigate some article of *virtù*, reminds one of nothing so much as a swarm of minnows to whom you cast a morsel of bread, or a squad of ducks with a worm too large to be swallowed at a gulp, and which one gets hold of for a second, only to have it snatched from his bill by another. *Cracked*, cries one of these disappointed ones, who has not been able to use his microscope; *brass*, cries another, who has

found his touchstone equally unprofitable; and so they go on, snatching and depreciating, till we almost wonder that the Professor of the Art of Persuasion does not swoop down upon them in person from his eyrie, and 'conciliate' them (as Charles Lamb expresses it) with his ebony hammer. But even more necessary to the auctioneer than the intellectual endowments of which we have spoken, is the complete control of his temper. In the proprietor of the goods, which may be selling at prices below his own expectations, this is not to be expected; and since nobody *does* set the same value upon an article as its owner, an observant eye may generally detect the Proprietor in an auction-room. Again, the change that takes place in the countenance of the amateur bidder (for the dealer makes no sign) when the lot for which he has closely contended is knocked down to him, is pleasant to contemplate: a moment ago, he wore an air of studied carelessness, not to say of disparagement; but now he is triumphant, radiant. "It is nought, it is nought," saith the buyer; but when he has gone his way, then he boasteth.'

The most curious sale by auction which has taken place of late in London—with the exception of the 'Fossil-man,' who did not fetch so much, by the by, as the price of a 'subject' in the old body-snatching times—was the disposal of the jewels and art-treasures which were 'looted' from the Imperial Summer Palace during the last Chinese war. They had been previously exhibited at the Crystal Palace as well as in Piccadilly, and were so far familiar to the public; but I could not help regretting that the Professor of the Art of Persuasion who sold them, and understood his business so remarkably well, did not also understand Chinese. Here was surely an example corroborative of what I have stated, that in this particular calling there is no species of knowledge which may not be found useful. In the case of those splendid salvers, for instance, half turquoise, half gold enamel, how was I to know that the centre represented the elements of nature, round which were circles containing the primitive Chinese characters, those of Lant-cheu and Confucius, the signs of the Zodiac, represented by fantastic figures, and bats, the emblem of long life and happiness? All this was worse than Greek to me, for it was Chinese; nor had I ever so much as heard of any relationship between bats and happiness, beyond the title of a work upon cricket, *Felix on the Bat*. As to whether an enamel was composed of 'pulverised gems' or not, there was a certain gorgeous fancy about the statement that threw the dissolved pearl of Cleopatra into the shade, and really deserved credit, if not belief—but that was a matter for the jewellers to decide upon; on the other hand, the question, as to whether it had the great Ming signet upon it, could only be settled by aid of a native interpreter. Thus it happened that the European jewellery ('presented at various times to the Chinese emperor') excited more interest than the Celestial wonders. There were objects literally encrusted with gems, and which seemed to have been manufactured rather to give the idea of lavish outlay than with any purpose. Imagine 'a beautiful telescope of the time of Louis XVI., enriched with pearls and enamels of fruit on a red ground, and wreaths of flowers in gold on a black ground, the object-glass cover being formed of a watch set

with pearls.' The glass was not a very scientific affair, and perhaps the watch was not what is vulgarly called 'a good one to go;' but what useless extravagance to place a watch in such a position! Similarly, there were 'gold waist-clasps' with watches in their centres, very convenient, doubtless, to passers-by, but to the wearers, unless of a very peculiar contour, quite unprofitable; they might just as well have worn them on the other side of the belt, and have thereby avoided the stigma, doubtless incurred from the wits of the period, of being always behind their time. A 'gold enamel box,' said to have been presented to the Brother of the Sun by Marie Antoinette, exhibited the same sort of extravagance; it was divided into three compartments, one being a musical-box, with an automaton mountebank; another a snuff-box; and the third a watch-case, with a medallion of the Petit Trianon. Underneath was a secret compartment opened by touching three small springs at a time. Could vain complexity and objectless extravagance any further go? The beautiful gold cage-temple in which the singing-birds fluttered and warbled with such exquisite naturalness, were, on the contrary, worthy of all admiration. I don't know what the proprietor expected he would get for those from this competitive examination of the pockets of the British public, but he set down in his catalogue 'a chalcedony cameo vase'—which, if I had bought, I should, in my ignorance, undoubtedly have used as a flower-pot—as 'superior to that of Ptolemy Philadelphus, valued at L.40,000.' It was, however, I believe, knocked down, if I may use such an expression in speaking of an object at once so frail and costly, at considerably less than that sum.

There was nothing within my figure, among all the jewellery and precious stones, except one 'loose cat's-eye' (Lot 219), which I bid for from motives of humanity. And yet I would have bidden something for the Jade ornaments, if a genuine Chinaman would have pledged his pigtail to the truth of what was said about them in the catalogue. 'All grades of Celestials regard Jade (a substance found in the mountains of Tartary) as a heavenly gift, and when a fine specimen is discovered (a very rare occurrence), the emperor calls a council of artists to decide on how it can be most advantageously used. The artist who undertakes it *does so at the risk of his life*; if his work is unsatisfactory, he is decapitated. As, however, the material is so extremely hard that no important work can, with the utmost diligence, be finished in less than twenty years, the artist's head is in no immediate danger.' Under such circumstances, if I were a Celestial artist, I should let the Jade alone. But is all this true? I pause for a reply—in Chinese; and I don't get it. 'A Tazza, in antique gray Jade, with fantastic dragons,' bears an inscription, says the catalogue, indicating that 'it remained eight hundred years in the coffin of an emperor, and was then removed with appropriate ceremonies.' That would have to be translated to me by a trustworthy student of the Chinese tongue, before my natural reverence for antiquity could screw me up to bidding-pitch. 'The Goddess Fo. The rudeness of her workmanship and the antiquity of the Jade,' says the catalogue (and very pretty language it is to address to a lady and a divinity), 'which is beginning to lose colour through extreme age, attest to the great antiquity of this piece;' but, for my part, I want some more direct testimony. And again,

with respect to the inscription at the back of the 'White Jade cameo medallion,' that 'the penalty of death awaits any person who, on finding this treasure, does not return it to the emperor,' I require further corroborative evidence. I have seen a sentence very like it—which could scarcely have been a sentence of death—upon a chest of tea.

But the most surprising thing that was put up to auction at this sale, or, indeed, as I should imagine, at any other, was the small bottle supposed to contain 'essence of crocodile,' reputed to be 'the strongest stimulant in existence,' and of which there is but one other in the world, and that 'in the possession of the Sultan of Turkey.' The ownership of this without doubt confers the power of shedding crocodile's tears. No wonder, therefore, that its proprietor (who, let us hope, has himself no further use for it) set a fancy value upon the article. Count Bismark would have given worlds for it when he found himself compelled, in opposition to the best feelings of his nature, to proclaim war against the Bund; or the inhabitants of our own Cave of Adullam might have clubbed together to secure this rarity, to evidence to their constituents at the next general election their regret at the postponement of a Reform Bill.

FROM TIME IMMEMORIAL.

MANY grand, noble, and solemn memories enthroned themselves upon mountain-heights. The poet, the artist, and the historian alike love, venerate, and immortalise many a mountain, which adds to its solitary dignity and mysterious grandeur the sublime interest of some great event in the supernatural or natural history of the human race. Ararat and Sinai, Henuon, Horeb, and Moriah are names which transport the mind by their mere sound into a world of infinite thought, wonder, and interest. Around Gerizim and Ebal, venerable and sacred associations cluster, dating from the earliest days of which any record is preserved. And away in the far past, beyond all such records, are the probabilities of the story of the sacred hills. Looking at their rugged sides and gray summits, and remembering that in all likelihood Gerizim and Ebal had been consecrated mountains, and had witnessed the performance of sacrifice and religious rites ages before Abraham and his grandson Jacob erected there their altars to Jehovah, the story of the ancient people, 'the oldest and smallest sect in the world,' whose dwelling-place is in the valley between them, whose lives are influenced by their traditions, as their homes are overshadowed by their majestic presence, acquires an extraordinary interest. There the present is a living illustration and explanation of the past; there the mind has not to travel through ages and gradations of history, to trace the fusion of races, the ravages of conquest, the removal of landmarks. All these are to be found on either hand; change and desolation spread widely around, and the glory of the past is but a sacred and solemn memory; but there, in the deep valley which lies between the holy hills, the past is not gainsaid by the present, the busy meddling of change has been stayed. 'Our fathers worshipped in this mountain, and we worship,' said a woman of Samaria, nineteen centuries ago, to a wayfarer who questioned her, sitting by the brink of the well which Jacob had made for his flocks and his people, in the midst of a hostile people, who might have forbidden

him the use of the stream which still flows near the patriarch's well. A little while ago, an English traveller* sat on the same spot, probably upon the self-same stone, and Amram, the priest of the Samaritans, told him how their fathers had worshipped in this mountain, this gray old Gerizim, stretching away and aloft in the pure air, and under the hot, cloudless sky; and how they worship still, they, the sole inheritors of the promise, the true children of the Covenant, who alone hold whole and unbroken the law of Moses, and possess the authentic roll of the Pentateuch.

In this little valley of Shechem dwelt Melchizedek, the mysterious priest of the Most High, and officiated, under the venerable oak of Moreh, in the sacred rites which preceded by long centuries the ceremonial law of Moses. Here Abraham offered up his first sacrifice in the Promised Land, and duly paid his tithes to Melchizedek. On Gerizim, now proved to be the Moriah of Abraham, was that terrible and mysterious trial of the faith of the friend of God, the sacrifice of Isaac, applied, and triumphantly sustained. How must Moses have thought of all these things when he commanded that the children of Israel, when they should have crossed the Jordan, and entered upon the Promised Land, never to be trodden by his foot, should be halted between Gerizim and Ebal, in the valley of Shechem, to listen to the solemn proclamation of the Law. And when the triumphant claimants of the Covenant swarmed about the immemorial hills, they, and their children, and their cattle drank sweet water from the well which Jacob, the father of the people, had given them when the Captivity was yet undreamed of; and now, behold, it had passed away, and they had come to fill the land and to possess it. Such as it was then, it is now, and the Law, as there proclaimed, is kept now, the customs then observed are observed now, though the tale of the greatness of the children of Israel is told and ended, though another Captivity and another restoration, a bitterer and wider ruin, and long ages of dispersion, homelessness, contempt, and contumely, the rule of the pagan, the presence of the Christian in their Holy Places and in their God-governed city, have made the chosen people a mere tradition for the historian of the past, a mere problem for the curious in the future.

A little while, and the sect of the Samaritans will be no more—a little while, and this wonderful illustration of the past will no more make the dead and gone ages real to the traveller's gaze. They are yielding slowly, but surely, to the law which, however long of operation, inexorably fulfils itself. Jacob's well has been purchased by the Greek Church. No more may the women of Samaria set down their water-jars by the brink, and speak with strangers there. The purchase is not talked about at present, but the mouth of the well has been filled in, so that it may be deserted; and when the fitting time comes, a magnificent building, rich with gold and gems, barbarous in taste, and unmeaning in ornament, will utterly efface the old Hebrew tradition, while it will (far less effectively than by the simple venerable well) commemorate the introduction of Christianity into Samaria by the founder of Christianity himself. A divided, and even

* *Three Months' Residence at Nablus, and an Account of the Modern Samaritans.* By Rev. John Mills. London: John Murray.

antagonistic interest reigns in this wonderful spot for those who hasten to examine its landmarks while yet they endure, for here is the last stronghold of the faith of the patriarchs, still vital and active in the actual scene of the first mission inaugurated for its destruction. Sacred as the valley of Shechem is to the Samaritans, who still worship the God of Moses according to the law of Moses, it has a double sanctity in the eyes of Christians, incomprehensible to them.

The identity of Nablus, the dwelling-place of the last remnant of the sect of the Samaritans, with the ancient city of Shechem is indubitable. The pulpit-like projection on Gerizim, which overhangs the city, and from whence any man's voice might make itself heard by a great multitude without extraordinary effort, is an important piece of testimony, but the entire description otherwise coheres. There was the sacred oak, beneath which Jacob buried the idols of his father-in-law's household; and under whose branches Joshua set up the first of the great stones of the Law, as commanded by Moses. Hard by the sacred oak was the ancient Sanctuary of the Lord, for whose superior sanctity over that of the Temple at Jerusalem (a mushroom city, without rank or importance, until the merely modern times of King David), the Samaritans contended. Here, too, is that 'parcel of ground' which Jacob bought of the sons of Hamor, the father of Shechem, for a hundred pieces of silver, wherein the wanderers laid the bones of Joseph, which they had brought up out of Egypt. To Mount Ebal belongs the sacred inheritance of the tomb of Joseph. If the time ever comes when its sublime solitude shall be invaded, and its secrets explored, what may it not reveal. 'We know,' says Mr Mills, 'that Joseph was embalmed in Egypt; and being the most important personage next to the king, there is no doubt that the usual appendages of royalty were placed with him in the coffin. If this is the real tomb—and there is every reason to believe it is—then underneath is the sarcophagus, and even the mummy of Joseph, just as they were when deposited by the conquerors.' The Mohammedan legend confirms the belief that when Moses led the Israelites out of Egypt, he carried Joseph's bones with him into Canaan, and buried them by his ancestors; but it affirms that they had first been placed by the Egyptians in a marble coffin, and sunk in the Nile, in order to help the regular increase of the river, and deliver them from famine for the future.

It must be a sensation worth experiencing to look from the valley of Shechem over the slopes of Gerizim and of Ebal, as they recede gradually, and offer space for hundreds of thousands of auditors, and to try to picture to the imagination the spectacle of the reading of the Law. 'The ark is placed in the middle of the valley, with the "heads of the people" ranged on each side. The Levites of the one half of the tribes stood upon the lower spur of Gerizim to read the blessings, and the Levites of the other half stood upon the lower spur of Ebal to read the curses. The vast congregation filled the valley; and the women and children covered the sides of the mountain like locusts. The Levites on Mount Gerizim then read the blessings, and the Levites on Ebal read the curses, to which the vast assembly responded Amen! A congregation and a service, compared with which all other assemblies the world has ever witnessed dwindle into insigni-

ficance.' From ancient Shechem to the Nablus of to-day, what a wondrous survey of time, what a chronicle of change and immobility side by side with it! It was ancient in the days of Abraham, venerable when Jacob came by that way. It was the capital city of the conquered land, under Joshua, a Levitical town, and a city of refuge. It retained its pride of place while the Judges ruled in Israel; and though Abimelech destroyed it, it was rebuilt, and restored to all its former power. The modern magnificence and pride of Jerusalem did not humble Shechem, during the reigns of the first monarchs. Thither Rehoboam went to decide the question of his succession, and when the nation was divided into two kingdoms, it continued to be the capital.

The story of Shechem is to be read in living letters at Nablus. Along the foot of Ebal, long lines of camels pass to-day, carrying on the traffic between Jerusalem and Galilee as it was carried on thousands of years ago. Within the gates of Nablus, the ancient 'gate,' in which the 'elders' sat, are the lineal descendants of those who heard the Law read from Gerizim, and beheld the burial of Joseph. Unchanged in faith, in dress, in customs, the visitor to Nablus who sees the Samaritans, and studies their domestic life, has no need to exert his fancy in repeopling the scene with forms of the far past. He has but to look and see. The Christian and the Mohammedan population he may discard as accidents, and go up with priest and people to the feasts of the Passover and of the Full Moon, on Gerizim, ascending by the steps which were cut for the first worshippers among the heirs of the Covenant. The account the Samaritans give of their own origin differs from that of Josephus, and it is far more attractive to faith and fancy. They hold that they are the only pure and unmixed children of Israel, the sons of Joseph, who have dwelt, through all their past history, since the conquest, in the mountains of Ephraim; that the Jews, on the other hand, ever since the Captivity, are beyond all doubt a mixed people, and that they have tampered with the Book of Joshua, and falsified their whole history. 'In their own history and chronology, the Samaritans prove, to their own satisfaction, that they are the only true representatives of the Israelites who entered Palestine under Joshua; and that their priest's family can trace their genealogy in an unbroken chain up to Aaron, the first high-priest of the nation.'

No people have been more persecuted and oppressed from age to age than the Samaritans, but suffering has only knit them more closely together. The story of their days, whether good or evil, is coming to a close. The only remnant of them is to be found at Nablus, and it numbers but forty families. Upon this little community, there is a distinct impress of superiority to all around them. The nobility of an immemorial ancestry, and a pure and ancient faith, is theirs, investing them with physical beauty, lofty bearing, and a strong family resemblance. They have never been tainted by assimilation to any other race, and their strict system of intermarriage has preserved all their traits. To observe their domestic life, is to live in a biblical atmosphere, and to return to the days of the patriarchs. It is to find the birth of a male child rejoiced over, and that of a female regarded as a misfortune; to see the ceremonial law observed in its minutest particulars, its endless

ablutions and purifications, its strange penalties and disabilities; marriage, mourning, death, the confession to be made in the sacred (Hebrew) tongue, with the last conscious effort, that 'the Lord our God is one Lord,' the frequent reading of the Law, the intimate relation between all the details of life and the tenets of their faith, which makes the exactions of the Levitical law appear to us as burdens very grievous to be borne—these may all be seen, as in the most ancient of days. Their faith and their people are synonymous. That any one of their brethren could change his creed, and yet remain a Samaritan, is beyond their comprehension. They believe in the coming of the Messiah, not as a king, or a conqueror, but as a peacemaker, and the healer of nations; as the inferior of Moses, the greatest of all; as a mortal man, who is to fulfil his mission, and die. They look for his advent about 1910 of the Christian era. His coming is to be preceded by peculiar signs, but they are not permitted to be divulged to unbelievers.

The worship of the synagogue is preserved in its most ancient forms, the Law is read from the precious rolls, and the language is Hebrew. The Sabbath is observed with such extraordinary strictness, that the movement of the hands, and even the lighting of a lamp, is forbidden. *No manner of work may be done from the sunset of the eve of the Sabbath to the sunset of the day of rest.* No servant of another faith may be hired to do prohibited work; no action may be performed, even in the defence of property or life. Their fasts are as severe as their Sabbaths are strict. The tenth day of the seventh month, called Tishri, is kept as the great day of atonement, and is the most important in the Samaritan calendar. The fast begins at sunset, and lasts twenty-five hours. During this time, neither man, woman, nor child, not even the sick, or unweaned infants, are permitted to taste so much as a drop of water. In the most extreme case, no medicine would be administered. Half an hour before sunset, all the community assemble at the synagogue, and the repeating of the Pentateuch commences. This, interrupted by prayers, lasts all night, and goes on in solemn darkness. In the morning, the worshippers form in procession, and visit the tombs of the prophets; on their return at noon, to the synagogue, the service commences as before. With the approach of sunset, the great ceremony takes place—the exhibition of the precious roll of the Law, their glorious possession, which they declare to have been written at the door of the tabernacle, in the thirteenth year of the establishment of the children of Israel in the Holy Land, by Abishna, the great-grandson of Aaron. Into whose hands is this priceless treasure, which a few English travellers have seen, destined to fall, when this story of solemn, awful antiquity comes to a close?

For forty years (a suggestive period in connection with their history) the Samaritans were prevented by the Mohammedans, peculiarly violent and fanatical at Nablus, from celebrating the Passover on Mount Gerizim. Twenty years ago, Mr Finn, the English consul at Jerusalem, succeeded in getting their right restored to them; and in 1860, Mr Mills witnessed the celebration of the Paschal solemnities, as a sharer of the tent of Amram; a wonderful experience, never to be forgotten, and intensified in its effect by the fact

that he had just witnessed the Christian celebration of Easter at Jerusalem. What solemn feelings they must have been which arose within him, when, having ascended Mount Gerizim, he stood and gazed upon the scene around. Under his feet was the wall of the ruined temple of Samaria; on the left, the seven steps of Adam, out of Paradise; still a little southward, was the place of the offering of Isaac; westward was the rock of the Holy Place; northward, the stones set up by Joshua. Hard by was the Samaritan encampment, and in front the platform for the celebration of the sacred feast. How strangely the tide of time must have rolled back, for the spectator, for the educated Englishman, divided by the incalculable space of a dispensation in the history of humanity from the men he was observing, divided by the incalculable gulf of race, and faith, and knowledge from those who thus confounded the ages, in their simple adherence to their antique law! Europe must have been forgotten, and all the modern world, and ancient Egypt have unveiled her mighty, mystic face to the gaze of his fancy, as the camp of the children of Israel was pitched, and the men came forth, and slew the Paschal lambs, and roasted them, eating, in haste, with their loins girded, their staves in their hands, and their shoes upon their feet—the Lord's Passover.

ON THE TRAIL.

I AM a police superintendent in a large iron-making town, and for upwards of twenty years have had the care of a populous colliery district. The peculiar avocations of the people supply ample disguise for criminals in hiding. Who would look for a runaway clerk in the black face and coal-stained garments of a collier, or in the guise of a labourer in the iron shed? It may be assumed, therefore, that many a strange incident has come under my notice in the course of so long a service, and some of these I may occasionally present to the public. One in particular I remember well, as practically illustrating a remark made in the *Times* on the conviction of Müller, that crimes of a conspicuous character are generally committed by the class that is least suspected. I was called one evening to quell a disturbance between several colliers and a party of Irishmen. The colliers, it appears, maddened with drink, had assailed the latter, driven them into a dwelling, and would speedily have killed one or more, but for the opportune arrival of the police. The night afterwards, I received a note from the railway authorities that a coal-train had been thrown off the line by some miscreant or other, who had placed sleepers along the rails. Knowing that colliers working at a distance invariably returned by these trains, and remembering the struggle of the night before, I at once concluded this to be an attempt at Irish revenge, and pursued my investigation accordingly.

A few nights after, another coal-train was thrown off the rails, as, in the former case, however, without harm to the men; but this second attempt spurred me on, so that certain suspected persons were speedily in custody. But I soon found that these were not 'my men.' It is useless for me to expatiate on the unerring signs by which innocence invariably asserts itself. The Irishmen were violent men in their cups, but most certainly

incapable of the atrocious act of which they were accused.

Scarcely had a week passed when the whole neighbourhood was thrilled with horror. At a distance of twelve miles from the town where I live, there was another town, to which our tradesmen resorted in numbers every Wednesday to market. In the evening, the last train, as usual, bore its numerous passengers to their homes. It was summer-time, and merrily they dashed along the rugged bank of a mountain-river, winding in amongst the hills. But soon the picture was changed; turning a curve in full career, the engine left the rails, and cutting deeply into the embankment, rolled on its side, fortunately having continued just a sufficient time in progress to break the shock of the carriages. There was an awful cry of lamentation, a wild medley, a hurried scene; men and women seeking to clamber through the opening above the locked doors, too intent on personal safety to think of anything else. Most were bruised, and all were frightened. While messengers were despatched to the nearest station, others searched along the route for the cause of the mishap. It was soon found. The scene of the accident was a curve, and the rail nearest to the river had been forcibly removed. The miscreant—for it was soon seen that a villain's hand had been there—had fortunately been ignorant of mechanics. He had taken up the rail by the ravine—for I have omitted to mention that there was a steep precipice at this point—and naturally thought that the train, with its load of human life, would have tumbled over. The rail next to the river was the 'safe' one, and so the engine simply ploughed along towards the scarp of the mountain.

When the details of this lucky escape reached me, I felt that my reputation was at stake. This was evidently Number Three of the diabolical attempts of the same hand. The first inquiry made was: Who drove the train? and one or two questions of a similar character put me in possession of this important fact, that the driver of the train and the driver of the coal-engine trains at the time the trucks were thrown off, was one and the same person. 'Now, then, for the driver,' said I, and marched to his lodgings. I found him a quiet, inoffensive sort of young fellow, not a likely man to have a malignant enemy. He was unmarried, and somewhat fresh to his duties on the line, not having been in the position very long. We at once touched on the subject of the accident, but I found he was quite at sea as to the cause.

'Have you an enemy,' said I, 'or any one who entertains any malice against you?'

No; he thought not.

'You are unmarried, I believe?'

Yes; he was.

'Courting, perhaps?' I suggested.

He confessed to the soft impeachment.

'Have you any objection to tell me who the lady is?' inquired I, for we police-officers are sometimes obliged to override delicate scruples. He mentioned the name of a young woman residing at a farmhouse six miles down the valley, and within half a mile of the scene of the accident. I drew a long breath, but kept my own counsel.

'Oh, so the damsel lives there, does she? Now, has she any other sweethearts besides yourself?'

He thought there had been one, a carpenter; but, quoth the driver, complacently smoothing an incipient beard: 'She has no lover now but me.'

'Where does this carpenter live?'

'About half a mile from the farm,' he answered; and with that I left, fully satisfied now that I was on the trail.

The morning after, and at the scene of, the accident, I had found a large thick stake, cut evidently from the adjoining wood. This had been used to prize up the rail from the sleeper. Examining it minutely, I saw that it had been cut recently, and that with a *notched knife*.

So, with this idea uppermost, I started on the mission, and after a pleasant drive, reached the little hamlet where the carpenter lived. The district was very mountainous and rugged; and as I mounted the winding road towards the house, I could hear the monotone of the river near which so narrow an escape had taken place. *Yonder was the scene. Was the criminal here?* The door was soon opened to my knock, and by the carpenter himself, a cool, self-possessed young man, who seemed to read my errand in a moment, yet asked me what I wanted, without the change of a muscle. I entered into his little room, and told him I had a suspicion he could enlighten me on the cause of the railway accident.

No, he couldn't; he had heard of it, like the rest.

Would he allow me to search him?

Certainly; and forthwith various articles were in my hand. On his person, I found two pocket-knives, each of which would have served to cut the stake. As I paused a moment, and held them in my hand, he heedlessly observed: 'That knife' (pointing to one) 'I only put into my pocket this morning, as I generally keep it at home.' I opened the knife; the blade was *notched*; and looking up from the article to the carpenter, caught his eye. We knew one another's thought in an instant; but he accompanied me tranquilly enough to the town. At the trial, the knife figured in evidence; various corroborating matters satisfied the jury of his guilt: he was found guilty, and sentenced to seven years' transportation. It turned out afterwards that he loved the farm-girl, and was incited by jealousy to the act which so nearly caused so frightful an accident. For all I know, the driver still dwells in single blessedness, for the maid is still a maid, as rosy-cheeked as ever, and, it is said, is waiting for the carpenter's return!

THE DEAD FLOWER.

In an old and musty volume, of strange and curious lore,
A relic found I, dried and withered, of some happy days
of yore.

By whose hand had it been placed there—why or wherefore,
when or where?—

Of true love perhaps a token, stored away by maiden fair!
Haply gathered from God's-acre, dear memento of a
friend

Gone before, yet in the memory ever living to the end!

There it lay, its pristine beauty faded—gone; but to the
eyes

Of the one who there concealed it, dearer than any prize!
As I found it, so remains it, undisturbed, but not forgot.
Ever sacred I preserve it, for it says: Forget-me-not!

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THE ATLANTIC TELEGRAPHS.

BY AN EYE-WITNESS.

IN THREE CHAPTERS.—CHAPTER I.

THE fourth attempt to connect England and America by a submarine telegraph has been successful. The perseverance with which capitalists and engineers have fought against ill-luck and misfortune has at length been rewarded by a glorious victory. Let us hope that those who have accomplished this work with such determination and energy, and who for so many years have fearlessly cast their bread upon the wildest waters of the globe, will now begin to receive that reward which is so strongly merited, and which has been so long delayed.

The first idea of an Atlantic telegraph seems to have originated, without doubt, in America. Bishop Mullock (of Newfoundland), Mr Griborne, Professor Morse, and Mr Cyrus Field, may all lay claim to having started this gigantic idea; but to the last-named gentleman alone belongs the honour of having not only forcibly and enthusiastically laid his views before the world, but of having very liberally backed those views with what was more useful and more forcible than either eloquence or enthusiasm. But although the idea was American, it remained for Englishmen to carry it out. The Atlantic Cable has been laid by the aid of English money and English talent, and by the help of an English ship that is without her equal in the whole world.

The *Great Eastern*, with her precious cargo, was to sail on Saturday, June 30th; and accordingly, on the previous day at noon, we who were going in her started from Victoria Station on our way to Sheerness, and reached the great ship on the afternoon of the same day. The ship was in a state of confusion, hurry, and bustle scarcely describable. She was surrounded by a fleet of colliers and lighters, who were giving up their final instalments of coals and stores of all kinds. Her accommodation-ladders were literally crowded with people anxious to get on board, and others who were apparently as anxious to get off. Sailors

and lightermen climbed up her steep sides, carrying every imaginable load—portmanteaus, hat-boxes, bonnet-boxes, sacks of biscuits and potatoes, hundredweights of mutton and beef, and every imaginable article of diet.

Portly directors, elegant and lovely ladies, and dandies from Pall Mall, who were going only as far as Ireland, jolted and jostled against smutty coal-whippers and greasy butchers. It was, however, no place for the mere idler or the looker-on. Everything indicated hard work and steady business. To all appearances, the first part of our voyage bid fair to be extremely pleasant. We mustered a party of fifty or sixty persons in the grand saloon, and among this number were about a dozen of the gentler sex, so that there was little likelihood of our suffering from *ennui* for the next three or four days. Besides this, everything around bore to most of us the charm of novelty. The weather was lovely, and all on board seemed thoroughly sanguine as to the ultimate success of the expedition.

Saturday, June 30, will always be a memorable day in the annals of the *Great Eastern*, and will be ever fresh in the memory of those who were on board the great ship on that day. The day itself was one of almost unexampled splendour. The sun shone brightly, and the air was fresh and balmy. Everything was in readiness, and we were really to make a start. At 11 o'clock, a rush was made to the forepart of the ship to see the anchor weighed, and a very pretty and spirit-stirring sight it was. The capstan was manned by some seventy or eighty men, and in midst of this human star, sitting on the top of the capstan itself, was the ship's fiddler, who, with fiddle in hand, was ready for action. The signal is given, the fiddler strikes up *The Girl I left behind Me*, round goes the capstan, and in process of time the anchors are brought to the surface, fished, and catted. The order is given: 'Slow ahead with the paddles,' and in another minute we are fairly under-way.

Our journey from Sheerness to Berehaven was pleasant in the extreme. But little occurred during this first part of our trip which is worthy of

being recorded. Some of the daily papers stated that the ship pitched and rolled tremendously, and that we shipped immense masses of water. One of those journals informed the public that at 'one dip of the ship, we took on board volumes of green water,' and by its further accounts, would lead the reader to suppose that we had really a bad passage round the Channel. The writer of this article must certainly never noticed any of those appalling phenomena. The ship was very much out of trim, and was two or three feet 'down by the head,' and once or twice, when a heavy sea struck her on the sponson, she shipped a good deal of light spray. These are the real facts of what has been reported as a violent storm, in which it was hinted that the great ship behaved anything but well; whereas, she was really so steady, that none of the ladies on board—although many of them were unused to the sea—were obliged to absent themselves from the mess-tables at any time.

With so many ladies and idle people on board, what could we do but give ourselves up to amusement?

There were among our company several who were well known in London as amateur playactors, and it was accordingly proposed to get up a burlesque on the subject of the cable, with the idea of performing it on the night before anchoring in Berehaven. Messrs Woods and Parkinson, who were on board to represent two of the daily papers, put their heads together, and in a very few hours produced a play, entitled *The Field Glass*, which was full of fun and bristled with good-natured jokes, made at the expense of those connected with the undertaking. The title of the play was chosen because it combined the names of two gentlemen who were principally connected with the enterprise—Mr Field and Mr Glass. The plot consisted in a fight between Glass and Neptune, as to the right of laying a cable; which, of course, ends in the complete victory of the former. The cast was as follows:

Neptune,	COLONEL DE BATHE.
Glass,	MR R. DUDLEY.
Field,	CAPTAIN BOLTON.
Clifford,	LORD HASTINGS.
Gooch,	MR G. ELLIOT.
Triton,	MR H. F. BARCLAY.
First Mermaid,	MR G. V. POORE.
Second Mermaid,	MR F. A. VAUGHAN.

The first performance took place on June 3, and was so warmly received, that by unanimous request it was repeated on the following evening. We had other amusements, however, besides the drama. Mr Oliver Smith entertained us all one night by displaying his ability as an electro-biologist, and succeeded in getting five or six men under the mesmeric influence, and compelling them to do the most extraordinary things. The ship had to be inspected, for to most of us she was quite a novel sight; and this employment would use up one or two mornings with the greatest ease. Then we had an occasional rubber of whist or an evening in the saloon, or played at leap-frog or shuffle-boards on deck.

On Thursday, July 5, those who were not actual imitators of the lark in respect of early rising, woke to find the ship safely anchored in Berehaven harbour, one of the best anchorages in the three kingdoms. A prettier spot is not often seen. The entrance being narrow, it seems almost like an inland lake, sheltered on all sides by lofty hills, and

with sufficient depth of water for even the *Great Eastern* with her heavy cargo to enter at all tides.

Although many left the ship bound for the romantic scenery of Glengariff and other show-places in the neighbourhood, others were coming on board, and we were soon surrounded by a crowd of boats, containing the native population, who had all come out to see the big ship. We had other visitors besides, not of the genus *homo*, that had come to make a long stay, and would add materially to the comfort of those on board. I allude to the live-stock. Stowed in pens in the forepart of the ship were—first, a flock of sheep, numbering one hundred and fourteen; second, a herd of eight bullocks; and third, three hundred head of poultry. Added to this, we had a milch cow, and in the ship's ice-house, besides eighty tons of ice, were twenty thousand pounds of dead meat, and two hundred head of poultry. This will give some idea of the enormous amount of stores required for the expedition, especially if the reader will bear in mind that every article of consumption was supplied in the same proportion.

While at Berehaven, we were joined by the *Medway*, *Albany*, and H.M.S. *Terrible*, who were to accompany the big ship.

On Friday, July 6, the *William Cory*, having on board the twenty-seven miles of shore-end, to be laid from Valentia, arrived at Berehaven, and, after taking on board Mr Willoughby Smith, Mr Loudon, and others, set sail again for Valentia to make a beginning of the great work. She was to lay the thick shore-end from the testing-house in Foilkomemmin Bay to a spot in the ocean twenty-eight miles further west, and there to buoy the end, where it was to remain peaceably until the *Great Eastern's* arrival to make the splice. On Sunday, September 8, while sitting at dinner, we received the good news that 'the shore-end had been successfully laid and buoyed.' This unexpected intelligence rendered it necessary that our operations should be pushed forward with all speed. The operation of coaling in which we were engaged was carried on with redoubled energy, and the engineers on board the ship were all busy completing the preparations of the paying-out machinery.

H.M.S. *Raccoon* arrived a few days before our departure, and on Wednesday, July 11, the officers of all the ships engaged dined together on board the *Great Eastern*. It is but reasonable to suppose that the friendly intercourse in which all engaged in the expedition occasionally indulged, tended in no small degree to secure that marked and glorious success which will make the year 1866 famous in the annals of civil engineering.

Thursday, July 12.—The cable fleet set sail at 8 P.M. for the rendezvous off the buoy that held the shore-end. No sooner were we outside the harbour of Berehaven, than we were enveloped in a dense white fog, so that all the ships were obscured, and the frequent use of fog-horns and whistles was rendered necessary. Altogether, we spent rather a noisy night; and the reflection, 'that if the fog did not clear off before morning, the finding of the buoy would be an impossibility,' did not serve to add to our comfort or raise our spirits.

Towards morning the fog cleared off. The buoy had not yet been sighted, and people were beginning to make awkward surmises, when the *Raccoon* signalled that she saw the buoy, and a few minutes afterwards the man on the look-out made the same

report. I dare say that there are many who imagine that picking up a buoy at sea is as easy as falling off a log. What is the amount of difficulty attending the process in a small ship, I know not, but I am certain, from personal observation, that with a ship of such enormous size as the *Great Eastern*, it is by no means easy. The buoy was sighted about 5.30 in the morning, and we fondly hoped that by breakfast-time the splice would have been made, and we should again be fairly on our journey. Round and round the buoy we dodged till 10 A.M., when Captain Anderson at length succeeded in getting the ship into a position favourable for the engineers to do their part of the work. A chain connected with the picking-up engine in the stern was passed by means of a rope to the buoy, and there made fast by one of the cable-hands—who had been sent previously in a boat for that purpose—to the bridle-chain of the buoy. This being accomplished, the buoy itself was cast adrift, and the cable remained attached to the chain that had been conveyed to it from the ship. The process of hauling-in now commenced, and the shore-end of the cable of 1866 made its appearance over the stern of the *Great Eastern* at 11 A.M., ship's time. The splice was at once commenced, and every one took up their respective positions, to be in readiness when the paying-out commenced.

While the splice is being made, I will ask the reader to accompany me round the ship, and inspect the machinery and appliances necessary for laying an Atlantic cable. As Mrs Glasse (or Mr Glass) would say: 'First catch your cable'; so I will give a short description of that world-famous rope. On looking at it in section, we see in the centre the bright copper conductor, consisting of seven copper-wires—six laid round one. Surrounding this is the insulator, four or five layers of gutta-percha, with a thin layer of Chatterton's compound between each layer of gutta-percha. The part described is called the core, and outside the core comes the external protection, which keeps the core from injury, and serves to give strength and durability to the whole. This consists of ten galvanised iron-wires enveloped in white Manila hemp. The diameter of the cable is 14 inches, and that of the core $\frac{1}{2}$ inch. The cable was stored in three enormous iron-tanks—'fore,' 'main,' and 'after,' situate as their names denote. The main-tank was rather bigger than the other two, it contained 864 miles of cable, coiled in 209 flasks; the height of the entire coil being 17 feet 8½ inches. The diameter of the tank was 56 feet 9 inches, and that of the 'eye,' or centre of the coil, 9 feet 8 inches. The after-tank held 839·637 miles, and the fore-tank 670·535 miles, making, in all three tanks, 2374 miles of cables.

Let us next take the paying-out machinery. In the tank stand some twenty men, all arrayed in canvas-dresses without pockets, and boots which have no nails in the soles. Their duty is to ease away each coil of rope from its fellows when its turn comes to be paid out; to give notice of mile-marks on the cable, that they may be recorded by the clerk at the paying-out gear; and to keep a sharp look-out that no mishap befall the precious rope, either by accident or malice. The cable passes from the tank over a light iron 'spider-wheel,' deeply grooved, and then along a long iron trough until it reaches the paying-out machine proper. This consists, firstly, of six grooved-wheels, over which the cable passes. Each of these six

wheels is provided with a 'jockey-wheel,' which is situated above the grooved-wheel, and rides on the cable as it passes onward. Each jockey-wheel is provided with a lever and weight, by means of which it can be made to exert various degrees of pressure on the cable, and each grooved-wheel is capable of being impeded in its rate of revolution by means of a brake-wheel, the brake of which can be screwed up to various degrees of tension.

After passing over the grooved wheels, the cable reaches the 'drum,' round which it passes four times. This drum is a wheel about four feet in diameter, and nine inches in breadth. Connected with the drum are two wheels of the same dimensions, round which are put powerful brake-straps, which, by being screwed up or loosened, can either accelerate or impede its motion. After passing round the drum, the cable goes over two grooved wheels, raised two or three feet from the deck, and placed about twenty feet apart. Midway between these two wheels, the rope passes under the wheel of the dynamometer. This dynamometer-wheel is free to move in a vertical direction, being enclosed in an iron frame, and can be weighted to any amount. As the strain on the cable is greater, so the dynamometer wheel rises higher in its iron frame, and the height to which it rises is shewn on a scale, on which is calculated the exact strain in hundredweights which a certain height indicates. According to the weight on the dynamometer, so the scale for demonstrating the pressure is altered. After passing through what may be called the 'dynamometer' system of wheels, the cable traverses a deeply-grooved wheel in the extreme stern of the ship, and disappears in the sea, forming as it goes an angle of about forty-five degrees or less, with a line drawn vertically from the deck of the ship. By means of a powerful engine, constructed by Messrs Penn of Greenwich, the paying-out apparatus can be reversed, and made to pick up, and in this manner the shore-end of the cable was got on board the ship.

Having described the various mechanical contrivances for paying out a cable, let us take a look into the testing-room on deck, and see what they are about there. The chief occupation of those on duty seems to be to keep an eye on Professor Thomson's galvanometer, which gives instantaneous warning if any fault occurs in the insulation of the 'conductor.' For the benefit of those who are electrically ignorant, we will make a small digression to explain the meaning of the term 'insulation,' and we humbly beg our scientific readers to skip the following paragraph.

Copper is one of the best conductors of electricity known to us, and hence the choice of it for the conductor of the Atlantic cable. Water is also a very good conductor. If, therefore, the water were to gain access to the copper conductor, the electric current would escape, as it were, into the sea, instead of traversing the whole length of the cable. It becomes necessary, therefore, to keep the copper wire out of reach of water, or, in fact, of any other conductor of electricity; and for this purpose it is completely encased in a non-conductor or insulator. Gutta-percha is one of the best insulators known and is exclusively used for that purpose by the Telegraph Construction Company, and, as on the present occasion, has always been used (as the insulator for Atlantic telegraphs. As long as the gutta-percha insulator remains entire, the insulation is, practically speaking, perfect; but if the

insulator be faulty, the insulation becomes defective, and the defect at once becomes evident in the testing-room, where the test for insulation is being constantly applied by means of an ingenious instrument, invented by Professor Thomson, and known as Thomson's Galvanometer. If a wire or nail be driven through the cable, and touch the conductor, the insulation at once suffers, and the fact becomes known instantaneously in the testing-room, and it is the duty of the electrician on watch to give warning to all parts of the ship. By touching a handle, an electric bell is made to ring violently in the tank and at the paying-out gear, and at the same time a gong is struck which can be heard all over the ship, and gives notice to the officer on duty to stop the engines immediately.

Having given these explanations, let us go and see how they have been getting on with the splice. What is vulgarly called the splice consists of two separate parts, the *joint* and the *splice*. It is the business of the joiner to form a union between the copper conductors, and to cover the same with layers of gutta-percha; while the splicer's duty is to intertwine the strands of wire and hemp in such a way that the two parts of the cable shall hold firmly together. While we have been talking, this task has been completed, and the splicer, with a smiling face, is seen with his 'serving mallet' in hand giving the final touches to his work. By 2-40, ship's time, all was ready. Mr Canning gave the order to 'stand by' and 'look out.' The stoppers are let go, the splice passes over the stern of the ship, the order is given to go-ahead, and the next moment we are fairly started on our mission to connect two continents by an electric wire.

As we steamed slowly a-head, we gave a hearty cheer, and fired two guns as a signal to the other ships that all was well. H.M.S. *Racoon* fired a parting gun, and manned her rigging, and in another minute had set her canvas and was sailing away from us towards Valentia. It had been a very gloomy morning, with a persistent drizzling rain, which had effectually damped everything, including the spirits of most on board, but just as we got under-way, the sun, who had so sulkily hidden his face from us, gave a transitory peep from behind his dense cloudy curtain, as if to wish us God-speed on our anxious journey. It had been a time full of anxiety for everyone concerned, and the reader may imagine the deep sense of relief which seemed to pervade all on board as they watched the Atlantic cable of 1866 passing noiselessly and almost imperceptibly from our stern, to kiss the deep Atlantic waves, beneath whose ruffled surface it was destined to remain, as we all fervently hoped, for ever.

HAIRDRESSERS.

THE ancient art of hairdressing is essentially human. Other animals may vie with, or even surpass us, in some of the pursuits of life. The mole, the rabbit, the ant-bear, and fifty other dumb miners are our masters in all that relates to shafts and tunnels. Our nets are no match for the spider's web; our engineering skill seems poor beside that of the mason-wasp and the honey-bee, and the little nautilus will ride out a squall that swamps an Indianman. But to man alone belongs the art of dressing the hair, and it would be hard for Professor Darwin to point out the gradual stages by which the gorilla learned to adorn and divide the

luxuriant ringlets that had replaced its rough shock of bristles. It is to hoary Egypt, foster-mother of all science, that we must turn for the first glimpse of the barber. To this day, the wall-paintings on obelisk, and cave, and temple, in Luxor and Philæ, in glowing colours yet undimmed, tell us of his labours. Of the artist himself, we know little. But it was a cunning hand that built up, lock by lock, those towering diadems of hair, the pride of Egyptian fine ladies three thousand years ago. They glimmer on the walls still, like painted ghosts, those shadowy beauties of Pharaoh's court, seated at their eternal banquets, smiling wanly upon us across the gulf of time. But whose was the skill that piled those mighty structures of frizzled curls, so fresh yet in their portraiture that the scent of the heavy eastern perfumes, the nard, the myrrh, the frankincense, seems almost to reach our senses as we gaze. Probably, if not a priest—and priests, themselves shaven, filled many an office more lucrative than dignified—the barber was a slave.

A slave, beyond question, was the adroit attendant who plied the scissors in the palaces of Assyrian monarchs, Medish princes, and Persian satraps, successively. The Great King went to war attended by a swarm of hairdressers, cooks, jugglers, men of music and men of magic, and of these the barber did not rank lowest in the scale. He was usually a Greek, for the suppleness of Grecian will and the fire of Grecian wit were preferred to the obsequious dullness of the more solemn oriental. In Greece itself, the profession first acquired that repute for liveliness, garrulity, and inquisitiveness, which has adhered to its members in all climates and in all ages.

Men of the same calling are often strangely alike; thus, the barbers of Spanish story and those of the *Arabian Nights* are identical. What if one tonsor wore a turban, and the other a Catalan cap, if one prayed to the Prophet, and the other implored St Jago de Compostella? For all these trifling differences, the men were twin-brothers, smart, pert human jackdaws, saucily hopping through life, prying into every dark corner where a secret lay hid, and remorselessly chattering about the same when the riddle had been read. The classic barber was not a whit inferior in these respects to his Christian and Mohammedan congeners. In spite of his toga and his sandals, the capillary artists of Bagdad and Seville might have hailed him as a man and a hairdresser. The story of the Athenian fleet coming, beaten, to its anchorage at the Piræus, and of how the wise resolve of the government to keep the bad news from reaching Athens was set at nought because a sailor entered a barber's shop to be shaved, and the shaver ran swiftly to the city, prattling of the defeat to all who cared to hear, is one that might have belonged to Andalusia or to Rumili, as well as to old Hellas.

No doubt but that, with the early Greeks as well as with the Romans of both empires, the bath, of which the hairdresser was in some sense the prime minister, filled a much more important part than any corresponding institution does with us. We domestic Northerners, on whose minds the merits of soap and water are only just beginning to dawn, and who need to have little books written to tell us how and why to wash, can hardly comprehend what the bath was to a countryman of Caracalla or of Justinian. A state of society in which the very poorest were daily laved and shampooed, oiled and rubbed with pumice-stone, scented, shaved, curled,

and joint-cracked, and turned out trim and clean from the splendid marble portico of the great public palace, would appear to us Utopian for luxury, however distasteful some of the details of this toilet might appear to our nineteenth century notions; but to the Roman of Old or New Rome, such a system of ablutions was not a luxury only, but a necessary of life, only second to bread and shows. Never, perhaps, were barbers so plentiful, never was the demand for their services so great, as in the two great cities that housed their pleasure-loving millions beside the Tiber and the Bosphorus.

The hair-dresser of the middle ages occupied a different position. He was no longer a slave. No patrician, with a broad hem of purple around his snowy robe, could order him to be flung to the lampreys or chained in the mill. On the other hand, the bath, that vast manufactory of clean fellow-creatures from the raw material of unwashed humanity, had vanished into the limbo of the past. Washing, throughout Christendom, was thoroughly out of fashion. There was deemed to be something paganish in the practice: Moors washed; the miscreant Turk was understood to bathe his heathen body every day in the year. Even the Jew had a character for cleanliness, that served to render the bath still more odious in the eyes of the faithful. When there was held to be some mystic connection between holiness and squalor, and when the dirtiest of hermits were most sure of saintly honours after death, neglect of the person became exalted into a virtue, and the barber was decidedly at a discount.

But the medieval hairdresser had two strings to his bow. The more ornamental part of his professional arts might languish in the cold shade of popular disfavour, but in the ills to which flesh is heir, he had a never-failing mine of profit. After the pattern of the tonsor of *Hudibras*, he not only shaved, but also

Drew teeth, and breathed a vein.

He was a member of the ancient and respected mystery of barber-surgeons. At his door hung the burnished brass basin, a sample of which dear old Quixote too hastily took for Mambrino's golden helmet, and which, still in a miniature form, swings before the shops of some continental brethren of the razor. Above the brass basin a red rag was hung, to remind those who wanted to be bled that the practitioner within could use the lancet; and as bleeding was once an approved remedy for every ailment, from low spirits to a severe cold, the lancet probably brought more grist to the barber's mill than did his shears and curling-tongs.

So far as we can tell, the hairdresser of the feudal days was graver than those who preceded or followed him. He was more of a surgeon than of a barber. Bone-setting, stanching wounds, plastering broken heads, were employments calculated rather to make him serious than jocund. He was a dentist, too, and exercised a rough despotism over the aching jaws of his afflicted neighbours. In fact, he appears to have been a person rather important than entertaining, and to be more associated with times of suffering than with seasons of merriment.

In the East, meanwhile, the hairdresser kept up his old character for talkative, light-hearted industry. No Hindu village was without its barber, paid, like the watchman, the sweeper, and the postman, out of the funds of the rustic community. In China, the barber was, and is, a merry, impudent fellow,

plying his trade in the streets, and driving noisy bargains with pig-tailed, sly-eyed customers as to the amount of copper cash that should remunerate him for the long and troublesome process of a Cathay toilet. The Persian barber, the Moslem barber of India, and the Turkish barber, haunt caravanserais, and usually retain a room in some half-ruined khan, where they can shave and shampoo the newly-arrived traveller; while the hairdresser of Tibet, who is probably a lama, hangs about the monasteries of that region of Buddhist monks.

Very gradually, as civilisation made progress, the wholly ignorant leech of the middle ages gave place to the partially informed doctor of the revival of learning, and the barber-surgeon lost the more lucrative of his two callings. In all the long interval between the classic period and the extraordinary outburst of enlightenment in the sixteenth century, the profession had produced but one historical celebrity, the notorious Olivier le Dain, or Le Mauvais, barber-minister of wily Louis XI. The hairdresser, if not a brilliant member of the commonwealth, was an extremely useful one, like his contemporaries, the smith and the wright. But he seldom figures in old ballads or stories; and the jongleur, the minstrel, and the very tailor that roamed the country with a needle-case, thimble, and shears, were by far greater sources of entertaining gossip than the barber could profess to be.

It is worth notice that Shakspeare's barbers are not merry dogs, retailing jests and anecdotes to levee after levee of customers. His grave-diggers, tapsters, and artisans are jocular enough; but the knight of the razor had still, in the Elizabethan age, something of the solemnity of a medicine-man adhering to him. By degrees, in Italy, Spain, France, and more sparingly in England, the brilliant butterfly of hairdressing shook itself clear of the gloomy husk of medieval surgery. Then was developed that bright *Figaro* whom Beaumarchais placed upon the stage, active, inquisitive, impishly jovial, with tongue and heels as unquiet as quicksilver, the sort of barber that might suggest to a believer in metempsychosis that the spirit of a magpie had been translated into the form of a man.

The hairdresser has been invariably loyal. His sympathy with courts and pageantry and the pomps of life is too deep to be shaken. When the Cavaliers of King Charles, with scented love-locks hanging down over their steel breastplates, were arrayed against an army of close-cropped Puritans in order of battle, there could be little doubt to which side the barber's affections would incline. Later, the full flowing periwig, with its ample cascade of artificial curls, the Ramillies and brigadier wigs, the toupee, and the powdered hair that lent such brilliancy to rouged cheeks and bright eyes, made the hairdresser of the eighteenth century a busy and valued artist. He had privileges, at anyrate in France, where he was allowed to wear a sword, and to dress in gay colours, as gentlemen did; and in 1789, a formidable riot was put down by a body of Parisian barbers rallying out, rapier in hand, to retaliate upon the revolutionary mob who had murdered one of their number.

The hairdresser, it must be owned, has sometimes abused his power. He whose privilege it was from time immemorial to take even royalty by the nose, and whose victims, once wrapped in the long white cloth, are helpless till the shaving or snipping be complete, has occasionally proved a tyrant

indeed, not only deafening the ears of the captive with his discursive talk, but levying black-mail from him by an almost enforced sale of rhinoceros' marrow and ostrich grease. It needs great moral courage to reject those wonderful oils and pomades which the hairdresser vaunts so glibly, while literally in his hands, and, in a capillary sense, at his mercy. But this illicit sale of unctuous goods to intimidated purchasers is fast growing obsolete. It was once believed that some peculiar virtue resided in bear's grease, and some hairdressers went so far as to keep one or two specimens of the ursine tribe chained up in a cellar, whence distant roarings reached the ears of a credulous public. But in these more modern days, revolving machinery for hair-brushing, or some novelty of that kind, proves more attractive than any laudation of oil, grease, or marrow, were it of the unicorn itself, and much of the empiricism of the hairdresser's art is gone for ever.

BROUGHT TO LIGHT.

CHAPTER XXXVII.—THE FAMILY VAULT.

THE vestry of the little church of Belair was a chilly and desolate-looking room, with its flagged floor and whitewashed walls; with its straight-backed oaken chairs, and its little iron-barred window; and not all the efforts of the rheumatic old sexton, who had lighted it up with a couple of wax-candles and a sputtering fire of damp wood, could make it seem even tolerably cheerful. Hardly had six o'clock done striking, when the vicar and Sir Michael arrived. Five minutes later came Mr Greenhough and Mr Penning, thickly powdered with snow-flakes, they having walked down together, arm-in-arm, from the Hall. When all were assembled, the vicar opened a private cupboard, and silently poured out four glasses of the excellent port of which a small supply was always kept in stock; and in silence it was discussed.

'I named the hour of six as that for our meeting here,' said the vicar, 'because I thought that what we are about to do had better be done under the friendly shade of darkness. Whatever may be the result of our visit here this evening, we need not take the public into our confidence, unless after-circumstances should compel us to do so. Jenkins, the sexton, is discretion itself; and the position of this church is so solitary, that I hardly think it likely that we shall be observed by any inquisitive busybodies from the outside. And now, gentlemen, if you are ready, we will proceed to business.'

Jenkins being summoned, produced a huge horn lantern, which he proceeded to light up with one of the wax-candles; and then taking a large key from its nail on the wall, he led the way out of the church; and so by a narrow gravelled path round one corner of the edifice to a spot where an iron door let into the wall, with a grating above it, and reached by a descent of three or four steps, indicated the entrance to the family vault of the Spencelaughs. The old man turned the creaking key, and pushed back the heavy door. Contrasted against the whiteness outside, for the snow-flakes were still falling steadily, the entrance to the vault looked like the black cavernous vestibule to some old-world dungeon, some place of torture and imprisonment in years long past. Stopping for a moment to indulge in what might be appropriately termed a churchyard cough, the old sexton picked up his lantern again, and went slowly in, followed,

one after one, by the others. If the atmosphere had seemed cold and marrow-chilling in the room above, it was twice as cold and marrow-chilling in this cavern of dead people. Ranged on the marble slabs which ran round three sides of the vault were the black coffins of several generations of dead and gone Spencelaughs, all with a terrible sameness about them, seen by that dim light, as though they were merely the multiplied coffins of one dead person, who loved a frequent change of domicile. Ah, no! some three or four of them were those of children—blossoms plucked at their sweetest, while somewhat of Heaven's dew still lingered upon them.

Although so few hours had passed since the funeral of Sir Philip, all traces of that ceremony had already been removed. The great flag over the centre of the vault had been put back into its place, and the baronet had found a last home on the slab appointed for him. A hushed and solemn feeling crept over the hearts of the four visitors as they gazed around. In the reverent presence of the dead, all heads were uncovered.

'This, sir, is the coffin you want to examine,' said the sexton in dry creaking tones, as though the hinges of his voice were in want of oiling. 'This is Master Arthur's coffin.'

And with that his old arms encircled a child's coffin, and lifted it on to the black marble table which stood in the centre of the vault. As he did so, a wreath of yellow everlastings slipped off it, and fell to the ground.

'The poor child was not quite forgotten,' said the vicar, as he picked up the wreath.—'By whom was this token placed here, Jenkins?'

'By Miss Frederica, sir. Every eighteenth of October—that was the day Master Arthur died—she comes and puts a fresh wreath on his coffin. She has never once missed doing it all these years. You see, sir, she and Master Arthur were play-fellows when they were children together, and very fond of one another. Lord! I remember them both coming hand in hand to church, as if it was only t'other day.—Master Arthur died when Miss Freddy was away from home; and the first time she came here after she got back, I thought the pretty darling's heart would have broke. However, she got over it in time; but every year since then, she has brought a wreath like what you see, and put it with her own hands on the coffin, and said a little prayer to herself, and then gone quietly away.'

'You have usually a good memory for such things,' said the vicar: 'tell me, do you remember the funeral of Master Arthur Spencelaugh?'

'That I do, sir,' said the old man eagerly. 'I recollect it as well as if it had happened only yesterday; and a shabby funeral it were, though it's I that says so. Sir Philip was away in India at that time, and Lady Spencelaugh was too ill to come; so there was just nobody to see the last of the poor lad but that lame and ugly Dr Kreefe, and a couple of undertaker's men. Mr Rolfe, he was curate here at that time, and a fast reader he was surely; and he soon gabbled through the Service; and they all seemed glad to hurry the poor little chap out of sight.—Before Sir Philip came home, there was a pretty white tablet to the memory of Master Arthur put up by my Lady, just over the family pew; and many a time has Sir Philip come here by himself to read what there is written on it about his boy; and sometimes he would say: "It was a sad day's work for me, Jenkins, when my poor Arthur died."'

The old man paused, more from lack of breath than want of words. It might be nothing more than fancy, but to every one there it seemed as if the light shed by the lantern was slowly growing dimmer and less able to pierce the gloom of the vault, which seemed to hold within its chill precincts the concentrated darkness of many years—a darkness that thickened the air, and was infinitely more intense than the blackness of the blackest night in the churchyard without.

'Eh, sirs! but it's a poor light to work by,' said Jenkins; and so saying, he opened the door of the lantern, and took out the candle to snuff it; but as he did so, a sudden gust of mingled wind and snow burst through the grating over the iron door, and extinguished the light, and sweeping through the vault, rushed out again by the way it had come; and as it did so, it seemed to the excited fancy of more than one there present as though the silent people lying so near them turned over in their resting-places, and whispered uneasily among themselves.

Jenkins was the only one entirely unmoved by this little accident. The old sexton was as much at home among dead people as though he were smoking his pipe in his own chimney-corner; and he probably felt a sort of kindly contempt for such of them as rested humbly in the churchyard, as a class of individuals who had a weakness for intruding their bones on the notice of survivors. He now proceeded deliberately to strike a match on the sole of his boot, and to re-light the candle, muttering something to himself meanwhile about its being pleasant seasonable weather.

'Am I to begin, sir?' he said to the vicar, when he had put the candle out of the way of a similar accident. 'I have got my screw-driver here ready.'

'One cannot help feeling somewhat reluctant to intrude upon the sacred repose of the dead,' said the vicar, addressing his companions. 'But in an exceptional case like the present one, where the truth cannot be arrived at by ordinary means, I think we may consider that we are fully justified in taking such a step.—Jenkins, you may begin.'

Jenkins whipped the screw-driver nimbly out of his pocket, and then proceeded to rub his nose with it appreciatively, while regarding the coffin with a critical eye: evidently he had a ghastly sort of relish for the task before him.

'My screw, gentlemen, don't seem inclined to bite,' said Jenkins, speaking thus of the nail. But at last the screw did bite, yielding slowly and grudgingly to the force of the implement. 'A famous fellow!' said the old man, holding up the nail between his thumb and finger. 'One of Death's double-teeth—he, he!'

All present turned suddenly. They felt, by the quick keen rush of snow-laden air, that the iron door was being opened by some one from the outside. They turned, to see a black snow-sprinkled figure, half standing, half crouching, at the entrance to the vault. It was a woman's figure; but the face was hidden, in part by the black hood drawn closely over the head, and in part by the white delicate hands.

'Oh, not too late! say that I am not too late!' It was Lady Spencelaugh's voice, but strangely altered. She staggered forward as she spoke, like one suddenly struck blind, till she stood by the table in the centre of the vault on which rested the little coffin. 'Do not touch that!' she exclaimed. 'It contains not what you seek—what it does

contain matters not. I confess everything. Arthur Spencelaugh did not die. I sent him away to White Grange, from which place he was taken to America by the Kreefes. I wanted the title and estates for my own son. I have carried the wretched secret about with me for twenty years, only to have it wrenched from me at the moment the reward seemed in my grasp. Pardon me—pity me, if you will: I care not: I only ask to die—to die—to die!'

As the last words came almost inaudibly from her lips, she sank in a dead faint on the floor of the vault. Mr Greenhough ran to support her; and then, with the assistance of the other gentlemen, she was carried out, and through the churchyard, and into the vestry. Scarcely had they got there with their burden, when Mrs Winch made her appearance. That faithful retainer, having left Lady Spencelaugh for a few minutes, and missing her when she returned, had divined, as by instinct, whither her Ladyship had gone, and had at once hurried after her. Finding, after a time, that Lady Spencelaugh shewed signs of returning consciousness, the gentlemen left her to the care of the landlady, with a promise to send a carriage down from the Hall.

As Mr Greenhough and Mr Penning walked back through the snowy park, said the former: 'Even if all this be true that we have just heard, it by no means proves that your man is the genuine Simon Pure.'

Mr Penning smiled a little loftily. 'We shall see what we shall see,' he said, with the air of an oracle; and with that, as by mutual consent, the affair was put on one side for the morrow's settlement; and Greenhough related a capital story of a hanging judge, which Penning capped with 'a good thing, sir, told me by Dawkins, Q. C.'

'Cheer up, my Lady,' whispered Mrs Winch reassuringly in the ear of the prostrate woman, whose head lay on her shoulder. 'All is not lost, even after what you have told them. The game is still our own. You remember the words of the telegram: "*The Ocean Child* has founded with all on board." Nothing can keep Mr Gaston out of the title and the estates; and, for his sake, what you have said to-night will be hushed up and forgotten.'

CHAPTER XXXVIII.—WAITING FOR JERRY.

The clock had just struck nine on the evening of the day which had witnessed such strange events at Belair, and Gurney Brackenridge was sitting at home in slippered ease, concocting for himself a tumbler of his favourite beverage. He was alone in the house, for Hannah had got a few days' holiday to visit some friends, and the chemist's domestic comforts were looked after by Mrs Jake-way in the interim.

The world had prospered somewhat with Gurney Brackenridge since we saw him last. Although he had never received the three hundred pounds which had been promised him in case he should succeed in a certain service, which, as events turned out, it had been found impossible to perform, he had yet been handsomely paid for his trouble in other ways, and especially for the neat detective-like style in which he had tracked John English from Pevsey Bay to a berth on board the *Ocean Child*, fast clipper-ship, bound for New York. Then, again, it was satisfactory to know that the widow's long-standing promise to marry him was likely at

last to have a speedy fulfilment. Mrs Winch had been in strangely good spirits ever since the receipt of his telegram containing the news of the loss of the *Ocean Child*, which had foundered a few days after leaving the Mersey, and while Brackenridge was still in Liverpool. The first of May had been fixed for the forthcoming nuptials; and, all things considered, the chemist ought to have been, if not in a happy, at least in a contented frame of mind. But such was by no means the case. The old sore was still festering secretly, and he refused to let it heal. He felt himself to be an ill-used and terribly aggrieved individual, because his future wife still persisted in her resolution not to enlighten him as to the nature of the secret bond which held her and Lady Spencelaugh so firmly together, and mixed up the interests of both so inexplicably with those of John English. Not only did the widow refuse to enlighten him now, but she gave him, besides, distinctly to understand that even after marriage, the secret would remain as heretofore her own property, and be in nowise shared by him; and he was too well acquainted with the resolute character of Martha Winch not to feel certain that she would keep her word in this respect in spite of all that he might say or do. Therefore did Gurney Brackenridge brood darkly over the slight which, as he conceived, was put upon him. Besides, how utterly and inconceivably foolish on the part of any one in possession of a secret affecting the happiness and welfare of another, and that other a person high up in the social scale, one who could well afford to pay for the keeping of it, to allow such a golden chance to slip, when it might be had for the mere grasping! It was not the chemist's style of doing business. To him it would have been as a little gold-mine; as a perennial source of income; bringing with it possibilities of unlimited cessation from work, with French brandy in unstinted quantity, and an exciting life in London or Paris.

His dark reverie was suddenly put to flight by the familiar click of the garden gate, followed next minute by a loud double-knock at the front door. 'That's Jerry's knock, I'll wager anything. What can the fool want with me to-night?'

He got up, and opened the door with a cordial greeting, for he always made a point of keeping in Jerry's good graces. 'What has brought you here, my man, at this time of the night?' said Brackenridge, as Jerry sat down bashfully on the proffered chair, while his bright eyes roved purposelessly about the little room.

'Jerry has just come from Belair,' said the lad. 'He has got to post a letter for my Lady; and he was to leave another here on the way.—There were five black crows sitting all of a row as Jerry went through the park this afternoon: that means that something bad is going to happen to somebody.'

The chemist held out his hand impatiently for the letter, and Jerry, after a little fumbling, produced it. Brackenridge at once recognised the widow's writing. He tore it open, and read as under:

'DEAR GURNEY—I have been up at Belair all day, and am just going home, very tired, and far from well. I send you this by Jerry, to save you the trouble of walking down to-night, as I shall at once go to bed on reaching home. Look in, however, in the morning, as you go to business. Sincerely yours, M. W.'

'I might have known better,' murmured the chemist bitterly to himself as he refolded the note,

'than to think that she would let out anything of importance to me.'

He paused for a moment, with the letter still between his fingers. What was it that Jerry had said? That he was taking to the post a letter written by Lady Spencelaugh! Any letter written by Lady Spencelaugh might, perchance, contain some reference to that secret which, day and night, weighed so heavily on the chemist's mind. Such being the case, supposing that he, Brackenridge, could get at the contents of this letter, might he not, by such means, chance to light on the key of the secret, and so, despite the widow's efforts, constitute himself master of the situation? The thought was a grand one—one that made his blood flush hotly in his veins; but how to carry it out? Jerry's incorruptibility as a messenger was known to him of old; by artifice only could he hope to obtain possession of the letter. But how? He mixed himself another tumbler of his favourite stimulant, in the hope that it might tend to sharpen his dulled wits, chatting meanwhile with Jerry on any indifferent topic that came uppermost.—Ah! an excellent thought! Suggested by the Fiend, doubtless; but none the worse for that.

'And is Mogaddo quite well?' said the chemist, changing the conversation abruptly.

'The salubrity of his lordship's health is wonderful,' answered Jerry.

'Then he pines no longer for the loss of the pretty Pipanta?' said Brackenridge.

'Alas! no. The darling is forgotten already,' said the simpleton mournfully.—'forgotten by all but Jerry. But the memory of Pipanta is still dear to Jerry's heart.'

'Would Jerry like to see his Pipanta again?' asked the chemist.

'Pipanta is dead, and buried under the Witches' Oak, and will never dance to her lord's music again. The great Katafango charmed her life out of her. And now, only the Lord Mogaddo is left, who whispers strange secrets in Jerry's ear at the full o' the moon.'

'Yes, but I can conjure back the ghost of Pipanta, so that Jerry can see it, but not touch it,' said the chemist.

'But Jerry is afraid of ghosts,' urged the lad. 'Jerry will be a ghost himself some day, and dance at midnight under the Witches' Oak, and frighten folk till they go crazy. He! he! a grand life! a rare life!'

'But it would not frighten you to see Pipanta,' said Brackenridge. 'You shall see her dance as she used to do, on that window-blind.'

'But you won't let her come near Jerry?' said the lad with a look of terror.

'Don't be afraid, man,' said the chemist. 'I've no wish to harm you.' Speaking thus, he opened a door which led into another room; and after an absence of about half a minute, he returned, carrying something white in his hand—a handkerchief saturated with some liquid which diffused a faint, peculiar odour through the room. Jerry's eyes were fixed on him suspiciously. 'Tut, man! you're not afraid of me, I hope,' said the chemist with a boisterous laugh. 'You haven't got the pluck of a mouse. Chut! how you tremble. I tell you again, you have nothing to fear. Now keep your eyes fixed firmly on the blind of the window opposite to you, while I hold this for you to smell at, and presently you will see the figure of the pretty Pipanta begin to shew itself on the

blind—faint at first, and then clearer and clearer, till you will see her as plainly as though she were alive before you.'

Even before he had done speaking, he had placed himself behind Jerry's chair, and half encircling the lad with one arm, pressed the saturated handkerchief to his nostrils with the other. Jerry made one or two abortive efforts to get away, but the chemist's iron arm held him remorselessly; and in a few seconds the lad's eyes closed softly, his head drooped backward against Brackenridge's chest, while an expression strangely sweet and solemn diffused itself over his face, which but a minute before had been troubled by a dim suspicion of the chemist's good faith, mingled with a vague dread of the coming apparition.

'Jericho! why, the lad's gone already!' said Brackenridge to himself. 'It doesn't take much to knock him over, anyhow.' Speaking thus, he flung the handkerchief to the other side of the room, and lifting Jerry in his arms, as easily as though he were a child, he deposited the unconscious lad on a sofa, with his head supported by the cushions. 'Now for the letter!' muttered Brackenridge. One by one Jerry's pockets were lightly examined, and then his hat; but the letter was nowhere to be found. 'It must be here,' murmured the chemist, as he proceeded to unbutton Jerry's waistcoat. And there it was; and there, too, was Jerry's pet, Mogaddo; and just as the chemist's fingers were on the point of grasping the paper, the reptile, lifting its head angrily from the folds of flannel in which it had been concealed, made a swift sudden dart, and bit Brackenridge in the wrist. The chemist drew back his hand with a fearful oath, but next instant he had seized the reptile firmly between his thumb and finger, and dragging it from its cozy nest, he carried it writhing across the room, and throwing open a back-window, hurled it with all his strength far out into the frosty night. His next proceeding was to take a piece of live-coal from the fire, and holding it with the tongs, to press it firmly on his wrist at the spot where the reptile had bitten it, till he had burned away the flesh almost to the bone. The agony was so intense that great drops of perspiration burst out on his forehead, and he bit his lip till he left a mark on it which was visible for several days. When he had put back the coal into the fire, he hastened to pour out and drink off half a tumbler of neat brandy; and after that he proceeded to bandage up his wrist, as well as he was able, with his disengaged hand.

Now for the letter. Poor Jerry still lay without sense or motion, utterly unconscious of the fate which had befallen his favourite. Brackenridge took the letter without fear. He saw, with some surprise, that the address was unmistakably in a man's writing; but as the envelope was merely fastened in the ordinary way, and not sealed, there would be no difficulty in mastering the contents. A little copper kettle was boiling cheerily by the fire, and all that it was requisite to do was to let the current of steam play on the gummed part of the envelope for a little while, and the thing was done. The chemist's fingers trembled a little as he took the folded paper out of the envelope, and turned to the lamp to read it.

Next moment, a wild intense pang of baffled rage and despair shot from the chemist's heart, and held him as though he were possessed by a demon; while from his lips, as blue as those of a dead man, proceeded a string of imprecations so intense and

dreadful that they could only make themselves heard in a sort of half-choked whisper. The letter was not from Lady Spencelaugh at all, but was merely a note from Sir Gaston to some friend in London, stating that, in consequence of certain unpleasant proceedings at home, he should not be able to keep an appointment as agreed upon. In the first access of his rage, the chemist crumpled up the letter between his fingers, and flung it into the fire, and was only roused to a sense of what he had done by seeing it burst into a blaze. The sight sobered him in an instant. What excuse could he possibly make to Jerry, who was the most faithful of messengers, for destroying the letter? There was only one excuse possible for him, and that was to deny ever having seen the letter—he could lie as hard as anybody if needs were—and to persuade the simpleton that he had lost it on the road from Belair. Yes, that was the only way practicable out of the confounded mess he had got himself into.

Going up to Jerry, he shook the unconscious lad roughly by the shoulder, and called him by name. But Jerry's sleep was far too sound to be broken by such simple means, or, indeed, by any earthly means whatever, as the chemist, with a horrible, sickening dread gnawing at his heart—a dread in comparison with which his previous anxiety about the letter had been as child's play—was not long in discovering. Again and again he cried aloud, with a strange agony in his voice: 'Jerry, Jerry! wake up, man—come, wake up!' but Jerry remained supremely indifferent to all such entreaties. Then the chemist tried to find his pulse, but there was no pulse to find. Next, in hot haste, he fetched a looking-glass out of another room, and held it over the lad's mouth; but obstinate Jerry refused to breathe ever so faintly: the glass remained unsullied. Not even the weakest heart-beat was perceptible to the fingers that hungered so keenly to detect it; the delicate mechanism had stopped for ever: Jerry was growing cold already.

Convinced at last that all his efforts at resuscitation were utterly useless, the chemist sat down with a bitter groan opposite poor dead Jerry; and taking his head between his hands, as though it were a loose portion of himself which might chance to fall off and get damaged, he contemplated his handiwork in silence. But presently he grew frightened. That same sweetly solemn look still rested on the face of the dead lad, and it troubled the chemist wofully; it spoke of something—of a heavenly peace and serenity—so entirely beyond his ordinary experiences, that he could not bear to contemplate it any longer. With that instinctive desire which we all have to cover up our lost ones, he fetched a clean cloth out of a clothes-press in the next room, and spread it gently over the face of the dead boy. It may be that at that moment some pang of regret, pure and simple, for the friend he had lost—a friend, even if a simpleton—made its way to the chemist's hardened heart. If such were the case, it was quenched next moment in burning anxiety for his own safety; for suddenly, and without any preliminary warning, such as the swinging of the garden gate, or the noise of footsteps on the gravel, there came a loud single knock at the front door—a knock which echoed dully through the quiet house, but which fell like a sound of dire omen on the chemist's guilty heart. He staggered back as though smitten by an invisible hand. Who could possibly want him at so late an hour? Suppose he

were to pretend not to be at home? But that would never do, because one of the windows of the room looked out at the front of the house, and the tell-tale lamp shining through the blind betrayed his presence to all who might pass that way. He was still considering within himself, when the summons came again, louder and more imperative than before. With a trembling hand he took up the lamp, and carried it into the next room; and turning the key softly on that terrible Thing lying there so mute and moveless, he advanced on tip-toe to the front door, and putting his mouth to the keyhole, called out in a strange hoarse voice: 'Who's there? and what do you want?'

'Open the door, Brack, my boy, and you'll soon find out,' replied a voice from the outside, in accents rendered slippery by the imbibition of more strong drink than the speaker could conveniently carry.

Brackenridge at once recognised the voice as that of a lame cobbler named Griggs, a man known to everybody as one of the most drunken reprobates in Normanford; and he at once opened the door, first taking the precaution to put up the chain. 'Now, Griggs, what is it?' said the chemist, impatiently. 'Why do you come bothering me at this time of the night?'

'Well, I'm jiggered if that ain't cool!' said the cobbler, with a hiccup, as he swayed slightly to and fro on the step. 'Seeyhere. I don't want you, my buck, at any price: wouldn't have you a gift. Th' individle I want is m' friend, Jerry Winch. Here have I been waiting, waiting, waiting more 'n half-an-hour, and no signs of Jerry yet. It's tarnation cold standing out here, I can tell ye; so I want to know how much longer you are going to keep the lad.'

'Jerry Winch!' said the chemist, in a dismayed whisper. 'You are mistaken; Jerry Winch is not here.'

'Oh, fie now, Mishter B.! Very naughty to tell fibs,' said the cobbler, with an emphatic smack of his drunken lips. 'As if I didn't see him with my own blessed eyes come in at this very door! Seeyhere, now; this is how it is,' he went on, adjusting his balance to a nicety against the doorpost. 'I've been out 'n business this afternoon, and coming home, I found the roads uncommonly shlippery—so shlippery, that when I met my friend Jerry, who happened to be coming the same way, we agreed to walk arm-in-arm to keep one another up. Seeyhere, now. Jerry shlippped twice, but I picked him up and set him on his pins, and we were as right as ninnepence when we got here. Says young Flybysky to me: "I've got a letter for old B., and I must call and leave it. You wait here for me; I shan't be long; and then we'll go down the hill together." "All right, my turnip," says I; and away he goes, and I sees the door shut after him; and now you want to persuade me that he ain't here. It looks soapy.'

'Well, well,' said the chemist, in a perfect agony of bewilderment, 'I was perhaps wrong in saying that Jerry was not here.'

'In course you was,' interrupted the cobbler gravely.

'I ought to have said that I have got some important business to transact, in which I require Jerry's assistance. We shall not be done till a very late hour; in fact, Jerry will probably stay here all night; so it will be no use whatever your waiting for him any longer.'

'That's straightforward—that alters the case altogether,' said the cobbler. 'If Flybysky can't come, I must go without him. Seeyhere, now. I've been waiting here so long that the frost has got to my vitals, and in such a case brandy's the only cure.'

Anything to be relieved of this wretch's drunken maunderings! The brandy was quickly fetched, and eagerly drunk. After vowing that Brackenridge was a regular 'brick,' and insisting on a parting grasp of the hand, the cobbler turned to go. At the garden gate, he paused. 'Seeyhere, now. It looked soapy at first, didn't it?' he said, and with a last tipsey nod of the head, he disappeared down the road.

Having refastened the door, Brackenridge went back into the little room where he had left the lamp, and sat down to think. He must get away at once, that was very evident. When Jerry came to be inquired for in the morning, Griggs would remember everything: there would be no lapse of memory with regard to overnight events with such a confirmed toper as the cobbler. But for the cursed accident of this man's presence, Brackenridge felt that he might have hidden away the body, where, even if found, no suspicion would have attached to him in the matter. But such a course was now utterly out of the question. He must get away at once and for ever. To this dark ending had his scoundrelly arts brought him. An outcast and a murderer, ever dreading to feel the touch of Justice on his shoulder, he must go forth into the world, and try to seek out a new and obscure home where himself and his crimes were alike unknown.

After a time, he looked at his watch, and then he went upstairs, and hurriedly began to pack a small portmanteau. A few minutes were sufficient to accomplish this task; then he put on his overcoat, and a thick gray comforter, and a fishing-hat of brown felt; so dressed, no casual acquaintance whom he might chance to encounter would be likely to recognise him. This done, he took his portmanteau in his hand, and went quietly down stairs. He paused for a moment opposite the door of the room where the dead lad lay. His pocket-book was on the chimney-piece of that room; but not for the world dared he have gone in and got it. Leaving the lamp still burning, he stole out by way of the back-door, which he pulled to gently after him; and so away at a rapid pace down the snowy road. Already there was on him the sickening dread which would never utterly leave him again, and which every man feels when he first becomes a criminal—the dread of being taken.

MALVERN.

I DON'T know any place like Malvern, though no doubt there are scores; and if there are, what little chat I am now going to have with you about it will apply equally well to them, for I don't pretend to take the wind out of the sails of the local guide-book; indeed, I couldn't do it, for I don't know the names of the different summits in the range of hills of which the 'Beacon' is the chief. Nor can I tell you where to find the various wells, or which is which, or what they are respectively famous for. I have been staying here for a week, and have daily wandered over the broad slopes of grass, which rise some thousand feet above the town, and then shelve down into Herefordshire.

Sometimes we walk over and back again; sometimes we follow the edge of the ridge or backbone which here divides that county from Worcestershire, and tracking its successive humps for some way, descend into the flat, and, after lunch at a wayside inn, return to Malvern by the road. But, at any rate, it is a singular and interesting range of hills, and possesses, some say, the finest air and purest water in England. This may be. I have just come from grubbing about the slums of a crowded London district, with an eye and nose intent on everything offensive; and almost any country place would seem fresh and sweet to one lately engaged in anti-cholera sanitary visitations. Here the water tastes of nothing in particular, which is, I suppose, a good sign; certainly it is not so cold and sparkling as that from some of the worst London surface-wells, which are charged with gas which is more delicious to the sense than to the imagination. When you know what makes the water of those town-wells so bright and bubbling, they cease to be nice.

An acquaintance of mine, in a fashionable West-end street, had a pump on his premises of which he was immensely vain. Why, sir, the water was like champagne. He drank it himself; he drew glasses of it for his friends; he held it up to the light, and looked at it—full of bubbles; sharp, cold, clear. There never was such a jewel of a pump. He loved it. Presently, however, when Lord A——'s house, next door, was pulled down, and he found that my Lordship's drains had gone slap into his well, my friend ceased to enjoy the aristocratic liquor. There are no lordly sewers above the Malvern wells. The rock distils the rain from heaven, and it comes out in run-lets, which simply cool the tongue and quench the thirst. The air of the place is brisk and clean. When you walk along the ridge, it not only fills your lungs, but sweeps up over the green grass, and seems to find its way into every little gaping pore over your body. You feel as if you were furnished with a hundred mouths, all sucking in the breeze. It is sometimes, naturally, strong, and makes the wanderer on the hills bow to it; but its characteristic is freshness. Occasionally, when it blows from that quarter, you fancy you can taste the least dash of brine off the Bristol Channel; as a rule, however, if it smells of anything, it is of country-life. It picks up the air of the grass, the corn, and the leaves; it sweeps the fresh ploughed field and the meadow, and blows away every town-spun cobweb from your being.

The result of this pure air is said to be health. At any rate, it brings hunger. Malvern is a place for breakfast. You eat till you feel as if you ought to be ashamed of yourself; but you are not, and so you cut another slice of tongue or pigeon-pie, and ask for another cup of tea, and look pleasantly at the Worcestershire cream as it floats richly upon its surface, and smile upon society, and fall to again. You may take your luncheon with you to eat upon the hills. When you come back, you will find yourself ready for dinner. I am staying at the *Imperial Hotel*. People express their feelings aloud. Yesterday, at the table-d'hôte, an old gentleman opposite me said, authoritatively, as if it were a fact he had but lately discovered: 'Upon my word, —, I'm hungry.' Another on my left, one of the courses being rather slow in coming round, cried to the waiter: 'Bring me some bread to go on with.' Another guest,

who played as good a knife and fork as any, made the sole complaint I have heard since I have been here; it was this: 'I really think I must dine in the coffee-room; this table-d'hôte dinner reminds me of a school-feast every time I sit down'—an indirect but weighty compliment to the effect of Malvern air upon some fifty or sixty highly respectable middle-aged persons, who would be shocked at the thought of taking their food otherwise than in a calm and superior manner.

I need perhaps hardly tell you that, besides appetite, this place gives sleep. People sleep magnificently. You don't wake once. You go to bed early, and when you look at your watch the next morning, you are amazed. When I say you don't wake once, I forget myself. There is one drawback to the inn—it stands close by the station, and you may be roused by a passing night-train. But if it does wake you, it only reveals the depth of your slumber, into which you sink at once when the coughing, whistling monster has passed by. After a night or two, you do not hear it, but get your nine hours' sleep without a break.

Now, is not all this horribly sensual? Not a bit. I came here as a tired man. My doctor said: 'You are overdoing it; you must rest.' So I do nothing but breathe, and walk, and eat, and sleep; and, never knew a place better suited to help you in doing all these things. It 'knits up the ravelled sleeve of care' by day and night. There is nothing to do but rest. There are no artificial amusements. There is no theatre or assembly-room. A few men stray into the billiard-room belonging to the hotel after dinner, but they don't exert themselves. The other evening, I looked in, and there were some dozen sitting smoking on the sofas, looking at the idle empty table and cues. One or two made a remark with nothing in it. There is no conversation, no chess, no rattling of backgammon boxes. There is a piano in the drawing-room. It may be empty of wires; I have not heard its sound once. The inn is full, but in profound repose. The waiters' shoes do not creak. They do not bustle about with clattering plates and glasses. The bells don't ring—they give one 'ting,' and that is all. The easy-chairs in the reading-room are deep and soft. The sun shines in at the windows. Old gentlemen drop the *Times* on the floor and sleep in the afternoon. There are no magazines, no novels. There is nothing sensational. All rest. I was struck by the utter absence of all liveliness and intelligence in my fellow-guests when I arrived, but they are, I imagine, like myself—geniuses in suspense. This place is a parenthesis in intellectual exercise. The only sign of scientific appreciation of things by the visitors is their constant tapping of the barometer. There have been showers, and people tap the barometer in the hall till I believe the needle moves round incessantly. This morning a gentleman took a friend to task for his inquisitive tapping. 'My dear sir,' he said, 'you forget that that is a very delicate instrument. A barometer may generally dislike this perpetual summons, but ours here is used to it. I was waiting for my turn at tapping, for I find I can always make the needle move, if I tap long enough.' I moved it nearly two inches yesterday.

On a retrospect, I find I have said nothing about the scenery. Well, it is extensive. The hills go straight up out of the flats of Worcestershire, and when you climb them, you feel as if you were mounting the rigging of a ship. You look over a

green sea. They say you can make out portions of twelve or fourteen counties; I make out nothing. I sit on the top, and see beneath me a thousand hedged-in fields, brown, green, yellow. They fade off into blue in the dim distance. At one place in the horizon, I tell myself that a certain blotchiness in the air marks the 'Black Country,' and I believe I can thus fix the position of Birmingham; but this dun cloud may be my fancy after all. I like best to look at the shadows racing across the flat, corn-cropped, wooded earth, and the bright sun-rays coming down in patches through the gaps in the clouds, and sometimes suddenly shewing a red house among the trees, or a distant tower which I had not seen in the shadow-gloom. The view has an air of solid respectability in it, from the towers of Worcester, Gloucester, and, I think, Hereford cathedrals, which cap the smaller spires of the country churches.

But the flatness of the view pleases me. You are fourteen hundred feet up, and look over an ocean of earth, alive with shine and shadow. The eye gets the same kind of repose as when it rests upon the sea. It is not checked; it is wearied by no importunate sights; it feels free, and yet satisfied. It is filled without fatigue, and exercised without toil. You sit and look with growing width of vision, and yet you are never perplexed with asking yourself what you have looked at. You come down after a long clear day, and a man inquires what you have seen. Well, you have seen Worcestershire and Herefordshire certainly, and Gloucestershire, and some blue Welsh hills, and so on—a dozen counties—you don't care about their names. You have seen them flat and silent, with here and there a little wriggling white worm, which is the steam of an express-train, boring slowly through the far-off trees—so far off that you don't hear it in the least, unless it should work its way towards Malvern—and then it makes a small clear whistle, and burrows away again under your feet, to come out the other side of the hills towards Hereford, with a distant phit and puff as it sweeps away. That is all. There is nothing to see beside, apparently, half England and Wales. And yet I am wrong, very wrong. Malvern abounds with tokens and associations of the past. People who wish to improve their minds may fill them with visions of Druids, ancient Britons, Romans, monks, middle-age battles, dykes, camps, geology, igneous formations succeeded by water deposits, war, history, hydropathy, antiquity, and what not. Now I come to think of it, the Malvern hills are streaked with old ditches and encampments, which arrest the idlest eye. Here Caractacus fought; here Piers Ploughman had his 'Vision.' Some of the sharpest tussles in the Wars of the Roses took place under the eye of the 'Beacon.' But I won't tell you of all these things, or any of them. The guide-book is bursting with information. It says on its cover: *Malvern: Past and Present; its History, Legends, Topography, Climate, Springs, Natural History, with an Exposition of the Water Treatment*, &c.; by R. B. Grinrod, M.D., LL.D., F.L.S., F.G.S., &c., author of *Bacchus*; *The Wrongs of our Youth*; *The Slaves of the Needle*; *The Compressed Air-bath*; &c. He tells us everything, and more. He tells us all; from the Silurian system down to the hire of the donkeys. Of the scenery, he says: 'Vast historical associations crowd upon us in a contemplation of the district over which the eye glances from the summit of the Worcestershire

Beacon;' and then he serves it up piecemeal. He tells us all about the church, which once was in such bad repair that pigeons—which he calls 'ornithological innocents'—flew in and out of the windows. It is now well restored. The author of the guide-book tells us also how to feel as well as see. We are inspired with the muse of one 'Cottle,' who thus expresses the thought of a tourist who, scorning the help of donkeys, has walked up the hill behind the town:

The toil is o'er! Thou soul within me shout!
Now on the Beacon's towering head I stand.
The world in miniature!

. . . . While high heaven
Assumes an aspect more magnificent,
So thronged with all unsutterable things!

In spite of this strong varnish, I maintain the beauty of the view from the Malvern hills; and I am supported by almost too many, in the shape of bricklayers, architects, and speculators. The Beacon itself is safe from the trowel and the hod; but the whole range is fringed with villas, which breed fast. The very name of the place is multiplied—there is not only Great Malvern but Malvern Link, West Malvern, North Malvern, and Malvern Wells; which last, I think, takes my fancy above the rest. It is less flooded by excursionists; it has an apparently comfortable hotel, with its back against the hills, so that you can begin to mount them a few yards from its door, and its face toward the wooded plains of Worcestershire, down upon which it looks. Then, again, it brings you within an easier distance of the Herefordshire Beacon. You have a greater choice of walks. But probably Great Malvern, which is Malvern Proper, will remain the favourite. There, indeed, are gathered the water-cure establishments, for which the place is famous, and which bring a large proportion of the visitors. I will not venture to give you an opinion about the hydropathic system, because I have not got one; but I should think that cleanliness, good diet, regular habits, and moderate exercise must contribute largely to its success when it succeeds, and have a wholesome effect upon the patient when it fails.

MARLOW AND SANDHURST, HALF A CENTURY AGO.

IN TWO CHAPTERS.—CHAPTER II.

BAGSHOT HEATH affords a fair specimen of English improvement within the last half century, or a little more. It was then a bare moor; but for a few thinly scattered firs, treeless. The Great Western Road ran across it for eighteen miles, throughout which, the village of Bagshot and the hamlet of Blackwater were almost the only signs of habitation. As the shadows of evening fell, the Golden Farmer would ride out of his yard in his true character of highwayman; or the royal farmer, George, would occasionally enact the 'Induction to the Taming of a Shrew.' 'Scene, before an ale-house, on a heath; horns winded; enter a lord from hunting, with his train.' When he had been cantering all day about the broad ridings cut through the heath, to make his ways ways of pleasantness, and his sport easy, and found himself, towards nightfall, so far from home, he would resort, for his modest supper and bed, to the *White Lion* at Hartford Bridge, hard by at the heath's end. The face of this country is now covered by

great public buildings, of widely different character—a most luxurious asylum for criminal lunatics (a murderer's paradise); a most fantastic one for decayed actors; a most extensive one for decaying humanity in general (the cemetery); and two large colleges. Woods wave between meadows and corn-fields; villages, farms, and nursery-gardens have sprung up so thick as to leave barely room for the little British army to stretch its legs when issuing from its huts at Aldershot.

The beginning of this colonisation was the new Military College at Sandhurst. In the spring of (I think) 1810, a passing stage-coach shot me out among the primal colonists, and my first feeling was disappointment. The scene was busy enough, but equally dreary. A vast unfinished pile of stone rose out of the desert, which had been cleared, in large patches, for plantations where, as yet, was no sign of vegetation, and looked like the galled hide of some immeasurable brown beast. The ornamental water was a pond; the future Parade, a swamp, on which you could seldom look without seeing a horse of the wagon-train buried up to the girths, and a party of men digging him out. A detachment of them and a militia regiment were huddled close by, and employed on the works. The monotonous line of the horizon was broken by a ruined obelisk, set up, perhaps, like that on old Lincoln Heath, as a beacon for wandering travellers.

Entering the building, the humble, homely make-shifts of Marlow were exchanged for noble dining-rooms and spacious halls of study fitted up with really handsome oak tables. It was all too fine. A little while—a very little—and penknives and inkstands, in the hands of boys, had removed the gloss and rawness, and marked them deep with the respectable scores of real hard service. Wide galleries and staircases led to lofty bedrooms, each containing five iron bedsteads—we thought them grand—for were they not novelties? At the present day, you would look for such couches in barracks and workhouses. At first, there was no peace in our palace. Trades-unions and strikes had not yet topped and tailed British industry; it was, and justly, an element of the national pride. The workmen came early, and departed late. So long as they could see at all, hammer and saw ceased not to murder sleep. Soon this annoyance came to an end, and we began to realise the changes in our position. A fourth company was added to our numbers, and each company had two sergeants instead of one; we argued that discipline was to be doubly strict. Such, I believe, had been the intention, but widely different was the result. Greatness began to be thrust upon us; an infusion of quasi-royal blood, in the shape of a Fitzclarence, was poured into our ranks (not a bad specimen, he was). I had been taking counsel with myself rather seriously of late, had got reconciled to my fate, and made up my mind, in the spirit of my Catechism, to learn and labour truly to do my duty. My mathematical work became a pleasure to me; still greater ones were French and German. Modern history and geography were neglected and despised, and I fell into the beaten track—but can see now how attractive, and how eminently useful to military men, the neglected studies might have been made. Divinity was not taught; classics were, nominally. A few of the most hopeless subjects, of whom nothing could be made, were sent to dawdle away their time with a couple of clergymen (classical professors), and with landscape-drawing. Fencing

had been tried, but did not take. Military drawing and fortification were considered most important—but it was all theory—or all mechanical. Eventually, I learned all that Sandhurst taught of these branches, and (with a vanity, pardonable, I hope, at that time of life) thought myself perfectly accomplished. I could copy plans in a style worthy of a professional engraver; I could rattle you off, and have done so in public, siege operations in the most minute detail. But, though not aware of it, I little understood what I was talking of so glibly. A year or two after, I was quartered at Antwerp, then considered a first-rate fortress. When I walked into it, luckily alone, I stood astounded. The scales fell from my eyes. For the first time, I saw real works, and for the first time came to comprehend the meaning of all the plans I had been copying, and all the details I had been cramming. I kept my own counsel, and tried to make the most of the fortnight I passed at Antwerp.

In practical teaching, I suppose the Woolwich cadets to have had immense advantage over us; and indeed we had the highest respect for them. *Omne ignotum pro magnifico*, is a true saying; but there is one equally true: 'By their fruits ye shall know them.' The British army of that day did really stand somewhat higher in the opinion of the world at large (they had beaten that opinion into it, in fact), than modern Crimean, or even Indian, heroes seem to be aware of. But of all that glorious body, no portion ranked higher, in point of education and good character, than the artillery; I might almost say, none so high. The few now alive who can speak from personal experience, will, I think, bear me out in this assertion.

The punishments at Sandhurst (flogging being no more) were, drill in play-hours, confinement to college, extra guards, reduced diet, and black-hole. Expulsion I never knew an instance of. (The gunpowder-plot was before my time.) Guard-mounting was a solemn and tedious farce. Guard was relieved during study and at night; but at other times, sentries were posted all about the building, *à propos* de nothing. I have always thought the boy excusable, who, in sheer want of something to do on his useless post, pulled a burning-glass out of his pocket, and set fire to the carriage of a gun on the Parade. He knew the carriage was rotten, and would kindle like touch-wood, while the distance was such as would screen him from all suspicion. It smoked, it blazed. He had not the means of firing an alarm, but he ran in and turned out the guard: there was a lively scene, and the secret was well kept. The list of punishments was regularly read out in the dining-halls, just before the puddings and pies, and that adorable 'stickjaw' of Sandhurst, were served. It was simply a baked suet-pudding, with raisins, but to my taste charming. (When I am good, I am sometimes indulged with it still at home—as far beneath the original as — But let me not be unthankful.) Thrice a week was this ambrosia ours. But even beyond this were the fruit-pies of summer. What flinty crust! what sour windfall plums! what barrenness of sugar! But hark! the senior under-officer is reading out the punishments. A 48, Douglas, unsteady in the ranks (scratching his head when at 'Attention!' perhaps); no pudding this day. The sergeant points his finger at Douglas, who gets up, looking daggers, and steps into the

hall, where he is joined by his companions in fasting, and marched off to the guard-room till dinner is over. This absurd-sounding punishment was a most effectual one. Would you desire stronger evidence of our simple and frugal way of life?

The black-holes were closets on the basement, from which light was excluded. The prisoner was locked up, alone, for twelve, twenty-four, or (rarely) forty-eight hours. There was a tradition of a week. A bread-and-water diet was sometimes added. Many clever and daring expeditions used to be formed for the relief of the distressed garrisons of the 'holes.' In broad day, on the open Parade, the dash had to be made. A chain of innocent-looking sentries lounged along the whole front of the college, to give the alarm. You scaled the parapet-wall of the basement, and, at the risk of your neck, penetrated to the shoot which gave air to the hole, shied down it your pamphlets or your stickjaw, and effected a hasty retreat. It was not bad practice. Once, in the still night, we were roused up by the entrance of a prisoner from the black-hole, who belonged to our room. He came in shouting, and proclaiming that news of the battle of Leipzig had just arrived; in honour of which, a general jail-delivery was instantly ordered at Sandhurst. I remember being flattered by the unprejudiced evidence of a girl (my sister), who came with my father to pay me a passing visit. She had been the same day to see my brother at Eton. Unasked, she said to me: 'What a fine healthy-looking set the cadets are, in comparison of the Eton boys! They seemed as if they had all been overeating themselves at the pastry-cook's.' Whatever Eton might be, these Sandhurst lads were really fine sturdy fellows, and of hardy habits. A change of linen came from the laundry twice a week. You might get wet to any extent, but there was no change of raiment to be had at any other time, and you had to get dry like the cattle in the fields. Yet, in the course of two and a half years, out of a number varying from three to four hundred, there was not one death, and not above two or three serious cases of illness. On the whole, there was very little misconduct towards the neighbourhood; but if angered, the cadets were rather a formidable body. The wagon-train had given some offence, and a fight was quietly arranged. The victory of boys over men was never for a moment doubtful. The leader of the Sandhurst volunteers (and they were not many) felled his opponent senseless, said very coolly to his followers: 'Take him away,' stepped over him, and charged on into the citadel (the stables). West India fever felled him very shortly. Hardy as we were, one thing used to puzzle me. In the summer, the first movement in the morning was to the Parade, where we formed square, and short prayers were read. During these, it was a common thing for the boys to faint. The finest fellows among them were subject to this weakness, two and three in a morning, and no sham whatever. I have seen one fall forward out of the ranks so dead as to cut his face badly against the gravel. By the surgeon's advice, baskets of bread were carried down the ranks before prayers, and we were made to eat a piece; but this did not seem to have any effect.

Grandeur! more grandeur! We are to have a pair of colours! Queen Charlotte is coming to present them in person! It was the Sandhurst house-warming. She came, dowdy, snuffy, gracious.

The Prince Regent, the Duke of York, and all the generals in London (the best were in Spain) united to make Bagshot Heath stare. The scene was a type of military England at that moment—boys and old men. You can understand how they made up a show; the parade and salute, the chapel and prayer, the actual presentation, the big-boy ensigns trying not to look overawed as they bowed the knee to royal ugliness; and the holiday, which we did not half enjoy, for we did not know what to do. Meanwhile, the governor feasted his guests, a guard of honour (cadets) mounted before the door. How many times did I present arms that blessed evening! The queen and the ladies had left the dining-room; the boys had been let into the grounds, to see the fun; a dance on the lawn was proposed; the Princess Charlotte tossed her bonnet to the nearest cadet to hold, and was led out by young Lord Palmerston. All this time, the old soldiers were drinking. Hullo! what's the doctor going in for? The college surgeon had indeed slipped in, and his errand soon slipped out. 'Twas whispered in study, 'twas muttered in hall, that the Duke of York had drunk himself into a fit, and been bled. Fame went on to say (we all piously believed her, and I have never heard her contradicted) that the duke was put into a carriage, and sent off to London (thirty miles), under the care of an aide-de-camp who was not so drunk—not quite. But, as in the days of stage-coaches, it was well known that a totally blind horse was not so dangerous as an animal whose sight was going, so did it now prove in the case of drink. The aide-de-camp had just sense enough to become aware that the ducal bandage had slipped (he must have been gesticulating, perhaps fighting with his nurse). What with port wine and pitch-darkness, it must have been difficult to ascertain the true state of affairs. And when they came to London town, when the pie was opened, there was a dainty dish. The duke had fainted from loss of blood, and was still bleeding from the arm; while the aide-de-camp, grave, but not potent, had his thumb pressed on the duke's temple, to stop the flow of blood. Be it recorded in the annals of Sandhurst, that at the consecration of her colours, royal blood was thus spilt.

In a day or two, we boys got sober, and went to work again. I was now in full training for the examination; I had already got my commission by purchase, but 'went up for my certificate,' for the honour and glory of it. I do not like to say how many hours a day I worked, for months, because in the days of my youth I have said it, and been answered by incredulous smiles; I prefer saying that such an amount of work is a great mistake. It did not hurt my health; I was strong and temperate (to the extent of giving up stickjaw altogether), and resolutely took one hour's hard exercise daily. Moreover, between bodily and intellectual feeding, there is this important difference: mixing your wines makes you more speedily drunk; mixing your dishes makes you gouty, or worse, before your time; but mixing your studies is refreshing, and enables you to go through ten-fold labour. *Experto crede.* In the Sandhurst course, there was great variety. But mental cramming is as bad as physical; an intellectual *foie gras* is the result. This was the weak point of our education. It was a race for the army; and the authorities, from the Horse Guards downwards, stimulated the war-fever. My day came. The

Board assembled; stars and crosses dazzled our eyes; powdered heads wagged as seriously as if they understood what was going on. On it went, and, like other shows, came to an end. I was rewarded. I had got what at Epsom is called 'a place.' I got my certificate, signed by—well, a royal duke headed the list of signatures, and I used innocently to admire his autograph as something really beautiful. It was only in later days that some evil spirit whispered in my ear, the handwriting was undeniably fine, but was it not that of the little clerk in the college office? I fear it was.

Home I went, thinking of nothing but the regiment in which I had been six months an ensign. While daily expecting an order to join, came a letter from the lieutenant-governor of Sandhurst to my father: 'Great pleasure—son distinguished himself—Royal Highness—special mark of favour—made such good use of time already—allowed to remain six months longer at college, to perfect his education.' Murder! What was I to do? Defeated by my very success, and my father so tickled, that there was no hope of getting off. In short, I had to return; and of course those six months were wasted. I had no object to work for. They were very indulgent to me, and so I did keep out of serious scrapes; but I did no good. I was senior under-officer, had command of a company, and beg to record my protest against the monitorial system, for it was, in fact, the same kind of thing. Many of the best fellows in college refused such promotion, and before my time was out, I wished I had done the same. There was too much policeman's work. I felt myself in a false position with my comrades. The heads of some were turned by their brief authority; mine was not; but glad I felt when the long six months came to an end.

It was a dark winter's night when I silently quitted the college, and walked down alone to meet the coach, pondering on the world that was opening beyond the darkness. Looking back on it now, I feel thankful that the future is concealed from my sight.

Independent of the Cadets' School at Marlow was a Senior Department at Wycombe for officers in the army. Many of the names most renowned in our great war were to be found on its rolls. When Marlow emigrated to Sandhurst, Wycombe moved to Farnham; and when the reduction of all military establishments, consequent on the peace, had left much empty space in the great building at Sandhurst, the Senior Department was brought over to utilise it. Soon after, I received an intimation from the governor, that if I chose to accept it, a vacancy was at my disposal. I was then a half-pay officer, studying at Cambridge; but the red coat had stuck to me like the shirt of Nessus. In an evil hour, I abandoned civil law. What I might have done with *Noir*, is not for me to say; but I changed my stake to *Rouge*, and have lived to hear '*Rouge perd*.' Nine years were past since I had left the nest on Bagshot Heath, hopeful and confident. They were most eventful years. I had seen strange things, and been a humble partaker in great ones; had gone through a fair share of hardship, and some suffering, but was as hopeful and confident as ever.

Time had greatly improved the appearance of Sandhurst. A flourishing little town had sprung up. The gardens I had left infants were now in

youthful bloom; plantations were become woods; the buildings were mellowed. As to the new race of cadets, I could only see that the dress was modernised. The old officers and professors were mostly all there, but, alas! not modernised; yet their regular occupation and simple life had preserved them well. Time had dealt lightly with the majority; some he hardly seemed to have noticed; a few had felt the weight of his hand, and seemed sinking beneath it. All (I thank them) welcomed me. I had great expectations from the new governor. The war had hardly produced a more distinguished officer, none more competent to train young soldiers; but he left his government to take care of itself, wasted his high talents, and stained his honoured name, in teaching himself Greek and Latin, and secret dissipation. So mysterious was his seclusion, that we hardly knew whether he was in the government-house or in London. There he would be, it was believed, for days and weeks at a time, much worse employed than any scamp of a cornet among us, who might have run up to kill eight-and-forty precious hours with bad wine, worse women, and chicken-hazard. Some evening, in the twilight, a stage-coach would pull up at the private gate of the government-house. A man, very plainly dressed, would step down from the roof, should a valise, and walk in. Next day, Sunday, the governor's great pew in the gallery of the college chapel would be a comely sight. All along the front sat a row of good-looking servant-maidens, faultlessly dressed. At a proper distance behind them were the men, and high above all sat the governor in person:

Bringing up the rear of that bright host,
A spirit of a different order waved
His wings.
And where he gazed, a gloom pervaded space.

That is, the boys under his eye left off larking, and looked down into their Prayer-books as demurely as if they were learning the collect for the day. Little hypocrites! But was not the governor a great one?

My companions were fourteen young officers, all strangers to me. Two halls of study were given up to us, where we met our professors. We had nothing else to do with the college, and were particularly desired to keep out of the way of the cadets (for fear they should spoil our morals, I suppose). We did associate with them no more than the red do with the fallow deer in Richmond Park. As to board and lodging, we were left to make our own arrangements. I took up my quarters at a farmhouse, three miles off, got a horse and a servant, and commenced as a military Bachelor of Arts. I measured my work, and found it easy. The course was not then nearly so ambitious a one as at present; in fact, I had only to rub up most of it, and to master military surveying in the field. My object was to obtain by examination a senior certificate, which might forward me in my profession; but I felt it needless to work as I had done before, remembering what I had got for my pains. I had plenty of leisure, and plenty of pleasant employment for it. Occasionally, we took a day with the bounds; and one or two of the party (not I) rode remarkably straight. I did more in the way of shooting, having formed an alliance with a young Irishman, a pattern of industry in that line. Our appliances

were rude enough; yet those moderns who may despise our sport, are quite mistaken. It was great enjoyment. He had a tolerable double-gun (per-cussion had not yet been heard of), and a right good Irish dog-of-all-work. I had only a single barrel, which had belonged to an old sailor-uncle of mine when he was a boy—very long, very light. It kicked viciously, but I have killed some very long shots with it. Game was scarce, and hardly preserved at all; we walked all over the country, never got into trouble, and our larder was seldom empty. A very small set would now and then take themselves off to London for a midsummer night's dream. One solitary case there was of discreditable conduct, as far as debt was concerned. The debtor was the most gentlemanly-looking man of the lot, the best unprofessional dancer I ever saw; and 'Paddy was loved by all the ladies.' He contrived to get appointed to a regiment in India, and got on board ship with difficulty, leaving a few little Sandhurst tradesmen, unaccustomed to that sort of thing, howling.

Both the officers of the college and the neighbouring gentry were very kind—more than kind. Above all other hospitable houses, however, was one (I almost hesitate, but cannot deny myself the pleasure of speaking of it here) where lived a fine old English gentleman, with a fine young family of English gentlemen. All gone now, I think, but one! If she should chance to read this, and recognise the writer, I would beg her, in the name of the household of other days, to accept thanks, warm and hearty, for the frank hospitalities I enjoyed, and the many merry hours I passed under her kind-hearted father's roof.

And the work went on as heartily as the play. From my farm-window I could see the college observatory, and had arranged night-signals with the mathematical professor. If he were at leisure for an extra hour or two, he would shew the lights; and if I were at home, I started across the meadows to him; and bad walking it was. There was a log-bridge or two which, in the dark, nearly let me into the river more than once. When the time for examination drew near, and my work was at the hardest, my servant had orders to bring my horse up to college at a certain time. I took half an hour, as hard as ever he could go; and that was my play for the day. I soon had companions in this, and we got into some little trouble for damaging the college fences. The surveying was mostly done upon the heath. I used to be at work very early, and many a breakfast of bread and milk have I enjoyed at the *Tumble-down-Dick*, a little public-house, close, if I mistake not, to the camp at Aldershot. Then came the 'final sketch,' a large one, for which a month was allowed. My lot fell in Kent, near Sittingbourne. I went down, took up my quarters at an inn, reconnoitred my ground, and reasoned thus: I am my own master for a month. Here we are in the middle of September. I have trained my horse so steady that I can take angles off his back. On tolerably even ground, I can pretty well depend on his pacing. I'll do most of the work so. Then perhaps I may finish it in a fortnight, be home by October first, and survey the pheasants for another fortnight. I used to be on my ground as soon as I could see, and I never left off as long as I could see; then cantered to my inn, made a hearty meal, and went to bed. 'As much corn and beans as he will eat,' were my orders to the hostler. My horse was a rough, hardy

brute, with an appetite as good as his master's. But the weather was severely hot, and before the end of the fortnight he was beat, while I was fresh. He was just able to finish the job. What the work was, may be guessed from the fact, that on the three days' journey home, about fifty miles a day, he nearly recovered himself. I had carried my point, but, as in the 'flying sketch,' could not venture to boast. For the second time, I stood before a college Board of Examiners, and this was an easy matter. The boy had been somewhat anxious and awe-struck; the man was not. I got another certificate, with a string of great names to it. Others, in right of theirs, were brought forward; mine never availed me anything. Somehow, I had not the knack of success. I could get certificates easy enough, but what to do with them I could not find. On a very humble scale, I seem to have verified Pope's lines:

Some to whom Heaven in wit has been profuse,
Want as much more, to turn it to its use.

With affectionate regret, I took my leave of Sandhurst. I strive to look at it impartially, and, admitting many imperfections, can have no hesitation in speaking of it as, in my time, the best school I ever knew; as possessing the best, and free from the worst peculiarities of public schools. The honest, truthful, generous public opinion was there; there, too, you learned to mix freely with your fellow-creatures, and to deal with them as a man should. You got the corners of your character rubbed off, so as to save it from hitching, and enable it to work smoothly in the machinery of life. But there was no extravagance—very little idleness. Work was popular, for hardly any of it was useless. No flogging, no fagging, no bullying worth mention. Very much of the original charitable character of the institution was preserved. It fostered a soldier-like spirit, and fed the ranks of war with youths trained to hardihood, and to habits of application and subordination. Does not this sound like a good military school? And all this I certify it once was.

Let others say what Sandhurst now is, and why.

THE SWALLOWS.

FLY, swallows, now September
Has yellowed every leaf;
Fly, swallows, for rich Autumn
Is piling sheaf on sheaf.
Fly faster, faster, swallows,
To deserts broad and free,
For Africa, the golden,
Stretches her hands for thee.

False friends, ye leave us, eager
For homes less fair than ours;
Like Love and Hope, you leave us
In Winter's bitter hours.
Go, then, for when the rainbow
Proclaims Spring's gentle reign,
With flowers and early roses,
You will return again.

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A LONG SWIM.

'BLESS my soul! Jones is dead.'

'What! your cousin the parson?'

'No, no!'

'Not Jones of the 99th?'

'No. Jones of the *Saragossa*.'

'You don't say so. Which of them?'

'Peyton Jones.'

'Dear me! I'm very sorry to hear it. Stunning fellow was Peyton Jones. Thoroughly good fellow. What did he die of? It would take a good deal to kill Jones.'

'Influenza.'

'No! You don't mean to say that influenza killed Jones? Gad! fancy a man who'd had yellow fever three times, dying of influenza!'

'Ay, and who had been chewed for half an hour by a tiger in a jungle.'

'Yes, and who awoke one morning with a boar-cremaster round his neck.'

'Just so, and who took that tremendous swim at Antigua.'

'Ah! what was that?'

'Did you never hear of that? Why, it was one of the pluckiest things that was ever done. I am surprised you never heard of that. Surely I must have told you that myself. Goodness knows, I am never likely to forget it; for, but for Peyton Jones, I might not be here now to tell it. Jones was in the *Briareus* when the affair occurred, and the ship was lying in the harbour of Antigua. I was out there at the same time, and saw a good deal of the naval men, and a better set of fellows I wouldn't wish to know. You never were in the West Indies, I think; so I must explain that outside the regular harbour of Antigua, there is a sort of second harbour—a large bay, the shore of which, on one side, after taking a wide sweep, runs out into the sea for a great distance. Well, one fine day it was arranged that we should have a picnic; so, four or five of the officers, among whom was Peyton Jones, with an Irish doctor and myself for guests, took the ship's pinnace and three men, sailed out of the harbour and across the bay to an eligible spot on

the opposite shore, and there picnicked to our hearts' content. The doctor was an invaluable man at festivities of this kind. His tales used to follow one another like a string of sausages; the head of one joined to the tail of another by a "Faith, and that reminds me"—particularly funny to listen to, from the absence of anything in the first story that could by any possibility have suggested the second. On the occasion I am speaking of, he kept us in roars of laughter all day; telling stories and singing songs incessantly till it was time to think about returning. So, after one more tale, which, being of an exceedingly comic character, reminded the doctor of a very distressing case at that time in hospital, we finished the other bottle, and in a short time were afloat. No sooner were we under-way, than Dr O'Grady got up an argument with Jones, who was at the helm, upon the subject of steering; and in a short time requested, on the ground that illustration was necessary to render his views clear, to be allowed to give a practical example of his powers as a steersman. This, Jones at first objected to; but public feeling running strongly in favour of the doctor's being allowed to try his hand, and the doctor giving this feeling voice with a force and eloquence peculiar to himself, the end of the matter was, that he was soon seated comfortably at the helm, singing the *Groves of Blarney*.

'For a short time the voyage went on very smoothly; but just as O'Grady was in the middle of an amazingly funny comparison between Arion, whose singing attracted the dolphins, and himself, whose voice appeared to possess a certain charm for sharks, a sudden gust of wind took us, and laid us on our beam-ends.

"Port your helm!" shouted Jones, jumping up, and making for the tiller. "Port, O'Grady! port!"

"The same t' you, and plenty of it," replied the doctor, still facetious, though a thought flurried. "Port it is!"

'But, unfortunately, port it wasn't. By a little error of the doctor's, it was starboard instead; and the result was that in another moment we were all struggling in the water, and the pinnace was keel

uppermost. As several of the party could not swim, the first thing to do was to look after them, and help them to scramble up on to the keel. Peyton Jones, who was a magnificent swimmer, and all of us who could swim at all, worked zealously at this, splashing as much as possible the while, in order to keep the sharks away; and in a very short time, a long row of moist, uncomfortable bodies ornamented the bottom of the capsized boat.

"Are we all here now?" cried Jones, who was at the end of the line. "One, two, three— Good Heavens! where's the doctor?"

"Help!" shrieked a man who was at the other end of the boat—"help, help! Here's a shark at my leg. He's got my foot in his mouth."

"Faith, and if it is a shark," said the voice of the doctor from the water, "ye'll never be troubled with corns on that foot again. But this is no fish, but an Irishman, fortunately for you, Thompson. Lend a hand, bhoys. It's myself, and no mistake. That's right.—Ah, ye ungrateful baste"—apostrophising the boat—"what did ye go turning over in that way for, after I'd been steering ye so carefully, and all?"

"By Jove, I thought we'd picked all up," said Jones. "I'd forgotten you, O'Grady."

"Upon my conscience," said the doctor frankly, "and you were justified in that same, for, faith! I forgot myself when I undertook to steer. But who could have expected that a boat which was going on so mighty pleasant, would turn suddenly over on its stomach, in that ungraceful fashion?"

"I did not know you could swim, doctor," some one said.

"I'm not, perhaps, what ye'd call altogether a fine swimmer," O'Grady returned; "but if it's diving ye want, I'm the bhoys. Bedad, it was that that detained me just now. No sooner did I come up, than down I went again; and if my attention had not been caught by Thompson's foot, faith! I can't exactly say to the minute when I should have stopped."

"Well, we're all here now, at anyrate," said Jones; "but what's to be done next? Has any one any suggestion to make?"

"And is it suggestion you mane?" said O'Grady; "then it's myself that has, and here it is: if any gentleman is in the possession of a brandy-flask, let him pass it down here."

"No gentleman was. All the brandy left undrunk was in the hamper, and where the hamper was, the sharks knew better than we.

"Bad-luck to the hamper!" said the doctor; "and bad-luck to the fellow who put the brandy into it; and worst luck of all to the shark that will come into so fine a property, and may the glass bottle cut the coat of his stomach into ribbons. Amen."

"Stop fooling, O'Grady," said Jones. "The business is very serious."

"And, by Jove, it was. Here were nine or ten of us, wet to the skin, sitting on the keel of a capsized boat, two full miles from shore, with no possibility of making way either forwards or backwards. In addition to all this, the bay swarmed

with sharks, and the night—which comes on with a rush out there, you know—was just falling, so that there was no chance of being seen and picked up. If we were forced to remain in this desperately uncomfortable situation all night, there was every probability that some one, overcome by sleep, would be slipping off his unpleasant perch into the sea; and it was quite certain that the sharks, attracted by such a promising feast, would be cruising about us on all sides, waiting, like dogs, for the crumbs that fall from their masters' tables. But what was to be done? The only remedy was one that it made me shudder to think of—that some one should undertake to swim two miles, in defiance of the sharks and the darkness, and carry the intelligence of our misfortune to the ship. A more risky expedition you can scarcely imagine, and it almost took my breath away when I heard Jones's voice from the end of the row say: "Somebody must go and get assistance, and as I'm the best swimmer of you all, I'll go."

"By gad! think of the sharks, old fellow," said the man next him.

"Just what I shan't do," said Jones; "I shall think of them as little as possible. There's no help for it, you know; some one must go."

"It was so thoroughly one man taking the danger of ten on his own shoulders, that each of us, from very shame, endeavoured to dissuade him; but as all that we could say made no impression upon him, a midshipman named Knapton, who was a very good swimmer, declared he'd accompany him.

"It's better for two of us to go," said Knapton; "for if only one went, and he were to come to grief on the way, you know, these fellows would be no better off than they are now."

"People talk a good deal about our national degeneracy now a days; it doesn't look much like national degeneracy, I imagine, when, out of ten men—some of whom, as not being able to swim at all, must be left out of the account—two could be found to go in for such a very forlorn-hope as this. Well, Jones and Knapton stripped themselves to the skin—the less luggage you take on a journey of this kind, the better—and dashed into the water; and you may fancy with what anxious hearts we on the boat watched, as long as the failing light would let us, their heads rising and falling with the waves, and the splashing made by their feet.

"Kick well," Jones shouted to Knapton, for he knew what cowards sharks are, and what a little thing will sometimes frighten them—"kick well; make as much splash as possible; it's your only chance, if they get a sight of you."

"And there we sat in silence—even the doctor was dumb for the time—staring after the two heroes, for heroes they were, if there are such things at all: first their heads were lost in the darkness; then the white foam made by their feet; and knowing, as we did, the dangers that surrounded them, when we lost sight of that, the hope that they could ever reach the shore seemed to mix with the darkness, and to be lost as well. It is a terribly painful thing to have to

remain inactive while others are incurring great danger; to feel that you cannot raise a finger to help them, however desperate their position. I don't know that I ever passed a more wretched time than I did after Jones and Knapton had got beyond our sight. As I sat shivering on that dismal boat, thinking of those two fellows swimming along in the midst of perils which they had no power to avoid, there came into my mind a scene from an old book which I had not read since I was a child, in which a man had to pass in the dead of night through a valley set everywhere with snares and pitfalls, which in the darkness he could not see, but still was forced to go walking blindly on, conscious that at any moment he might step into absolute destruction.

But Jones and the midshipman were swimming steadily all the while, for some time almost side by side; their faces set for the shore, and their thoughts dwelling as little as possible upon what might at any moment happen down below. Some men—I among them—have a horror of touching anything under water; and I am certain that if I had been either of those fellows, the very knowledge that every kick I gave might send my foot against a shark, who would snip off my leg in a twinkling, would have acted like the touch of the electrical eel upon me, and deprived my muscles of all power of motion. It did not operate so with them, however. The apprehension of danger only made them more active in trying to escape from it, and for about three-quarters of a mile—we could not see them, of course, but, as you may imagine, we had every single incident related to us afterwards—they proceeded swiftly and evenly. But after they had accomplished that distance, Knapton began to drop gradually behind. He had either overrated his powers, or exhausted himself with kicking too vigorously; at any rate, from whatever cause, when they had gone about a mile, he cried out to Jones: "I can go no further. I must shut up. You go on. Never mind me—go on." Jones, however, was the last man in the world to desert a friend in difficulties; he turned, and swam back to him at once.

"Are you done up, old fellow?" Jones said to him.

"Yes," says the midshipman; "I can't go on any further. But you go on; you'd better leave me."

"Not I," says Jones; "we set out together, and we'll finish together, or not at all. Now, look here. Don't you grasp at me, and cling to me; you're too good a swimmer not to know that that's raving madness. Rest your hands upon my hips; let your body float quietly out; and I'll see what I can do."

Knapton did exactly as he was bidden; Jones stretched himself out before him; and with more than ever resting upon him now, in every sense of the term, struck out again for the land as resolutely as before. Who was that rusty old hero? Æneas, wasn't it? pious Æneas?—that they make so much fuss about, because he carried his father on his shoulders out of burning Troy, all the while in mortal dread that Greeks would pop out upon him at every corner? Well, he was not a bit more of a hero than Peyton Jones. In fact, give me Jones for choice; for, reckoning the elements as about equally nasty, who would not sooner have to deal with a Greek than a shark? In the first case, you might drop the Governor, and go in at the Greek, without fearing to find the old gentleman a cinder when you turned round to pick him up

again. But with Jones it was quite different. If he left Knapton, the poor fellow must have drowned; and as far as the sharks were concerned, he had nothing for it but to swim on, and if the enemy chose to bite his legs off, why, they must. Besides, there is another thing to be said for Jones's case—it is perfectly true; whereas, as regards the feat of Father Æneas, it is—to put it in the mildest way—open to question.

This is, however, rather a trifling way of speaking of what was no trifle to Jones. As he was swimming on, toiling along with Knapton, more dead than alive, hanging on to him, he suddenly became aware that *one of them* was after him. The demon had found them out at last. It was a sickening moment that; yet, determined never to say die, swimming vigorously to the last, and kicking and splashing with all his might, Jones pushed his way through that awful sea. The shark kept close to them; now on this side, now on that, now diving beneath them, and—"I give you my honour, sir," Jones said to me himself, "that once I distinctly felt the beggar's infernal nose touch my thigh, and the horror of that nearly finished me." Heaven knows how he reached the shore a whole man, but he did reach it at last, and brought Knapton with him too, fainting certainly, but without a limb short.

Well, he had got to the land, and that was the principal thing. After struggling through two miles of sea, dragging a half-dead man along with you, and dodging sharks, any land would seem a paradise; but still it is not exactly the thing for a gentleman in these days to make his appearance on *terra firma* in the very same costume as that in which Adam first made his. In his joy at reaching land, and bringing his friend safely with him, Jones had forgotten his state of undress; but when he had carried Knapton in his arms up the beach, and had laid him out, as if to dry, well above high-water mark, then, as he was starting off at a run in the direction of the harbour, the full conviction of his absolute clotheslessness came over him with crushing force. How on earth was he to make his way to the harbour, and to appear on the deck of H.M.S. *Briareus* without a single thing to cover him except his own confusion? It was a dreadful dilemma, and for a moment Jones almost regretted that the sharks had not delivered him from the difficulty; but a moment's thought, and the recollection of the miserable plight in which his friends on the capized pinnacle were, from which nobody but himself could save them, restored his resolution. Muttering to himself that he'd by odds sooner repeat the first part of his undertaking than carry out the last, he set off running towards the harbour. But he was to be spared the horrors of having to give such a bare recital of the calamity as this. His Good-Fortune came to his aid—Fortune, being blind, could do so, of course, without shocking her sense of decency—and helped him at his need. He had not run far before he saw a big nigger coming towards him. The big nigger had on a shirt and a pair of trousers. Now, a shirt and a pair of trousers are not generally considered a lavish superfluity of clothing; but in Jones's naked condition they seemed nothing less than a monstrous piece of extravagance.

"A shirt and trousers!" said Jones to himself, as if such a combination had never come beneath his notice before—"a shirt and trousers! He can't require both of them. He must lend me one or

other. He shall keep whichever he likes, but one of them I must have.—Here, you nigger."

"And Jones walked solemnly up to the black, and stated that, situated as the nigger could see that he was, he was under the necessity of requesting the nigger to resign the moiety of his wearing-apparel. He added that he was an officer on board H.M.S. *Briareus*, and would trouble the nigger to look sharp. The nigger not unnaturally declined to part with either shirt or trousers. It certainly was rather hard lines for him, when you come to think of it—when you put yourself into his position and garments. That a gentleman, of however high a standing in her Majesty's service, and giving references however unexceptionable, should make his appearance in a state of nature, walk up to you in a lofty manner, and coolly demand a most important part of your clothing, was rather hard lines; and the nigger thought so. He flatly refused to consent to the arrangement, and not without having some reason on his side either. And yet, what was Jones to do? He must give the alarm, and he must have some clothes to do it in. There was but one course before him; "to do a great right," he must "do a little wrong." It was exactly one of those cases in which, there being a show of right on both sides, nothing but might can settle it. It is not every man who, after swimming for two miles, would feel himself in a condition to assault a large negro, but Peyton Jones was one in a thousand.

"Look here, you rascal," said Jones, "I must have your trousers."

"Yah, yah, yah!" laughed the nigger, as if he were beginning to see the joke.

"I'll pay you for them, you black scoundrel," said the gentleman in buff.

"Yah, yah! Let massa put him hand in him pocket, den, yah, yah!" said the gentleman in black.

"If you don't give them to me, I shall take them," said Jones.

"Yah, yah, yah, yah!" laughed the nigger, as if the joke had been a good one all along, but here was the cream of it.

'Some men can appreciate no argument but force, thought Jones; so he knocked the nigger down. Niggers are, as everybody knows, hard-headed individuals, but one blow from Jones was more than enough even for a nigger: with two he would have slain a bull of Bashan. The nigger offered no more resistance. Jones took off his trousers, put them on himself, and shewing, to my mind, great moderation in not taking the shirt as well while he was about it, left the *sans-culotte* on the ground, ran off to the harbour, reached his ship, and gave the alarm. The hundred hands of H.M.S. *Briareus* were turned up instantly; boats were sent out; and about ten o'clock that night, when we had given up all hope of being rescued from our distressing position till next day, and had set it down as certain that both Jones and Knaptown had become food for sharks, the welcome lights, that assured us not only of our own deliverance but of the safety of at least one of them, shone through the darkness; and in a few minutes we were all taken off that confounded keel, and lifted into the boat. It was a near thing, though. The boats had been here and there for a couple of hours without finding any trace of us; the lieutenant had given the order to return; and it was only through the boatswain neglecting the order, and making one

cast more, happily a successful one, that led to our being rescued. However, "just in time" is better than "too late;" relief reached us at last; and in spite of sharks and shipwreck, there was not a man of us lost, thanks to Peyton Jones's heroic conduct in taking that perilous swim in the dark.—And now he's dead, poor fellow!

'Possibly; but of influenza? No, I'll never believe it.'

THE ATLANTIC TELEGRAPHS.

BY AN EYE-WITNESS.

IN THREE CHAPTERS.—CHAPTER II.

THE commencement of our voyage was glorious indeed, and seemed to speak of prosperity alone. On the morning of the 14th the wind shifted to the west, the clouds cleared off, and the sun came out and brightly shone upon the scarcely dimpled surface of the ocean, which reflected back his radiance as from a myriad of fairy mirrors. Everyone was in the best of tempers and the highest of spirits. The directors of the several companies on board looked very pictures of bliss; the electricians sat down to their breakfast with smiling looks that plainly said that all was right in the testing-room, and the countenances of the engineers bore equally good evidence that no kink or fault had as yet arisen to disturb their equanimity. The drum kept on continuously, smoothly, and noiselessly revolving, while the bell of the indicator gave an occasional tinkle at intervals of about three seconds to mark each revolution.

We had paid out one hundred and fifteen miles, a very small fraction indeed of eighteen hundred, and although all had gone smoothly and seemed to promise success, still every thoughtful man was well aware how many slips there might be while raising so heavy a cup to a lip that was so far distant. A thousand and one accidents beset the tiny rope on all sides, any one of which might be sufficient to sever it, and when one considers this fact, it is not surprising that the prudent and experienced were always ready to check any signs of premature exultation and joy.

Sunday, 15th, was a day in every respect as glorious as its predecessor. During the day we passed over what is known by hydrographers as the 'Trist Bank,' and moved from two hundred and ten fathoms to a depth of two thousand and fifty. It was at this point that the cable of 1857 had parted, and from that time the spot has been looked upon by cable engineers as a bugbear.

On this occasion our transit into deep water was successfully accomplished, the only evidence of the change being an increased strain on the cable as shewn by the dynamometer. The cable touched the surface of the water some fifty yards astern of the ship, and, according to calculation, reached its ocean bed seventeen miles behind us, thus taking about three hours to sink. On the evening of this day we received our first instalment of news from England, and Mr Willoughby Smith published the first number of *The Great Eastern Telegraph*. From this date till the end of our voyage we had the chief news of importance transmitted to us daily

from Valentia. *Monday, 16th.*—Everything going on well; so well, in fact, as to be quite monotonous. *Tuesday, 17th.*—Same as yesterday. During the afternoon of the 17th, the wind shifted to the south, and there was every prospect of rain and wind.

About 3.50 p.m. the electric bell in the tank rang violently. Mr Temple, who was on duty at the time, at once gave the order to stop the ship and reverse the paddles, which order was obeyed in less time than it takes to write. Mr Canning came scudding along the deck at a pace that would shame Deerfoot; the captain is at the stern in an instant. 'What is the matter?' 'Has it parted?' 'Is there a kink?' 'Is it a broken wire?' are questions asked eagerly by all. 'Is there anything wrong in the tanks?'—nothing save the ringing of the bell. Is anything amiss with the drum, the cable, the brakes, the jockeys, or the dynamometer? No. Mr Willoughby Smith comes running along the deck, doubtless with a tale of faulty insulation. Wrong again. He merely asks—'What is the matter?' and in reply to questions, says that in the testing-room all is OK. Nothing is wrong, then—positively nothing. The order is given—'Go ahead with the paddles!' and in another minute we are again under-way. The explanation of all this excitement is found in the fact, that the electrician on duty had accidentally touched the bell in passing and had caused it to ring in the tank. Although it is not pleasant to have one's nerves tampered with in this way, still the little excitement served as a sort of rehearsal, and shewed in case of accident how quickly every one could get to his post, and how readily the way of the ship could be stopped. The events above described were all crowded into less than two minutes of time.

This rehearsal, like the sun in Hood's poem, did not come 'a wink too soon,' for we were destined to 'ring up' for the real performance far sooner than we expected. The wind had gradually freshened as the day advanced; the sky was overcast, and a pertinacious drizzly rain descended in sufficient quantity to make every one exceedingly uncomfortable.

After the excitement of the afternoon, and the dampness of the evening, a glass of grog was deemed advisable before 'turning in.' With this intention, a snug party had assembled in the saloon, when—'O, the uncertainty of human joys!'—a gentleman from deck hurriedly opened the door, and, in a voice panting with excitement, summoned Mr Canning on deck, 'as there was something wrong.' Ye gods! how we started. Six steps at a time up the 'companion,' and on to the deck. On through the pitchy darkness towards the stern—as we pass the paddle engines we see them reversed; we pass on to where a knot of men are standing, all of us eager to learn what is the matter. Here the cause of the excitement becomes evident. Lying in the trough was the ugliest knot formed of entangled cable, and from it in all directions stretched lines and bights of cable whose destination or purpose it was impossible to discover by the fitful light of a few oil-lamps. It seemed astounding to the uninitiated that such a complicated knot could be tied in so short a time; but this was no time for considering, prompt action was the order of the night, despite the gloomy influence of wind and rain. Although cutting out the entangled portion seemed to be the only rational way of treating the difficulty, still hope seemed to die within us when we heard the order actually given to 'Get out the

ocean-buoy and prepare to cut the cable.' Luckily these orders demand time for execution, and while one party were engaged in carrying them out, another were combating the difficulty in a different way. Bights of cable were dragged out and taken along the deck, the better to see where they went; others were passed into and others pulled out of the tank, but all to no purpose. The case seemed hopeless. Mr Canning and Mr Halpin, the chief officer, could be seen, like rival Laocoons, struggling with this interminable black serpent. Gloomy figures marched about in the misty darkness, bearing lanterns which cast fitful shadows on the soaking deck; blue-lights were burned on either paddle-box; and altogether the scene was peculiarly weird and wild, and while extremely exciting, was at the same time equally depressing, since all feared that our expedition had come to an untimely end.

It must be a very puzzling knot, however, that will not yield to the combined skill of a cable engineer and a sailor. After about twenty minutes of twisting and turning, which seemed almost to make the mischief worse, the cheering news was heard, 'that it was all right;' and at this juncture Mr Smith and Professor Thomson reported that the cable was electrically perfect, and that no sign of the mishap had become evident in the testing-room—this was good news, indeed. The process of recoiling in the tank was commenced, and by 1 a.m. was completed, and the order given 'to go ahead slowly.' An hour later, to the unspeakable joy of everyone, all the disarranged cable had passed over the stern of the ship, and we were going ahead again at our usual speed of five knots.

The reader will be wondering how such an accident could occur. It appears that as the cable was leaving the tank, a rough and loose end of yarn, or a projecting piece of wire, had caught two or three coils of rope in the flake beneath, and had dragged them with it into the 'eye' of the coil, over the spider-wheel, and into the trough. *Hinc ille lachryma.* Hence the bother and turmoil, and the almost abrupt termination of the expedition.

The shock that this accident had caused to the minds of all was everywhere visible. The voice of the joker was hushed, and an expression of anxious care had taken the place of 'wreathed smiles,' in the faces of everyone.

This feeling of depression was not easily shaken off, and for days we rather resembled a party of maniacs from the gloomy side of Bethlehem Hospital, than gentlemen endowed with a fair allowance of British animal spirits. But from this date all went well. On the night of Thursday the 19th we emptied the *after-tank*, and effected the change to the *fore-tank* without any mishap. Our work was now nearly half done; we had paid out eight hundred and forty miles of cable, and were approaching the deepest water that we should have to encounter, two thousand five hundred fathoms. On Sunday 22d, at noon, we made our nearest approach to the end of the cable of 1865, being about thirty-four miles to the south of it. We had now paid out twelve hundred and seven miles of cable, a greater length than had ever been paid out from a single ship before, and this fact seemed to inspire everyone with redoubled hopes, and to make the successful termination of the enterprise to be almost a certainty.

At 11 p.m. on the night of Tuesday the 24th, we changed from the *fore* to the *main* tank. We had

now paid out fifteen hundred miles of cable, and were gradually leaving the deep water behind us: every hour, until we should reach Heart's Content, the water would be getting gradually more shallow. Although our chance of success had now become almost a certainty, no one dared to give utterance to the thought, for who can tell what cloud may arise to dim the brightest day, or what fresh misfortune may befall an Atlantic cable? As we approached Newfoundland, we became aware that it was famous for its fogs, and morn, noon, and night, the fog-whistles and horns could be heard giving warning to our consort ships to give us a wide berth. Thursday morning, 26th, arrived; we were within one hundred miles of Heart's Content, and in one hundred and thirty fathoms of water. About 3 A.M. the *Albany* was sent ahead to make the land, and at 4 P.M. she returned to us, having done what was required of her. Towards evening H.M.S. *Niger* came out to have a look at us, and having come alongside of us, and given a series of hearty cheers, she returned towards land to spread the good news.

On turning out on the morning of Friday, July 27, we were all delighted to find that we were within a few miles of the shore. The *Great Eastern* had entered Trinity Bay in the night, and was now steaming steadily on towards the harbour of Heart's Content. The fog had cleared away, the sun was shining brightly, the sea was disturbed by scarcely a ripple, and, in short, everything seemed to contribute to make the termination of our voyage as pleasant as possible, a strong contrast to its commencement on that dull, drizzly Friday morning on which we had made the splice off Valentia. By 10 o'clock we were at the mouth of the harbour, and here the *Great Eastern's* portion of the work was to end. It now alone remained for her to cut the cable and transfer the end to the *Medway*, where it would be spliced to the thick shore-end. The *Medway* was to have the honour of putting the finishing-touch to the great work, by laying the shore-end in Heart's Content harbour. At 10.30, two guns announced that the cable had been cut, and the end passed over the stern of the big ship to be taken to the *Medway*, and in a few minutes the *Great Eastern* steamed proudly into the harbour, amidst the vociferous cheering of crowds of persons who eagerly watched us from the shore. By about 2 P.M. the splice with the shore-end was finished, and the *Medway* moved slowly ahead with the great heavy shore-end streaming from her stern. When a few hundred yards from the beach she was stopped, and the cable transferred to one of the paddle-box boats of H.M.S. *Terrible*, from which the remainder of the cable was to be paid out. Awaiting it on shore were some fifty Jack Tars from the *Terrible*, who, with signs of impatience, watch the tardy approach of the boat. Each eager to be first, their impatience grows greater every minute; and when the boat is still some ten yards from land, they rush into the water, which flows round the necks of some of them, seize the end of the cable, and in a very short time carry it to the testing-house, amidst vociferous cheering from all on shore, which was speedily answered by a royal salute from the *Terrible*, the *Lily*, the *Niger*, and the *Great Eastern*, making the hills of Heart's Content re-echo again and again. After some little trouble the electrical instruments were adjusted, and satisfactory signals transmitted from Heart's Content to

Valentia and back again. After the work was accomplished, all adjourned to the church, where an impressive service was held, and an excellent sermon preached by the Rev. Mr Gardiner. After church, we returned to the ship and partook of dinner, a meal to which, it is needless to state, everyone did ample justice. There were men round that table who had but just seen the accomplishment of the dream of twelve long years, who had fought bravely and manfully against the full tide of public opposition, and who had been pointed at and jeered at both by the public and by private friends as wild enthusiasts. There were men who had willingly resigned their fortunes, their time, and their peace of mind, who had given up all domestic joys and comforts, and had changed the estate of wealth, dignity, and ease, for danger, discomfort, and deprivation, who had cast off the luxuries which they had earned by their own exertions, to court a pilgrim's hardships, and take in hand the staff; and all for what? *The Atlantic Cable*.

Heart's Content is not what would be called an interesting place, although, I have no doubt, that is not altogether without interest in the eyes of the shareholders of the Anglo-American and Atlantic Telegraph Companies. The village itself consists of a wooden church, and about a hundred wooden houses, all built in a most unpretending style of architecture; the harbour is well sheltered, and the water is deep, so that the *Great Eastern* can anchor within a few hundred yards of the shore. The commerce of the place consists of cod-fish, which are dried in the sun, and dispense an aroma that is anything but nice.

Our sojourn at Heart's Content was not to be one of idleness, as we had to prepare for the second and more difficult part of our mission, by taking in coals and stores, and shifting cable from one ship to another. Within a fortnight from the time of our arrival, we were ready once more to make a start; and at noon on Thursday, August 9, found ourselves weighing anchor preparatory to setting sail for the grappling-ground.

KING THEODORE.

CERTAIN Correspondence, recently presented to the House of Commons, by command of her Majesty, respecting the British captives in Abyssinia, over whose liberation we rejoiced prematurely, and whose position is still a subject of grave uneasiness, sets before the European world an extraordinary picture. The disastrous story of Mr Plowden's sojourn in Abyssinia, the violent death which terminated it, in the moment most full of the promise of success; the tremendous revenge taken by King Theodore, who executed fifteen hundred men to avenge the murder, and propitiate the English government, who shewed itself duly sensible of the attention; and the almost equally sad and far more humiliating results of Captain Cameron's consulship—have invested the story of British intercourse with Abyssinia with a romantic interest, extremely rare in the annals of our diplomatic service. The story of the past and the present in the remote country, allied to us by a common tie of Christianity, however debased its form, and inconsistent its practices—the most fertile of all the known

provinces of the mysterious African continent, peopled by a race more marked by contradictory traits of character and anomalies of custom than any other in the world; a race, holding its own in the midst of savage tribes, which cut it off on the land sides, and barred by the hostile power of Islam from the sea; such a story has interest of no ordinary kind, and is told in the curt, formal pages of the *Further Correspondence* for which the House of Commons called last August.

Mr Palgrave's revelations of the model government, by a sovereign of quite ideal virtue and wisdom, of a splendid, prosperous, and enlightened community, in a portion of Arabia popularly believed hitherto to be a trackless desert, will have hardly taken the world more by surprise than Mr Plowden's dispatch to Lord Clarendon respecting the accession of King Theodore to sovereign power in Abyssinia; and the ambitious projects of that prince—a true hero of the Carlylian stamp—for the reconstruction of the Ethiopian empire, and the consolidation of the Ethiopian races. All this so long before Sadowa too, and when the nationalities on this side of the world were by no means having it all their own way. Few stranger documents can, by any possibility, be lying hid amid the archives of the Foreign Office, than this dispatch, which ought to be added as an appendix to all modern geographies, and included in the school courses of instruction, which, it is strongly to be suspected, mostly stop short at Bruce, in the article of Abyssinia.

The geographical position of Christian Abyssinia, its political institutions, its religious condition, are fully described in a singularly able paper, enclosed in Mr Plowden's dispatch of the 20th June 1852. The first of these is simple and easily defined. The northern boundaries do not reach within a hundred miles of the Red Sea at any point; and the interval is occupied by various savage tribes, all Mohammedan, all, except the Gallas, totally without government, living by their flocks and camels, and engaged in incessant feuds. The only good harbour in the Red Sea is Massowah; and the Turks own the island, and claim the coast for sixty miles inland. So much for the north. The western boundary is the pashalic of Sennaar. To the south-west, vast forests, frequented by wild beasts, or hot plains inhabited by negro races, exclude Abyssinia from the navigable part of the Blue Nile, whose impetuous torrent, on the other hand, protects the country from the daring and dauntless Gallas, a fine race, whose men are brave and honest, and whose women are beautiful. On the east and south-east, are various tribes of fierce and fanatic Mohammedans, who are themselves barred from the sea by the savage Adaiel, by whose hordes, led by the famous chief, Mohammed Grayne, Abyssinia was nearly destroyed, when Portugal interposed, and saved it by the introduction of firearms. Stretching all along the eastern boundary, again, to join the north, are other savage tribes, once Abyssinian, and still speaking the ancient Ethiopic tongue, but all lawless and inimical. The country which lies within this pleasant border is a range of vast table-lands and

fantastic mountains, varying from four thousand to fourteen thousand feet above the level of the sea. Deep valleys, the beds of the larger rivers, intersect this, but however circuitous their course, all these streams finally join the Blue Nile. They are nowhere navigable, and only a few mountain-torrents, swollen by the rain, find their way to the Red Sea. The valleys teem with the richest produce; and the soil is capable of growing everything which will grow anywhere; but there is little cultivation in proportion to the extent of territory. The scenery is varied and beautiful, and the country combines mineral resources, a delightful climate, tropical luxuriance, and such salubrity that no waste of European life need be apprehended from frequenting it. Such is the general result of Mr Plowden's statement in 1852, but he concludes in these words: 'While nature has done so much, human energy or skill has done nothing. The utter want of roads and bridges—the stagnant or lawless nature of the social system—the obstinate attachment to ancient customs—the multitude of rulers, indifferent to everything but their personal enjoyment—the constant wars, and consequent insecurity of life and property, are fast ruining a country of whose beauty and fertility its inhabitants may with some reason boast.'

The political condition of the country at this date bore resemblance, in some particulars, to that of feudal Europe, without the latent element of progress, and with the disadvantage of decadence from a former standard. Preserved from a complete lapse into barbarism by the existence of a written Law, the execution of its decrees was almost abrogated, the will of the chiefs being in reality supreme. The chiefs, each holding the rank of 'Dejajmatch'—a title somewhat analogous to that of duke—nominally subject to the Ras, or prime minister to the emperor, were like the turbulent vassals of Louis XI., the barons of King John, or those semi-fabulous daimios, of whom we occasionally hear, in connection with a few murders and a bombardment or so. Turbulence among rulers and people then prevailed, constant strife for power, but without extraordinary bloodshed or much cruelty, and marked by a certain classical kind of military grandeur. The war-councils and camp-feasts have a flavour of the *Iliad* about them. Soldiering was and is in high repute; and as each man knows that personal prowess may lead him to the height of power, the soldiers are high-spirited, independent, and full of *esprit de corps*. They have neither knapsacks nor bâtons, but they have the equivalent of both, and a proverb to match the Gallic boast. Corruption, confusion, adherence to tradition, sluggishness, and pride, more than oriental, but less than the average misery, suffering, and oppression of oriental countries, marked the social system of Abyssinia when the first attempt at making a treaty on the part of Great Britain with the Ras was made; and altogether the description reads like a medley of all the histories of feudal times, and all the books of eastern travel ever written in modern days. The hardest thing to realise is, that the country is nominally Christian, and that, when King Theodore pathetically invites Queen Victoria to consider how Islam oppresses the Christians, he is lamenting his own misfortunes. Morals there are none among the Abyssinians. Every sensual pleasure is indulged without scruple and without shame. The interests or convenience of the moment are the only rule of

conduct; want of tact and ill-temper are the only crimes in their code. They are decidedly a happy people, and of a kindly nature, knowing and caring nothing for the world outside Abyssinia. In Mr Plowden's time, they hardly knew that any other nation existed, and were persuaded that the lands beyond the sea were but a succession of barren deserts. When Europeans came among them, they would ask the strangers whether corn grew in their country, or if there were any women there; and, on the whole, betrayed a singular indifference to the prospects of trade and the increase of wealth held out to them by the enlightenment of their minds on the subject of foreign nations. Of course it is always surprising and unpleasant for Great Britain to learn that she is not wanted or wished for; but it cannot be denied that the Abyssinians and the Japanese were of one mind as to not ardently desiring the blessings of English civilisation.

The people of Abyssinia possess in their own land all the necessities, and many of the luxuries of life in profusion; they have great freedom of speech and action, and they are constitutionally and systematically gay. They meet misfortune and death with perfect fortitude; they are not violent or emotional; when it suits their interests or convenience to commit what we should consider very serious crimes, they go and do it, and tell all the particulars with good-humoured laughter. It is difficult to our minds to realise all the influences and results of a social system in which neither crime, detection, nor punishment is recognised as disgraceful, in which, in fact, there is no such thing as disgrace, and consequently no susceptibility, sensitiveness, or shame; but, if we could succeed in realising these influences and results, we should understand the people over whom King Theodore assumed his sway, and the wonderful work he is doing. They are sensible, witty, superstitious, dirty, proud, litigious, intensely obstinate, and singularly averse to new ideas. The Jewish origin of many of their institutions is unmistakable, and several of their characteristics are strongly Jewish. They have a written language, but they never use it; all affairs are transacted verbally; in the rare case of a letter being written, it is neither signed, sealed, nor dated. Marriage is a civil contract, dissolved at pleasure, and no distinction is made, in station or provision, between legitimate and illegitimate children. The ties of relationship are strong, from interested motives, as a barrier to the exactions of rapacious governors, and the violence of the soldiery. They do not carry their sentiments to the practical point of sharing their means; on the contrary, incessant lawsuits are carried on between relatives, for land and property; and they will muster in thousands to bewail and avenge the death of one whom they would cheerfully have permitted to starve.

Their religion is as anomalous as everything else about them; it is difficult to make out whether they believe anything, but their observances partake of the absurdities of Islamism, the severities of Judaism, and the lowest superstitions interpolated into debased Christianity. Their priests are extremely despotic, and have met all attempts to introduce the Roman Catholic creed with admirably organised massacres, by which the Jesuits have been the chief sufferers. As a nation, they never had any element of progress within themselves, and they never appear to have desired

any. Egyptian and Assyrian monarchs spent their lives in erecting huge monuments to their own memory, and the greatest marvels of Indian architecture were reared with a similar purpose. But the Abyssinian kings, practical philosophers in their way, sought only for the daily splendour and enjoyment within their reach, and were perfectly satisfied to be forgotten after their death. No purely national antiquities exist; there is absolutely no record of the history of two thousand years. Coinage and architecture in solid stone have never been attempted, though the Ptolemies set them the example of both, as shewn by the remains of Axum, and the gold and copper coins found in these ruins to this day. The Portuguese introduced the art of brick-burning, and built towers and bridges of excellent workmanship; but in 1852, no person in Abyssinia could make mortar. The mercantile portion of the community are not numerous, and are regarded by the agricultural classes and the military with much contempt. White cotton cloth is the sole material used by the people for their dress, and every other kind of costume is eyed with dislike and ridicule. Every kind of merchandise is transported on horses, mules, or donkeys, and the caravans travel with exasperating slowness. Mr Plowden states, that they frequently consume a whole year between Enarea and Massowah, a distance of 750 miles. To be sure, there are no roads, no bridges, abundance of robbers, and each tribe to be encountered on the way has its own peculiarly embarrassing institutions, and offers some especial bar to the progress of the journey.

In 1854, the condition of Abyssinia was thus summed up: 'The wasteful government of a military oligarchy, the incessant struggles for mastery, and uncertain tenure of all power, the careless sensuality of the chiefs, the wretched administration of the law, the utter decay of learning, and the corruption of the priesthood, have ruined a nation that has suffered little from national convulsions or foreign conquest. Individuals are found who feel that the nationality is lost, that internal feuds are fast dissolving them into petty tribes as savage as their neighbours, and that their chiefs, still claiming the high-sounding title of kings, are no better than powerful robbers. But it is to be feared that this decay cannot be checked by any efforts of their own, and that the boast of the Mahomedan, who points at the few remaining Christian provinces for his, will be verified.' When this was written, four competitors were struggling for power, of whom one was Ras Ali, with whom the first negotiations for a treaty had been commenced by the English government, and the other three, all remarkable men, though we have only one to deal with, bore the title of Dejaz. This one man was named Kasai, was married to the daughter of the Ras, and is described by Mr Plowden in glowing terms. Of him, he says that he is subtle and vigorous, daring to a fault, and disposed to innovation. He had then abolished in his army the practice of mutilating dead bodies; taught his soldiers some discipline, made war without camp-followers, and encouraged foreigners. Though proud, his manner was all humility; he was severe, liberal, and usually just, though he would sometimes break out into unaccountable acts of violence, indicating an unsettled temperament. Mr Plowden closed his speculations upon the contest between the chiefs with these words: 'Upon the whole, Dejaz Kasai would be the most

desirable.' Now, this Dejjai Kasai is King Theodorus of Abyssinia.

The story of his elevation to a rank to which he always believed himself destined, is the most brilliant and the most romantic conceivable. In this confidence in his destiny, and in the prudence with which he concealed his designs until they were ripe for execution, there is a similarity between him and his brother of France; and the results of his reign will be no less remarkable in their sphere and degree than those of the rule of Napoleon III.

The first step taken by Dejjai Kasai was the denial of the authority of the queen, mother of Ras Ali, under whom he governed the provinces near Sennaar. He defeated all the troops she sent against him; but when the Ras sent an immense force, after much treating and manœuvring, he surrendered, and the Ras, not wishing to injure him, accepted his submission, and restored all his former honours. After a while, Kasai again threw off the mask, and fought desperately, against the immensely superior force of the Ras, whom he utterly routed. Some time was consumed in collecting fresh soldiers and materials, and then Kasai beat the two contending 'Dejjai,' and all their strongholds surrendered to him. The fruits of the last victory were large treasures, accumulated for three generations, the submission or imprisonment of almost all the chiefs in Abyssinia, and the coronation of Kasai, under the title of Theodorus, King of Kings of Ethiopia.

Before the murder of Mr Plowden shut us out from knowledge of the progress of events in Abyssinia, and during the halcyon period when it seemed likely that England would make a good thing in money of his friendship, many interesting particulars were furnished respecting King Theodore. The triumph of his cause was marked by clemency and generosity, and he applied himself, within a week of his coronation, to the succour of the outlying districts of his kingdom, where the Mohammedans were, as usual, persecuting the Christians. At one of those outlying places, Mr Plowden came up with the new king, whose army consisted of sixty thousand men. He described King Theodore as a young man, vigorous in all bodily exercises, of a striking countenance, peculiarly polite, gentle, and engaging in manner, and possessed of great tact and delicacy. His bodily and mental energy are untiring, his personal and moral daring are boundless; and he proved them amply from the first by the unrelaxed severity with which he treated his soldiery, even when mutinous, and in the face of the foe; by pressing forward extensive reforms, in a country unused to any yoke, even while engaged in unceasing hostilities; and also by his suppression of the power of the great feudal chiefs, when a man less confident in himself, his destiny, and his power, would have sought to conciliate and make use of them. He is terrible in anger, but has great self-command. He is indefatigable in business, his language and ideas are clear and precise, and he manages all his affairs himself; he has neither councillors nor go-betweens. He is fond of splendour, and receives in state, even on a campaign. He is unsparing in punishment, accessible to all, gravely courteous to the meanest, strictly moral in his domestic life, excessively generous, free from cupidity, clement towards the vanquished, to whom he always offers his friendship. Surely a kingly king, is this destined ruler of the Ethiopians.

The fatalism of King Theodore is a curious trait in his strange character. His pride in his royal and divine right is excessive, and his fanatical religious zeal violent. His faith is of the strongest. Without Christ, he declares himself to be nothing; with His aid, he believes that nothing can stay him; and he carries this belief to the point of indifference to external human aid or foreign alliance. If England, or France, or Russia, any, or all, would drive away Islam for him, he would no doubt be well pleased; but as they will not, he resolves to 'keep hammering away,' undaunted and undiscouraged, on his own account.

Such of the earlier proceedings of his reign as are known to us are admirable. He suppressed the slave-trade in all its phases, only permitting slaves already purchased to be sold to such Christians as should buy them for charity, and set the example in his own case by paying the Mussulman dealers what prices they pleased to ask for any slaves brought to him. Then he immediately baptised his new purchases. He abolished the barbarous practice of handing over murderers to the relatives of their victims, and had them solemnly put to death by his own executioners instead. He directed his attention largely to military discipline, drilling the soldiers himself, and repressing plunder by instituting a regular system of payment for his troops. He began to encourage commerce by abolishing vexatious exactions, and decreeing that duties should be levied at only three places in his dominions. One of his first declarations was, that in time he would disarm the people, and create a regular standing army, armed with muskets only, and that he would convert swords and lances into ploughshares and reaping-hooks, and cause a plough-ox to be sold dearer than the noblest war-horse. A wonderful sample of the administrative ability of this extraordinary man is afforded by the system which has created generals in place of feudal chieftains, and organised a new nobility, a legion of honour dependent on the king, and chosen for their daring and fidelity.

This is but a brief and faint sketch of the great man who has appeared in the little-known kingdom of Abyssinia, to rescue the country from a rapid relapse into hideous barbarism, and to secure for himself a niche in the temple of Fame. A totally uneducated man, so ignorant as hardly to be aware that Europe existed, until Europeans came to treat with him in his sovereign capacity, and still difficult to convince that any king so great as King Theodore reigns upon earth; alone, without a counsellor, unaided save by his own genius—well might Mr Plowden say of him, in the measured language which he doubtless did violence to his own feelings of admiration in using: 'a man who, rising from the clouds of Abyssinian ignorance and childishness without assistance and without advice, has done so much, and contemplates such large designs, cannot be regarded as of an ordinary stamp.' To reform and regenerate his kingdom, was the work that lay to his hand when his reign began. He has pursued the task with wonderful courage and ability, proving himself a man whom, notwithstanding the unhappy disputes which have arisen between him and the British government, Englishmen must heartily admire, and whose greatness they would be the first to acknowledge. This sage and powerful monarch, practical, politic, hard-working man of business as he is, has a dream, a fair vision of the future. Something is to be done

when Abyssinia has been raised to the pinnacle of prosperity and greatness, when the empire of Ethiopia is 'consolidated'—when the Mohammedan tribes are reduced to submission, and Islam driven from the seaboard: then, Theodorus, King of Kings, will issue forth in irresistible might, at the head of his legions, to conquer Egypt, and march in triumph to the Holy Sepulchre.

There is grandeur in the wildness of such an ambition; and the romance and imaginativeness of his disposition aid the solid, daring, and practical character of his genius, in setting the true heroic stamp upon the extraordinary career of King Theodore.

BROUGHT TO LIGHT.

CHAPTER XXXIX.—A SECRET EXPEDITION.

WHEN the woman Marie, taking herself into her own confidence, after the fashion of most crazy people, told herself that Henri Duplessis was at White Grange, she stated nothing more than the truth. The Canadian was there in hiding; and there also, as a matter of course, was the faithful Antoine. Duplessis, in the first instance, on leaving Lilac Lodge, had really made his way to London, although the police were utterly baffled in their efforts to trace him, and had there lain up in lavender for a while, till the heat of the pursuit had in some measure died away. Marie had been shut up at White Grange all this time, to which place, as soon as his plans were ripe, Duplessis himself made his way, in the disguise of a Savoyard, with an organ at his back; and there he was shortly afterwards joined by Antoine. This dangerous move had not been made without a purpose—a purpose over which the Canadian's mind had been brooding ever since his flight from Lilac Lodge, and which he was now prepared to put into execution. The carrying out of this design had been delayed for several weeks in consequence of the unavoidable absence of Clotilde, Lady Spence-laugh's French maid, who, as a great favour, had been lent by her Ladyship for a couple of months to a particular friend about to proceed to Paris for a short time, whose acquaintance with the French language was of a limited character. Clotilde's presence at Belair was necessary to the plans of Duplessis, and as Clotilde was now back again, further delay was unadvisable.

Hitherto, Duplessis had said nothing to Antoine as to the nature of the great scheme which had been ripening in his brain for so long a time; but now that the eve of the night itself which he had fixed upon for his secret expedition had arrived, there was no necessity for further reticence, more especially as he needed the assistance of that devoted servitor. The best room in White Grange, a room seldom used by the family, and considered in the light of a state-parlour, had been given up to Duplessis. He had swung a sort of hammock in one corner of it; and in this room he slept, read, smoked, and took his meals; and once and again played a greasy game of piquet with Antoine. Considered at its best, it was a mean and shabby little den, and the Canadian's refined tastes rose in revolt a hundred times a day against the dingy

squalor by which his present life was environed. But all that would now be changed. So, as the afternoon waned, he summoned Antoine from the little loft close under the rafters, where that worthy was enjoying a comfortable after-dinner snooze, and bidding him close the door, and draw his chair up to the fire, he proceeded to unfold the details of his scheme.

Any one who had been acquainted with Henri Duplessis during his season of prosperity, would have found it a difficult matter to recognise that 'fine gentleman' under the husk which adverse circumstances had of late compelled him to assume. In place of the drawing-room exquisite, whose happy ease of manner, and unfailing supply of polite *persiflage*, he, perhaps, had secretly envied, he would have seen before him an olive-skinned and rather dirty-looking individual, with a crop of short black spiky hair, and a ragged black moustache; dressed in a suit of clothes whose best days had long been over. But the old fine manner was not to be hidden by a ragged coat; Duplessis was still a gentleman, though his supper might be nothing but bread and cheese and table-beer; and even surly old Nathan Orchard, who, as a rule, had scant respect for any one but himself, never addressed his singular lodger without first carrying a finger to his forehead; and it is almost needless to add that no change of circumstances could weaken in the slightest degree the devotion, and affectionate respect, with which Antoine regarded his master.

'Come here, my chicken, I want to talk seriously to thee,' said Duplessis, as Antoine closed the door. 'Nearer still, for we must have no eavesdroppers. That will do.—Thou seest these two bank-notes? They are of the value of ten pounds respectively, and are absolutely the last fragments of a once comfortable little fortune. Our old curmudgeon of a host will claim them as his due to-morrow, and when once they pass out of my fingers, one shilling and fourpence-halfpenny will be all that Henri Duplessis can call his own in the world. A pleasant prospect, is it not, my infant?'

Antoine's chubby face lengthened visibly; and there gradually crept over it such an expression of blank, but still comical consternation, that Duplessis could not help bursting into a hearty laugh.

'Our lucky star is hidden for a time behind the clouds, my Antoine,' resumed the Canadian. 'I must turn ambulatory musician for a livelihood, and watch the world and its doings over the green baize of a barrel-organ, in company with a small monkey of many accomplishments.'

'And what is to become of me, Monsieur Henri?'

demanded Antoine in a pitiful voice.

'Ices in summer, and coffee in winter. Let them be good and cheap, and in a dozen years thy fortune will be made.'

'Ah! Monsieur Henri, I don't want fortune; I don't want anything but to stay always with my dear master; to share his lot whatever it may be; to work for him now that he is poor, as'—

'Enough, my dear boy—enough!' said Duplessis with a sigh. 'Thy words stir strange feelings in my breast, such as had better remain unawakened. Thou hast the finest heart in the world; and so long as thou art left to me, I cannot believe that my good star has deserted me entirely. My fortunes, truly, are at a desperate ebb; but listen, my cabbage, listen with all thine ears: I have a scheme,

a splendid scheme, which, if it only succeed, will make us both rich men for life!

'Ah! Monsieur Henri, I knew your genius too well to fear that you would ever have need to walk long in the gutter.'

'It was to carry out this scheme that I came back from London into the very jaws of the lion, as one may say,' resumed Duplessis; 'and it would have been carried out weeks ago, had not Clotilde been away. At last I have succeeded in arranging everything for to-night. How are thy nerves, my Antoine? Does thy pulse beat steadily?—is there no lurking fear at the bottom of thy heart? The service is one of some danger; and thou mayst as well put thy revolver into thy pocket before we set out.'

'Monsieur has proved my courage before to-day,' said Antoine proudly. 'He has no occasion to doubt me now.'

'I do not doubt thee, thou pig-headed son of a hippopotamus. I know that when the moment comes, thou wilt be true as steel. O Antoine, if only we are successful! Think what openings there are in the New World, in Mexico, in California, for men of enterprise, with capital at their back.'

'But Monsieur has not yet favoured me with any particulars of his great scheme,' said Antoine quietly.

'A merited reproof. *Ecoutez donc.* In the first place, we leave here to-night as the clock strikes twelve, and then'—The Canadian's voice sunk to a whisper, and the two heads came together over the little table. Listening, Antoine took in all the details of the plot eagerly.

'It is a scheme worthy of the genius of Monsieur, and it cannot be otherwise than successful,' said the glowing Antoine, as Duplessis sank back in his chair, and prepared to light a cheroot. 'But has Monsieur decided what to do with *La Chatte*?'

'No, Antoine,' said Duplessis, pausing in his occupation, while a deep frown darkened his face; 'I have not decided. What can I do with her? To go on for ever paying her board and lodging at this place would ruin a millionaire. Our friend, Monsieur Orchard, does not grant us the asylum of his roof without charging us a heavy price for it. And yet, to attempt to take her with us out of the country, would be to run a thousand risks; more, I confess, than I have the courage to meet. What to do, I know not.'

'A couple of pinches of that gray powder which Monsieur once shewed me, dropped into her chocolate some morning, and, pouf! her little candle is blown out for ever, and nobody but ourselves is any the wiser.'

'A devilish scheme, Antoine, and one that I can never agree to. No; we must find some less objectionable mode of getting rid of her.'

'Monsieur is over-particular,' said Antoine drily. 'In such cases, indecision is only another name for weakness. When this little Belair business is well over, let Monsieur go to Paris, and enjoy himself for a while, leaving me still here. The claws of *La Chatte* must be clipped at once and for ever, and Antoine Gaudin is the man to do it. Monsieur has no occasion to trouble his mind further in the matter.'

Antoine twisted the waxed end of his moustache tenderly as he spoke, while an evil smile crept over his face, which brought into view his great yellow wolfish teeth; but Duplessis, smoking his

cheroot thoughtfully, and gazing intently into the fire, answered never a word.

The comforting words whispered by Mrs Winch in the ear of Lady Spencelaugh, as that person came back to consciousness in the little vestry, and reiterated again and again, as the two women sat together in the privacy of her Ladyship's dressing-room, were not without their effect on the mind of her on whose behalf they were spoken. Surely, what the widow said must be true! John English had sailed in the *Ocean Child*; the *Ocean Child* had been lost with all on board. Granting, then, John English to have been the real heir, of which there could no longer be much doubt, the title and estates, now that he was gone, would come, in proper legal sequence, to Gaston; and this horrible confession, which she had been driven by the force of circumstances to make, would, for the sake of the family, be hushed up by the few people to whom it was known. But even supposing that, by accident or design, some tittle of the truth were to leak out, and become the common property of that select circle in which her Ladyship lived and moved—the gossip of inferior people she held in utter contempt—no one knew better than she did how quietly but efficiently Time's busy fingers work at the cleansing of a soiled reputation, provided that the stain be not of too deep a dye to begin with; how patiently the old graybeard will strive to mend the flaws in your character, as though it were a piece of cracked china, only the porcelain on which he works must be of the finest quality, and not composed of inferior clay: and it is wonderful how much your patched porcelain will often stand in the way of wear and tear, if only common care be used in the handling of it. Three or four years, her Ladyship thought, spent not unpleasantly among the German spas, and the galleries of Florence and Rome, and then she might come back with safety, bringing with her a renovated reputation, which would never be too rudely questioned by the denizens of Vanity Fair, where so much base alloy is quietly winked at, and allowed to pass current as sterling coin.

Lady Spencelaugh, deriving what scraps of comfort were possible to her from these considerations, and from the cheering words of her humble friend, Martha Winch, allowed herself, after a time, to be put to bed. She lay quietly enough, so long as the landlady was with her; but no sooner had that indefatigable person taken her leave for the night, than her Ladyship arose. Utterly tired out as she was, both in body and mind, by the events of the day, her brain was yet far too excited for sleep; besides, the quietude of bed frightened her. Her restless fancy peopled the dusky chamber with all sorts of unwelcome visitors, till, unable any longer to bear their company, she crept, shawled and slipped, to the cosy companionship of the dressing-room fire; and there, crouched on the rug, between sleeping and waking, she allowed her mind to play at hide-and-seek with the distorted and ever-changing crowd of doubts, and hopes, and fears, which now claimed her as their own; and enacted over and over again, in fancy, the whole painful drama of the day just closed.

Midnight came and went, but Lady Spencelaugh never stirred. She still lay coiled on the rug, with white fingers tightly intertwined, her head resting on a bunch of rosebuds, cunningly worked with

coloured silks on the cushion of a *fauteuil*. The silvery voice of the Sèvres clock on the mantelpiece had just told the hour of two, when she was roused from her state of semi-stupor by the noise of the opening door. She turned her head uneasily on its pillow, and said: 'Is that you, Clotilde? You may go to bed. I shall not want'—The rest of the sentence died away in her throat at sight of two strange men, their faces covered with black crape, coming rapidly towards her. They were in her before she could scream or give any alarm.

'Speak, and you are a dead woman!' exclaimed one of the men, seizing her roughly by the shoulder, and presenting a pistol at her head.

'O spare my life!' she contrived to gasp out.

'Obey my orders implicitly, and no harm shall happen to you,' said the man. 'But dare to give the least alarm, and that moment you die!'

He then bade her rise and seat herself in an easy-chair; and with that, the second man whipped a coil of thin rope out of his pocket, and proceeded, dexterously and neatly, to tie her Ladyship in the chair, so that she could move neither hand nor foot; after which he proceeded to gag her with her own pocket-handkerchief, and a small strip of wood, which he had evidently brought for the purpose. When he had done, had her life depended on it, Lady Spencelaugh could not have uttered anything beyond a faint moan.

'Await my return here,' said the first man, as the other one stepped back a pace or two, to admire the neatness of his handiwork. 'But first bolt both the doors, so that there may be no fear of intruders.'

There was something in the tone of this man's voice which, even through the midst of her terror, seemed to strike familiarly on Lady Spencelaugh's ear. Certainly she knew the voice, she said to herself again and again; but where and when she had heard it before, was a question which, in the present perturbed state of her mind, she found herself utterly unable to answer. As before stated, the faces of the men were hidden by crape veils; their dress was homely and commonplace enough; and their boots were covered with some soft material, which deadened the sound of their footsteps.

The second man now seated himself on a chair close to Lady Spencelaugh, and proceeded to light a cigarette. Him her Ladyship regarded with indifference, now that she found her life was not in danger; but her gaze rested uneasily on the first man. Why had he come hither, and what was he about to do? He approached the chimney-piece, and she held her breath. His fingers seemed to be wandering, as if in quest of something, among the intricate scroll-work, and quaint old-world conceits, which the hand of some dead-and-gone sculptor, making the hard marble plastic to his fancy, had carved with loving care and minuteness all over the snowy surface; and her eyes dilated as she watched him. Could it be possible that to this veiled midnight plunderer was known the precious secret guarded by her with such jealous watchfulness—the secret which, she had fondly hoped, was known to no one among the living except herself and Martha Winch? Had the dead found a tongue to whisper it, or by what other occult means had her strange visitors become possessed of the knowledge? Her breath came in thick stifling gasps as she watched him; but when

she saw his fingers press gently the fifth marble button from the top on the left-hand side of the mantel-shelf, and at the same moment turn thrice to the left the small brass knob hidden behind the central scroll-work—when she saw one side of the chimney-piece roll gently back on hidden wheels, disclosing, as it did so, a narrow opening in the wall, evidently leading to some mysterious chamber beyond: when Lady Spencelaugh saw all this, knowing that the hoarded treasures of her life—all the gems and precious stones, the gatherings of many years, and which, next to her son, Gaston, she loved better than aught else on earth—were about to be snatched from her for ever, her heart gave way within her, and with a faint groan, that was stifled in her throat, her head sunk forward on her breast, and for a time she remembered nothing more. When Lady Spencelaugh recovered her consciousness, the two men were still there; one of them holding a small spirit-flask in his hand, which he had evidently been applying to her Ladyship's lips, in the hope of bringing her round more quickly.

'She will do now,' said he who seemed the leader. 'Put on the gag. We have no time to lose;' and with that he turned to a small table near at hand, on which were spread a quantity of gems and precious stones of various kinds, some of them still uncut, while others were cut and set as necklaces, bracelets, rings, or other articles of personal adornment: a glittering throng truly. The gag was in her mouth, and Lady Spencelaugh looked on in dumb despair while the veiled man swept all her cherished treasures into a wash-leather bag, and then disposed of the same in some safe place about his person. They were lost to her without hope of recovery; all her precious hoard was gone, the slow, patient accumulation of twenty years. This hoarding of precious stones had been a monomania with her, secretly pursued, for not even Sir Philip himself, although aware of her weakness in this respect, had had any idea of the extent to which she had carried it. By means of what devilish arts had this white-handed thief learned the secret of the hiding-place? As her bright darlings slipped from her eyes for ever, she felt at that moment as though it would be a pleasant thing to die, and so end all this weary coil of calamities which was encompassing her around without any hope of escape. This brief, vivid drama in which she had been an involuntary actress, had had for her such an intensity of meaning as to cause her to forget for a little while that other dark drama of the day just done, in which she had played one of the leading parts; but now that this second act was consummated, the full weight of her misery flowed over her in a double wave, under whose accumulated force her very soul seemed to die within her, leaving her for a time powerless to suffer further. She had some dim sense of being left alone, and of hearing the key turned in the lock as the two men beat a hasty retreat—yes, alone; bound hand and foot, powerless to stir or speak, and without hope of release till morning should reveal her condition to some one—if, indeed, she could live thus till morning. To die would perhaps be best.

CHAPTER XL.—THE EAST WING.

It was quite dark by the time Jane Garrod got home from Belair, which place she had left

immediately after it had been decided to visit the family vault; with the result of which visit she would of course remain unacquainted till the following morning. The snow was coming down fast as Jane plodded homeward along the solitary by-paths which she knew so well; and when she turned a corner of the road, and while still some distance off, saw the ruddy glow of fire-light that streamed across the white road from the window of her own little home, her heart felt glad within her to think that her lot in life was cast in humble places, such as the sweet flower of Content loves best to haunt.

Jane scraped her feet, and shook some of the snow off her gown and shawl; and wondering whether Abel would have had sufficient forethought to have the kettle boiling against her return, she quietly opened the door and went in—went in, to find a bearded, stalwart individual sitting by the chimney-corner, who no sooner caught sight of her than he started up, and crossing the floor in a couple of strides, seized her by both hands, and shook them heartily, and then stooped and kissed her just as heartily on the cheek.

'Thank Heaven, you are come! back safe and sound!' were Jane's first words when she had recovered in some measure from her surprise, and had further refreshed herself with a quiet fit of crying. 'But, oh, what a deal of pain and anxiety you would have spared both Miss Frederica and me if you had only written to tell us you were about to leave Pevsey Bay!'

'I did write to you,' said John, 'only an hour before the train started, telling you that I was going to America to try and hunt up some proofs of my identity.'

'Certainly your letter never came to hand,' said Jane. 'As I've many a time told Miss Frederica, there was some treachery at work in the case, of which we knew nothing. But we need not mind that now. May I ask, sir, whether you have succeeded in finding what you went so far to look for?'

'I have—beyond my utmost expectations,' answered John. 'But not another word shall you drag out of me till you have told me all the news about a certain young lady.'

'A certain lady is quite well, and that is all I can tell you about her at present,' said Jane with a smile. 'I have been with her all day, and when I left her this afternoon, her last words were: "Oh, if he would but come!" Whom she meant by he, I could not of course imagine.'

John thanked his stars that just then the fire gave too dim a light to allow of the hot flush that rose to his forehead being seen even by Jane's friendly eyes.

'And Sir Philip?' said John interrogatively, after a little pause. 'I ought to have asked after him first, but even now, I almost dread to put the question.'

'Sir Philip is dead; and you are now Sir Arthur Spencelaugh,' said Jane solemnly; and with that, she got up from her chair, and swept John a stately old-fashioned courtesy, full of obeisance and respectful homage, and stood to hear his commands.

John turned away his head with a groan, and Jane knew that his tears were falling fast.

'If I had only come in time!' he murmured at last—in time to see him and tell him who I am, and ask his blessing! I loved him, Jane Garrod,

loved him and revered him from the first moment I saw him, as I never loved and revered any other man. And now, I shall never see him more on earth!'

Jane, leaving him alone in the twilight with his grief, went softly out into another room. In about half an hour, she came back, carrying a lighted lamp. 'It is needful, Sir Arthur, that you should go up to Belair at an early hour to-morrow,' she said; 'there is much to do, and'—

'Hush!' said the young man gently, laying his hand on her arm. 'You must not call me by that name—at least, not till the world shall have acknowledged my right to bear it; and even then, to you, to whom I owe more than I can possibly repay, let me never be other than plain John English!'

'Miss Frederica, sir, has fought your battle bravely while you have been away,' said Jane, as she went deftly about her preparations for tea.

'God bless her for it!' said John heartily.

'But to-day was the hardest time of all for her—almost more than she could bear.'

'How so? I do not understand you,' said John with reawakened interest.

Jane was burning to tell her guest all that had happened, affecting his interests, since his departure from Pevsey Bay; and now that his curiosity was aroused by her last words, she took care that it should not flag again till she had said all that she wanted to say; and John himself, when once Jane had begun her narrative, was as eager to hear as she was to tell.

Tea was an hour later than usual that evening at the little station-house, a want of punctuality on the part of his wife which surprised Abel Garrod even more than the return of John English had done, or the narrative of the strange events which had happened that day at Belair. When tea was over, John produced his meerschaum, and Abel his yard of clay; and then, in order to satisfy Jane's evident curiosity in the matter, John entered into some details of what had befallen him after leaving Pevsey Bay; mentioning, among other things, how he had secured a berth on board the *Ocean Child*, and had even gone on board her preparatory to sailing, when, hearing accidentally, at the last moment, that a brother of the Mr Felix who had so nobly befriended him some years before, had just arrived in Liverpool from Australia, he had at once gone on shore again, preferring the risk of losing his passage to missing the opportunity of seeing the brother of his dead friend, for whose ear he had certain private messages, which Mr Felix had charged him to deliver in person, should a possibility of doing so ever arise.

As it happened, fortunately for himself, John English did miss his passage on board the *Ocean Child*, which vessel was lost a few days after sailing, with all on board. John had been tracked by Brackenridge on board the ill-fated ship, and when news came of the wreck, the chemist at once concluded that Mrs Jakeway's late lodger was one of those who had perished.

John English lay on the night of his return in the same cosy little room in which he had passed so many weary days and nights during the time that Jane Garrod was nursing him of his wound; but his brain was far too busy to allow of sleep coming near him. He drew up the blind before getting into bed, and then lay staring out at the

dark cloud-squadrons hurrying brokenly across the sky—no unmeet emblem, it seemed to him, of the hurrying throng of broken thoughts coursing so restlessly, just then, across his brain, all darkened and solemnised by the knowledge that nevermore on earth would he see that face which he had learned to love and reverence before even his wildest dreams had pictured it as the face of his father. Two or three hours passed away, and John's eyes were as wide open as ever; when suddenly he leaped out of bed, attracted to the window by a glare of reddish light in the western horizon, which he had been vaguely watching for some time, but which was now rapidly growing so bright and lurid as to claim his serious attention. Suddenly there came a tap at his door, and then Abel Garrod spoke: 'For Heaven's sake, get up, sir, as quickly as you can! *Belair is on fire!*'

Leaving Lady Spenceleugh bound and gagged so that it was impossible for her either to stir or speak, the two men locked the door of the room behind them, and then stole noiselessly along the corridor leading from her Ladyship's apartments, and so down the broad shallow stairs, at the foot of which they were met by Clotilde, thanks to whose good offices they had obtained such easy and unopposed access to the interior of the Hall. The French girl carried a small lamp in her hand, and, after laying a warning finger on her lips, she beckoned the two men to follow her, and so led the way across the entrance-hall, and then through one or two winding passages, till she brought them to a little door at the back of the house, which opened into the kitchen-garden.

'All safe, so far,' said Clotilde in a whisper: 'you must go back by the same way that you came. The garden-walk has been trodden by half-a-dozen people since the snow ceased falling, so that there is no danger of your footsteps being tracked.'

'Thou hast been a good child, and thou shalt not be forgotten,' said one of the men, as he chucked the waiting-girl under the chin. 'But the most difficult portion of thy task is yet before thee. When the discovery comes, be careful not to overact thy part. Don't be too much surprised—too much horrified. Call up thy tears once or twice—tears look so genuine—in commiseration of my Lady's sufferings; but avoid being noisy. And now, *au revoir*; thou shalt hear from me shortly by a sure hand.'

'Such a girl as that is!' said the second man in an oily whisper, as he came up behind the other a minute or two later. 'She would have kept me there till!'

'Silence, babbler!' said the other one with a snarl. 'Reserve thy *contes d'amour* for another season. Half an hour ago, Henri Duplessis was a gentleman; now, he is a common thief.'

Clotilde left alone, felt far too happy to go to bed just then, for Antoine had spoken loving words, and she wanted to muse over all that he had said. She drew her thick woollen shawl over her head, and gliding back noiselessly through the hushed house, softly unfastened a door on the opposite side of the hall, which admitted her on to the terrace, one portion of which was sheltered by a verandah; and here she paced backwards and forwards for nearly an hour, lost in a vague, rosy love-dream, till the piercing cold of the frosty night began to make itself felt. Breaking out of

her reverie, she went indoors, and after refastening the door, she proceeded to the little anteroom where she had left her lamp before going out. Opening the door, she started back in terror at finding the room full of smoke—nay, there was more than smoke, there was actual live flame; red quivering tongues licking the wood-work greedily; great lurid blotches, like some terrible eruption, momentarily spreading, and merging one into another, and gathering strength and fierceness as they spread, and already far beyond any curative means at command of the French girl. She understood it at a glance; the lamp had flared up for want of snuffing, and the flame had caught the tapestry with which the walls in part were lined, and had so spread to the panelling behind, which age had rendered almost as dry and inflammable as tinder. This anteroom was situated in the east wing, and the east wing was by far the oldest part of Belair. True, it had been renovated and repaired at different periods, but always in keeping with the original idea, which had apparently been to make as much use of timber and plaster, and as little of stone and brick, as possible. Lady Spenceleugh's apartments were situated in the east wing, her sitting-room and boudoir on the ground-floor, and her bed and dressing rooms immediately over them. Of the remaining rooms in the wing, one was the anteroom, where the fire originated; another, a great desolate billiard-room; while the rest were seldom used except on those rare occasions when Belair was full of guests. In the whole of the east wing, only two people ordinarily slept, namely, Lady Spenceleugh and her maid.

Stupified with fear at sight of this new and terrible enemy, and utterly deserted by her usual *sang-froid* and presence of mind, Clotilde rushed back through the passage, and so into the entrance-hall, screaming: 'Fire! fire!' and then, unbolting one of the doors, she rushed out into the park, and hurried off in the direction of White Grange, in the vague hope of overtaking Antoine.

Clotilde's screams had been heard by no one except by the miserable woman who had been left bound and gagged by the two men, and on her ears the warning words fell with a terrible significance. In all that great house, she was the only person not asleep, and she could neither stir nor speak. The fire was spreading rapidly. It was no longer confined to the anteroom, but had fiercely laid hold of the great oaken staircase that led from the entrance-hall to the upper floors of the east wing; and was having a merry game to itself in the billiard-room; and would soon force its way into the empty chambers overhead. The pungent odour of the burning wood came in hot heavy puffs under the door of the room in which Lady Spenceleugh sat helpless, and gave a dread confirmation to the words of Clotilde. She listened as she never seemed to have listened before, for some voice or other token of the vicinage of human beings; but she heard nothing save the crackling of the flames as they seized on the wood-work at the end of the corridor, and seemed to be testing its quality with their teeth. She had undergone so much mental and bodily torture during the last few hours, that the keen edge of anguish was in some measure blunted; and now that the end of all her sufferings seemed so imminent, she sank into a sort of dull stupor of despair, which lent a strange air of unreality both to herself and her surroundings, making her feel as though she were merely acting a part in some weird, fantastic

dream, from which she should presently awake ; dulling for a time, as though by the influence of some powerful narcotic, both overwrought body and overwrought brain.

Nor was this spell, if such it may be called, broken till she heard a sudden rush of voices, and knew that the other inmates had taken the alarm. A little later, and there was a louder clamour of voices than before, and she could hear her own name called aloud ; and then she knew that they had missed her, and that some effort would be made for her rescue. Therewith the desire to live came back upon her in all its intensity ; and what a wild, agonised prayer was that which, from the lowest depths of her heart, went up to Heaven's gate, that she might not die just yet—that she, no martyr to any religion save that of Self, might not be called upon to undergo this fiery trial—that she might live, were it only for a little while, live to redress some of the wrong she had done, live that she might have leisure to repent !

Presently she heard Gaston's voice giving some orders to the men outside, and the sound thrilled her mother's heart. Whatever might happen to herself, her darling was safe ; and from that moment one half of her calamity seemed lifted off her. The room by this time was full of stifling smoke, and the menacing crackling of the flames sounded louder with every passing minute. There seemed to be quite a crowd of people collected in the shrubbery outside ; she could hear the deep murmur of many voices, now loud now low, without being able to distinguish anything that was said ; and ever and anon the sharp, imperative tones of Gaston sounding clearly above the rest, with what seemed to her like a ring of suppressed agony in their very clearness. After what appeared a terribly long delay, a ladder was found that would reach to the windows of her room ; and scarcely had its tip touched the wall, when a man was climbing it with the agility of a sailor, under whose fierce blows, next instant, the panes of the window fell in fragments to the ground.

'Mother! mother! where are you?' called Gaston, for it was he who had climbed the ladder.

The windows of Lady Spencelaugh's apartments were of the old-fashioned diamond-paned sort, with iron cross-bars worked into their frames, and opening only by means of small casements ; so that it was impossible for any one to get either in or out that way ; and her Ladyship had often secretly felicitated herself on the additional security which her rooms derived from the peculiar formation of the windows.

As it was impossible for Gaston to obtain ingress through the window, all that he could do was to call again, still more loudly than before : 'Mother! mother! where are you? For Heaven's sake, speak to me.' But the room was filled with a dense smoke, which only seemed to throw back the ruddy glare which shone in through the windows, without being penetrated by it ; and Gaston's eyes, as he clung desperately to the bars outside, were quite unable to pierce the obscurity within ; besides which, he had every reason to believe that his mother was in bed in the inner room, and his efforts were directed to the rousing of her from her supposed sleep. Again and again he called her ; and she in turn put forth all her little strength in a desperate struggle to free herself from some of her bonds, or at least to get rid of the gag ; but all her efforts proved utterly futile, and only seemed

to have the effect of rendering her a faster prisoner than before.

'My God! she must have been stifled in bed by the smoke!' she heard Gaston say at last ; and then she heard him go down, and with that, her last chance of escape seemed to die utterly away. She knew that they would not have tried to reach her through the window, had not all ordinary means of access to her rooms been blocked by the fire. Through the broken window she heard some man who had a louder voice than his neighbours, say that the rooms below were all on fire now, and that the thick beams in the ceiling would soon be burned through, and then— The man's voice was lost again in the murmur of the crowd, and Lady Spencelaugh's soul shuddered within her. There was no hope left her, then—none! Then came another thought : So much for her yet to do, and so little time to do it in!

A sudden cheer from the crowd. What could it mean? And next moment the sound of hurried footsteps advancing along the corridor that led to her rooms ; and then the crash of a heavy body against the door ; another, and the door broke away from its hinges ; and through the smoke there advanced upon her a tall dark figure which, in that first moment of surprise, she could not look upon as other than an apparition from the dead. The current of air from the broken window had thinned the smoke in some measure, and the room was filled with the ruddy glare of the burning house, and in the midst of that glare stood he whom but a few short hours ago she had fondly hoped lay buried fathoms deep beneath the waves—he whose young life she had blighted, whose death she had compassed—he whom she had hated above all others—the eldest-born of her dead husband, and now Sir Arthur Spencelaugh. Oh, the bitterness of owing her life to the courage of this man! Was this the method of his forgiveness?

'You, and in this position, Lady Spencelaugh!' said Sir Arthur, as his quick eye took in the details of the case. 'What scoundrel has been at work here? But you must tell me afterwards, for we have not a minute to spare if we would get back in safety.'

He had his pocket-knife out even while he was speaking, and was rapidly cutting the cords that fastened her. But even when released from her bonds, she was utterly unable to move either hand or foot, and Sir Arthur seeing this, hastened into an adjoining room, and brought thence a large counterpane, in which he proceeded to wrap the helpless woman ; and when this was done, he took her up lightly in his arms, and carried her out by the way he had come. At the end of the corridor he paused ; before him lay the gulf of raging fire, several feet in width, which he had so boldly overleaped when on his way to search for Lady Spencelaugh, before which all the other volunteers had paused aghast, and even Gaston, brave enough on all ordinary occasions, had trembled and fallen back, as doubtful of his ability to reach the opposite side. This fiery gulf occupied the spot where the old staircase had been, which was one of the first objects that fell a prey to the flames. From the opposite side of the staircase ran what was known as the Stone Gallery, and the space between the end of this gallery and the corridor where Sir Arthur was now standing was filled by a staircase no longer, but by a seething bed of fire. The leap across from the gallery to the corridor was a desperate one under any

circumstances, since to miss your footing on the opposite side meant nothing less than destruction ; and burdened as Sir Arthur now was, to get back the same way was a sheer impossibility. The men awaiting his return in the gallery had given him a hearty cheer when they saw him emerge through the smoke holding in his arms the object of his search ; but the cheer had ended in something very like a groan, when they saw and recognised the difficulty which he was now called upon to face. There was a minute's intense silence, which Sir Arthur was the first to break. 'Fetch up the long ladder out of the shrubbery,' he called out to the men in the gallery. They understood in an instant why he wanted it, and two minutes later, there it was. With hearty good-will, they proceeded to push it out from the gallery, and over the burning wreck of the staircase, till its other end rested on the corridor at the feet of Sir Arthur ; who then, taking up his burden again, stepped lightly from rung to rung across the fiery gulf, till he reached the opposite side, and then gave up his charge into the hands of the pale-faced Gaston, who as yet knew not the name of the fearless stranger.

THE EARL'S DAUGHTER.

(HISTORICAL PORTRAIT-GALLERY, August 1866.)

LARGE twilight eyes, and calm pure face,
A regal smile, sweet crimson lips,
White hands, that to the rosy tips
Are vitalised by inner grace.

Soft golden hair in clouds of curls,
Bright clustering round a tranquil brow,
Casting half-shadows such as glow
Athwart the cheeks of Titian's girls.

The quaint old dress I love to note,
Gray with geranium-ribbon bows.
How from the black and scarlet rose
Closes the collar at the throat !

Such lace ! a cobweb of rich thread,
Woven in stately Valenciennes
(A costly ransom for a queen),
By nuns and novices long dead.

Below it, from the fairy waist,
Soft yellow satin, fold on fold,
Falls in a cascade of pale gold,
Lit by a sunbeam shadow chased.

This was the daughter of an earl
Of Charles's time ; poor Lovelace sued ;
Perhaps young Milton may have wooed
This queen, this paragon, this pearl.

That is her father, that grave lord
In buff and corselet, scarf and plume,
Standing amid the cannon-gloom,
One gauntlet on his sturdy sword.

And that her mother, wise and shrewd,
With courtly wisdom deep ingrained—
Even in *James's* court unstained—
With high traditions deep imbued.

This was a maiden pure and good,
Great-hearted against grief and care,
Fit grief to halve, and joy to share—
A very queen of womanhood.

Where can such women now be sought ?
Mere feeble men, defiant, bold,
Small-brained, vain, flippant, heartless, cold—
Traitor to love, I basely thought.

Look at them with a patch of lace
Saddling each little empty head,
With tresses stolen from the dead,
In shapeless humps that scare each grace.

Traitor to Beauty ! lo ! I heard
A soft sweet voice beside me say :
'My ancestress, the Lady May !'
'Twas like the warbling of a bird.

I looked—yes, yes ; the self-same eyes,
As full of tenderness and love ;
And calmly rose those eyes above
The candid brow that poets prize.

Still twilight in the eyes ?—No, no ;
Forget-me-not has blue like theirs ;
No shadow of our meaner cares
Dimming their lustre or their glow.

And o'er them towered the golden hair,
The crown of beauty glorified ;
And with a holy radiance vied
To make the sunshine seem less fair.

And whilst I wondered, tranced with joy,
The vision vanished through the door ;
And down the statued corridor,
I heard the shrill voice of a boy,

Calling the carriage of the earl.
Fool ! rebel that I was to sneer !
Angels to men are always near,
And there is still the English girl

As she was ever ; pure of heart,
With an ideal of her own,
With spells like Cytheræ's zone,
Winning by magic more than art !

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MOVING HOUSE.

'THREE removes are as bad as a fire,' says the adage. I have not been entirely burned, but have been just a little singed. I have only moved once, but that once was a warning to humanity—ghastly in its commencement, awful during its continuance, and intolerable till its conclusion.

The Persians were ingeniously cruel, no doubt, when they smeared a criminal with honey, and bound him to an ant's nest. The ancient Scythians shewed a pretty fancy when they dragged the tops of four strong, lithe, young poplars together, then lashed a traitor to the combined branches, and let them spring back, to the instant extinction of the wretch's life. But still, neither Persian nor Scythian, with all their honey and poplars, ever invented any mental or bodily torture equivalent to that of 'Moving House.'

Envy the unsophisticated dwellers in huts, ye dwellers in cities, though camel's milk be inferior to comet port, and the desert sands be mere drifts of fleas, for the Arab leads away his mare, rolls up his carpets, bundles off his wife, and shifts his whole household in half an hour, leaving no trace of his residence but a pile of date-stones, and a black ring where the last fire had been. Truly, our modern civilisation multiplies our wants, but does it also double our pleasures?

Unhappy the man who suddenly awakes to the fact (having made a hit on 'Change, or being blessed by an increase in his family, or having received a legacy) that his house is too small for him. That idea having once taken possession of his miserable brain, nothing in the place henceforward appears to him in its true colours. It seems to contract before his eyes—to close in upon him like the fabled iron prison, inch by inch.

A house is at last chosen, and the time is actually fixed for the moving. The vans are ordered from the nearest town, after much haggling. According to the plausible upholsterer, moving is the merest trifle and almost an enjoyment: done in a day, and at a slight expense.

'Any danger of breaking?'

The stout upholsterer laughs derisively. 'Break?' He really seemed to have forgotten the word, or to have erased it from his dictionary. He had just sent a van full of glass shades safely a distance of six hundred miles—shades not even packed. Expense? Hardly anything—nominal. Four horses to a van—a shilling a mile per horse. What was that, you know? Then for packing, merely fifteen shillings a day, and travelling expenses. The same when out with the vans. No return-fare, of course. Packing all done speedily and safely. First-class men—enormous wages.

Mr Merryden (for so let us call the man about to move) returns home from the county town elate at the economy and speed with which the whole business (falsely considered expensive and troublesome) is to be conducted. He praises the progress of things to Mrs Merryden; alludes to the comfort, now so easily secured, of doing matters with rapidity and precision. Mrs M., who is conservative and nervous, expresses her fears about the drawing-room ornaments being broken, and the best telescope-table being scratched (as poor Mrs Numby's was); but is quelled by Merryden's loud voice and sanguine reassurances.

'Would not the railway be better and cheaper?' suggests Mrs M., roused by the amiable wish to appear more sagacious than Merryden, who hates opposition, and worry, and fuss, and loves his ease.

'No. Jobson, the upholsterer at Chalkerton, at once pooh-pooled railway luggage-trains; and he is a man of great experience, you know, my dear, and does these things every day. Is moving now for Canon Chatterton, all the way to Durham, lots of glass and china; famous for his old Venetian glass, you know—the canon.'

'But the railway is quicker, John, and I should certainly think cheaper?' suggests Mrs M., not to be convinced, wherever the canon may be going to.

'Won't do at all. Transfer at junctions plays old gooseberry with the glass and polished furniture—above all, the dreadful jolts, when the train is shunted; and then the porters haul and tumble the things about, and the company won't hold itself accountable. Oh, railways won't do at all;

the road's the true way—straight from door to door—saves a world of bother.'

'That is all you men think of' (this is the last Parthian arrow from defeated Mrs M.); 'anything just to save yourselves trouble, let the expense be what it will. Mind' (here Mrs M. becomes solemn and prophetic), 'if all the furniture gets broken, it's not my fault.'

Merryden growls denunciations of all restless and nervous people who invent trouble and forebode evil. It is his plan, he boasts, always to take things in 'a quiet sort of way'; and here he breaks into song, and rings for coffee, which means that he will discuss the matter no further.

The decree has gone forth, and Mrs Merryden must obey.

Day by day, the horrible event tightens its folds on that unfortunate lady. One by one the carpets are stripped off, and the house is flayed as if it was a huge dead animal, whose skin was its only valuable part. One by one the pictures are removed, and placed in melancholy stacks against the walls. These being gone, a new element of misery succeeds, for the whole place sounds hollow as a family vault, and promises to soon look as cheerful. The merest platitude is echoed back in ghostly mockery.

The first bitterness of the business is tasted by the miserable Mr Merryden; while the more doleful and bare the house becomes, the more bustling and victorious grows Mrs Merryden, the rejoicing housewife who directs the storm.

A light cart! That is the man to pack the china. Mr Merryden is requested, as a particular favour, to allow that operation to be performed in his study, as it is near the storeroom, where the best china is. He consents, but scarcely with gracefulness; in fact, we blush to say, he swears. He goes out, to forget his troubles in a long walk. He returns, and finds six crates standing at the door of his study, like the first sketch of a stable, in an animal painter's studio.

'The packing,' says Mrs Merryden, 'has been most beautifully done, and only one marble slab and two washing-jugs broken—cracked before, the foreman from Batson's said—most gentleman-like young man—' Wished Mr Merryden had been at home; he would have been so useful handing the things to the packers.'

'Straw enough for a dragoon regiment,' growls the ungrateful and unworthy Merryden. 'Why on earth not leave it all,' he suggests, 'to the upholsterers?'

'Yes, and have two-thirds broken, and the rest cracked. Why, John, you must be out of your senses!' snaps Mrs Merryden. 'What a goose you must be to believe what such people tell you.'

'But the big glass shades, dear—six hundred miles'—

'Stuff and nonsense! All packed in boxes, I daresay.'

'But, I tell you, old Jobson himself told me that their vans had beds and wells sunk below

the flooring, and the delicate things are placed there, embedded in hay.'

'It is no use talking, John. If you were to talk seven hundred years, you would never convince me; so pray, let things go on.'

So things did go on; that is to say, Mrs Merryden does as she likes, and household misery reigns supreme; some of it necessary, some avoidable, if Mrs Merryden was only a little less anxious, and a little more hopeful.

Then the books have to be packed. Each box becomes a vast puzzle, always presenting corners and triangular nooks, which the last volume in the row obstinately refuses to fill. The shelves look dismally blank when the books, their old companions, have been nailed down in the darkness of their temporary coffins. There they are—Horace and Molière, Homer and Peter Pindar, in strange fellowship and close confinement, for Heaven and Mrs Merryden only know how long. The unhappy husband sighs as he nails on the last lid, or tries, like a Samson, to drag the chests to a convenient and out-of-the-way spot.

Of course there is to be a sale of refuse things. Mrs Merryden is powerful upon the absurdity of taking 'that old-fashioned sofa,' 'that ugly set of china,' 'that hideous chiffonier;' and Mr Merryden's next awakener is the appearance of a quick-eyed subservient auctioneer's man from Chalkerton, who stalks about taking notes. He urges the sale of all Mr Merryden's favourite furniture, and can hardly be prevented by force from jotting it down in his catalogue. It is horrible to the discomfited Mr M. to see this interloper pinching and tacitly criticising the table round which friends have so often sat, and behaving with marked disrespect to old family pictures.

The week before leaving his house is indeed a perturbed and painful one to Merryden. It is full of discomfitures; day by day his comforts are snatched from him, as the leaves are plucked one by one from an artichoke: to-day, the pictures; to-morrow, the piano; the next day, the books; the day after, the carpets. How mournful the trees in the old walks look; the poplars seem to shudder; the very vines on the wall seem in pain. The meanest thing has a significance now. The very moss on the sun-dial he has a regret for, and is loath to leave. Not, by the by, that Merryden is a sentimentalist, by any means, but these feelings come by instinct, and need no culture. He feels, too, a sort of jealousy to think that at this favourite window a new man should look out—that this garden-walk another should pace. But life is full of farewells, and this is one of them. What is life, in fact, but a series of farewells, and so he remarks to Mrs Merryden; but she replies: 'Stuff and nonsense, John; go and help me to pack the pictures in the spare room.'

The fatal morning—bleak, cold, and ominous of ill—Merryden, smoking his cigar after breakfast in the higher part of his garden, espies a huge van, drawn by four brawny horses, emerge from a rolling cloud of dust on the high-road from Chalkerton.

It is a huge yellow parallelogram, blazoned with the name of Jobson, in tall, obtrusive crimson letters; and the four stalwart chestnut horses haul it bravely towards its destination. The village boys follow it, shouting, believing it to be a wild-beast caravan. Presently, it passes the gate, and crushes its way up the meadow to Merryden's back-door. The horses are detached; a square truss of hay rolls off the roof, chains rattle, the van-door is solemnly unlocked. The driver drags out countless bundles of bass-matting and carpeting, and removes the floor planks of the huge vehicle. Away jingle the horses to their stable in the village inn. Another moment, and a man appears at the kitchen-door with a chair and a green-painted wash-stand, which he places on the grass, as if he was arranging for a picnic. Miserable Merryden! you never felt the curse till now—discomfiture is upon you, sudden as an avalanche, irresistible as Niagara. The real moving, 'no steps backward,' has commenced. 'They're going now, and no mistake about it,' as a passing labourer is heard to pointedly observe.

Merryden, going to inform his wife, finds her knee-deep in preserve-pots, which she is hurriedly trying to pack in hay, and sink in a large chest; while two of the upholsterer's men, like cavalier soldiers sacking a mansion, are carrying off, to her horror, arms-full of the 'best set.'

'O Mr Merryden!' she groans hysterically, 'these men tell me that they must get all the packing done to-night, and we thought they were going to take two days and a half. And there's all the linen to pack, and all the bedding, and the ornaments. O dear, dear, it is cruel, John; it is enough to kill any human being ten times over. They say, never mind packing, but pack I will. I know how things are spoiled.'

Merryden tries in vain to comfort the distracted woman, who will pack a cheval glass in spite of the foreman's entreaties. In vain he assures her that mahogany is rather improved by moving, and that breaking glass is an accident unknown to them. Disorder worse than prevails in a plundered city; looking-glasses, unscrewed, lie on the floor, stacks of pictures encumber the hall, piles of carpet pyramid the stair-landings, book-chests fill the kitchen, stair-rod covers the dressers, wardrobes stand like sentinel-boxes at the front-door, shouting men, urged on and guided by a burly foreman, steer down stairs chests of drawers and frames of book-cases. Mrs Merryden vehemently declares that her head's going, and she cannot do it. They must stay another day. Meanwhile, firm and imperturbable, the foreman packs and packs the huge puzzle, which is to dovetail together and pile the van. Is the house not gone mad? thinks the frightened Merryden, as the old fixed and familiar objects seem to become alive and revolve around him till he is the centre of a whirlpool, a Malström of furniture.

Mrs Merryden, now worn and weary, still feebly essays to pack small vases and little Sèvres ornaments with extreme care in cotton-wool. But, one by one, the Harpy men snatch from her the objects of her care, and bear them away to the all-receiving, enormous Juggernaut of a van. Jobson's myrmidons are irresistible as Fate; there is no false sentiment about them; what they have to do, they do.

Rapidly the contents of the house are decanted into the van. In the parlour, lately so well

furnished, there are now only the fender and fire-irons left.

Merryden, reconnoitring round the house, finds a great dusty sheet of brown paper blowing over the lawn, and there is straw-littering round the garden-gate, usually a very threshold of the temple of neatness.

At every table or chair that is brought out, the village children shout, for to them the moving is a sight, and the boldest of them take dress-circle seats on an overlooking wall. Merryden's dinner on the day of moving is unimportant in quality and frugal in character. It is taken on the top of a book-chest, and he and his wife have one knife between them. Two other vans arrive later, and are loaded in the same way. Mrs Merryden wanders about lamenting and wringing her hands, like Hecuba, over boxes full of discordant and hopeless lumber.

There is a difficulty at last about a loo-table that cannot be got in, and it is left behind to be sold; and the doors of the last van are closed and bolted, just as the fly arrives to bear Mr and Mrs Merryden away to the railway station. As Mrs Merryden is driven off from the old house, so dear to them both, she expresses her comforting fears to her husband, 'that those men will break every bit of that glass,' to which Merryden, who is now restored to power, cruelly replies: 'Pooh! my dear, you are always anticipating the worst.—Drive faster, man, or we shall be late.'

THE ATLANTIC TELEGRAPHS.

BY AN EYE-WITNESS.

IN THREE CHAPTERS.—CHAPTER III.

WE had been preceded by the *Albany*, carrying Captain Moriarty, R.N., and H.M.S. *Terrible*, who were to go and define the spot beneath which the end of the cable of 1865 lay, to buoy the ground, and, if possible, to raise the cable from the bottom, and so anticipate the great ship in the work which she hoped to accomplish. When the *Great Eastern* and *Medway* left Heart's Content, many who watched us doubtless thought that we were bound upon a fool's errand. When Mr Canning, after the snapping of the cable of last year, declared his intention of grappling for the lost treasure, nearly all on board the ship regarded him as a reckless madman, determined on wasting time and money on a phantom—the very idea was at once ridiculous and absurd. These opinions were, however, soon changed when they saw the marvellous results of the three attempts at grappling. After drifting for some hours, the strain suddenly increased, and that exactly over the line of the cable, as proved by solar observation. Three times the body in which the grapnel had hooked was lifted from the bottom, and on each occasion the *grappling-rope* broke at a certain strain; but at neither attempt did the grapnel free itself from that which it had caught. This series of phenomena could have been occasioned by only one thing—the cable. Popular opinion on board the ship now changed, and all were anxious to procure stronger ropes, and recover the lost cable.

We took three days to accomplish our short trip

to the grappling-ground, or perhaps I should rather say the grappling-water; and about 2 P.M. on Sunday, 12th, we sighted the *Albany* and *Terrible*. The weather being boisterous, we did not attempt to grapple that evening. The *Albany* signalled to us 'that she had grappled twice, and had succeeded in hooking the cable at the second attempt; that she had buoyed it when raised 150 fathoms from the bottom, but that the chain of the buoy-rope had given way shortly after, and that the rope was lost again.'

On Monday, 13th, we made our first attempt at grappling. We began our operations at 12.30 P.M., and by 2 o'clock had paid out two thousand two hundred fathoms of grappling-rope. The wind being in one direction, and the current in one directly opposite, we scarcely moved from our original position, and accordingly, at 9 P.M., we began to haul in again. On our first day's fishing, we had no sport.

Here let us make a digression, and give a short description of the grappling-apparatus.

The grappling-rope is about two and a half inches in diameter, and consists of seven strands (six laid round one), each strand being composed of seven steel wires, surrounded by Manilla hemp. The machine which *pays out* and *picks up* this rope consists of a double drum, round which the rope passes four times. These drums are worked by a seventy horse-power engine, made by Mr Penn of Greenwich, and, being capable of revolving in either direction, serve the double purpose of paying out or picking up. The rope is paid out over the bows of the ship, and passes, in its progress thither, under a dynamometer such as has been described as belonging to the stern-gear. Whenever the operation of grappling was in progress, a knot of anxious watchers might be seen gazing incessantly at the indicator for any sign of an increased strain, this being the only means by which it could be inferred that we had hooked our prize. This instrument was to us what the float is to the angler. The next favourable day was Wednesday, August 15th, and accordingly, by 2 P.M., we had paid out our rope and grapnel. We drifted quietly in a northerly direction and across the line of the cable until 5.30, when the dynamometer gave indication that we had 'hooked.' This increased strain continued till 7.30, when Mr Cannings gave the order to 'pick up.' The *Albany* and *Medway* had been grappling on either side of us, the one about three miles to the eastward, and the other a little distance to the west, but as yet had given no signs of having hooked the cable. About the time that we began to pick up, a thick dense fog rose, which rendered our consort-ships invisible, and made the chances of a collision not improbable. While we were in doubt if we really had got the cable, and just as we began to haul up the rope, an incident occurred which at once quieted all doubts: we ran foul of No. 1 buoy, which had been placed by Captain Moriarty to mark the position of the end of the cable; and this tiresome little customer had most inconveniently located himself underneath the starboard sponson, and there it seemed inclined to remain, bobbing about like a cork in a basin, despite of all efforts to disengage it. At last, however, after every means had been tried to get rid of our visitor, it took French-leave, and freed itself, disappearing in the darkness. This little incident, although not pleasant, was unavoidable, and did immense credit

to the skill of Captain Moriarty, who had placed the buoy to mark the cable, and shewed us to what a pitch of excellence, in skilful hands, the science of nautical astronomy could be brought.

After picking up about 1300 fathoms of rope, and having thereby raised the cable some 1000 fathoms from the bed of the sea, it was determined, owing to the unfavourable state of the weather, to buoy it in that position, and wait for daylight. An ocean-buoy was accordingly got out, and the requisite splicings were made between the buoy-rope and the grappling-rope, when, just as the operation was close on completion, one of the splices 'drew,' and we had the mortification of seeing the grappling-rope and its precious treasure recede from our gaze, and disappear beneath the waves. Thus our first actual grappling was a failure.

On Thursday, 16th, we shifted our position six miles to the eastward, so as to get quite clear of the sundry ropes that had been dropped last year, all round the spot where we supposed the end of the cable to be. The day was fine, and by 4.30 P.M. we had lowered 2400 fathoms of grappling-line, and by 7.30 the dynamometer told us we had hooked the cable.

It was considered advisable not to prosecute our work in the dark; so, as the night was calm, we paid out a considerable length of extra rope, that there should be no strain on the cable, and hung by it all night.

By 4.30 on Friday morning, the drums were revolving and picking up the grappling-rope once more; by 8 we had raised the cable one thousand fathoms from the bottom, and from this time, as the length of rope to be picked up became less and less, the excitement increased in an inverse ratio. At length we were told that the length of rope paid out had been picked up again; and still owing to *stretch* and *slip*, the thirty fathoms of chain carrying the grapnel did not appear. At length our excitement was raised to a terrific pitch as the first link of the chain came above water. Every available spot in the bow of the ship was doubly filled to see these last thirty fathoms come up, and to see what answer was to be given to the important question which had been so frequently asked during the past year. I don't believe that, as the chain came up, link by link, that there were ten persons in the ship who were sufficiently little excited to draw a breath; and it may be thought a most fortunate thing that we were not all asphyxiated during that awful five minutes of suspense. At last, we hear the remark buzzing round: 'I see the grapnel! There—look!' Another minute, and it is plainly visible, and over two of its flukes, in a black loop, with its two ends stretching tightly towards the sea, hangs the black old cable of 1865. It requires a nimbler pen than mine to describe the intense, overwhelming enthusiasm of this triumphant moment. The loud, irresistible, and spontaneous cheer which burst from all will never be forgotten by those who heard it. The eyes of every one seemed to twinkle with exultant joy, and dance with wild delight. Every mother's son amongst us was a madman for the time being. This was a time, however, of all others, demanding close attention, and the cheering was therefore stopped at once. There was much serious work to be done in the next few minutes. The *Terrible's* boats were already at the bows of the ship, carrying experienced cable-hands to secure our prize. They

advanced to the rope, and were busy in attempting to put a stopper on it, when suddenly there was heard a little snapping, tearing sound; the cable parted on the fluke of the grapnel, and in another instant it was lost to view. *It had gone again!* It had appeared first to gladden our eyes at 10.45, and by 10.50 it was no longer visible. It seemed incredible, but was unfortunately too true; the cable which a moment before had seemed to be within our grasp, was now as far away from us as ever. That joy which before was so visible in every face, had now given place to a stare of blank amazement, and a look of sorrowful astonishment. This feeling of depression which supervened was transient in the extreme. All felt that, although we had not succeeded this time, yet we had proved that the deed could be accomplished, and that perseverance alone was needed to make the securing of the cable an absolute certainty. The sight of the long-lost rope was balm to the eyes of all. It had come like a bright spirit to cheer us on to further exertions—to tell us that all our labour had not been in vain—and that we should yet accomplish what we so ardently wished. It had come to assure us that our speculations had been correct, and that dynameters spoke the truth.

On Saturday, 19th, our grapnel was dropped. By 4.15, we had hooked, and began to haul in; and when we had raised the cable one thousand fathoms from the bottom, Mr Canning determined to buoy the bight, which operation was *successfully* accomplished by 10 o'clock, for the reader may be sure that there was no insecure splicing on this occasion.

On 22d, we lowered our grappling-rope again, about three miles west of bight buoy; but the ship not drifting properly, we picked up again.—The weather was now unfavourable to work till the 25th, when we made another attempt; but no sooner was our grapnel down, than we discovered we were drifting wrong; so we hauled in our rope, shifted our position, and then dropped it again. This time, although drifting in the right direction, we passed over the line of cable without hooking anything. These incidents, when combined with gloomy weather, were anything but cheering, and their effects were soon visible on the spirits of those on board. 'We shall never see Heart's Content again,' said some; others considered 'that we might as well turn towards England,' and stoutly maintained that the middle of the Atlantic was a fit place only for convicts of the lowest grade. There were still some amongst us, however, who cheerfully held out that, with a couple of days' fine weather to help us, we should yet set sail for Heart's Content with the cable of 1865 streaming from our stern. The reader will please to bear in mind that our two consort-ships, the *Albany* and *Medway*, always grappled on either side of us, the one to the east about three miles, and the other a like distance to the west; but owing to their extreme unsteadiness on the water, their grapplings were not successful, and there is good reason to suppose that the cable was broken more than once during their endeavours by the heavy pitchings of these ships. It was the great aim of Mr Canning to lift the cable in three bights, so as to lessen the strain upon it; for if the cable were raised one thousand fathoms from the bottom in two places six miles apart, the big ship might go midway between these points, and lift a bight to the surface with comparative ease.

At 1.30 A.M. on the morning of August 27th, we were roused from sleep by the firing of a gun, and cheering, and soon the gladdening news arrived that the *Albany* had picked up the end of the cable, had brought it to the surface with very little strain, and had buoyed it, ready for us to pick up in the morning. Here was exciting news; no more sleep for any one that night. All were on deck at an early hour the following morning in the highest of spirits, on which, however, Captain Moriarty soon threw a damper of cold water. This gentleman, after observation, had come to the conclusion that the buoy which the *Albany* had placed was thirteen miles from the line of cable; and although it certainly held a bight of the 1865 cable, yet this bight must have two loose ends, or it could never have drifted so far away. This surmise proved to be correct, for on picking up the buoy, and taking the cable on board, it was found to be a piece only two miles in length. The proper explanation of this disappointment will probably never be known, for whether this piece of cable had been broken off from the main line by the heavy pitching of the smaller ships while grappling, or whether it was a piece used as a buoy-rope during the expedition of 1865, no one seemed able to decide, although the generality of opinion rather leaned towards the former hypothesis. To add to our disappointment on this occasion, Captain Moriarty declared that the bight buoy, placed by us on the 19th inst., had shifted its position, and was fairly adrift, being thus rendered perfectly useless; for, being adrift, it was clear that it no longer held the cable, and, having changed its position, it was no longer of any service as a mark. Our hopes were once more standing at zero. All the previous efforts to accomplish our object had been overturned by the mishaps of the previous day. Our bight buoy had gone, and we had but too good reason to suppose that at the spot where we were grappling, the cable was broken in more than one place.

On 28th, we grappled twice, and both times our grapnel passed over the line of cable without hooking anything, this tending to prove the supposition that the cable was broken.

Considering these facts, it was determined to change our ground, and move eighty miles further to the eastward, where we were sure that no loose pieces of cable existed, and where the water was a trifle more shallow, being *only* about nineteen hundred fathoms in depth. We reached our new ground early on the morning of August 30th, but the weather was too unfavourable to allow of any operations on that day.

In the middle of the day, on Friday 31st, we lowered our grapnel, and began to drift. We hooked the cable early on the morning of September 1, raised it a thousand fathoms from the bed of the ocean, and retained it in that position by means of a buoy. On Saturday, September 1, the sky was blue, and the sea was as calm as a millpond. Here was the very day for which we had been longing. The *Great Eastern* and the *Medway* both lowered their grapnels at 11 A.M.; the great ship being placed about three miles to the westward of the buoy, and the *Medway* a like distance west of the *Eastern*. Ten minutes after the *Great Eastern's* grapnel was down, the strain increased, and it was jokingly remarked that 'we had hooked the cable.' This, to the surprise of all, turned out

to be true; and as the strain remained unaltered till 6 p.m., Mr Canning gave the order to 'pick up.' By 7.30 we had raised it some seven hundred fathoms from the bottom, and the strain still shewed that we had got our prize. Just at this time the *Medway* signalled that 'she had cable.' On receipt of this good news, Mr Canning at once stopped all operations on board the *Great Eastern*, and signalled back to the *Medway* 'to haul up quick, and break cable.' These orders were promptly obeyed, and at 10 p.m. she signalled back: 'Have broken cable.' On the instant of the receipt of this welcome intelligence, the operation of picking up was resumed on board the *Great Eastern*; and as each succeeding fathom of the grappling-rope came over the drum, our hopes rose higher and higher, especially as the strain, as shewn by the dynamometer, was comparatively small, and in no way sufficient to injure the cable. By 12.30 on Sunday morning, there were only fifty fathoms to come; and at ten minutes to 1 (ship's time), the bight of the cable appeared above the water. This was an anxious moment, since all who had seen the difficulties of 'stopping' a cable feared lest some accident like that which occurred under similar circumstances on August 17, should arise in the moment of victory to mar our golden prospects.

An experienced man was lowered in a bight of a rope over the bow-sheaves of the ship on to one of the iron guards surrounding the hawse-pipes, and from this position he managed, but not without some difficulty, to secure the eastern side of the bight of the cable. The next task was to liberate the cable from the grapple, a work by no means easy, and one that took nearly an hour to accomplish. While these necessary works were being carried on, all was still as death; there was no cheering, no undue enthusiasm, to distract any one from his duty. Now and again, the voice of Mr Canning could be heard giving an order to the men engaged in 'stopping,' and this, together with the answering 'Ay, ay, sir,' of the man below, was the only sound to be heard. All the ship's company were on deck; this was no time for sleep. Every one was in a state of intense quiet excitement. Every face bore an expression of mingled impatience and fear; impatience for the quick completion of the work, and fear lest something should happen to prevent that completion. It was three o'clock before the order was given to pick up slowly, and the drums began to revolve for the last time; and it was half-past three before the end of the cable was got into the testing-room. The scene in the testing-room was at once solemn and exciting. We were now to learn whether or not we had been labouring in vain for the last three weeks. After waiting for some time, the end of the cable is brought in, followed by Mr Canning and Mr Clifford. In half a minute more, the room is full, the door closed, and all eyes fixed on Mr Willoughby Smith as he lays bare the copper wires of the cable, and makes the connection with his instrument. The first signal is sent to Valentia, and the little light on the slide of Professor Thomson's galvanometer is seen to move briskly backwards and forwards, and then come to a stand-still. We all wait breathlessly for a reply, but none comes. Five minutes elapse, and then the second signal is sent. No answer again. The suspense is growing really awful, when, after the lapse of another five minutes, a third signal is transmitted; and in less than a

minute, the light is seen to move in answer, apparently of its own accord, and Mr Willoughby Smith bursts out into a loud cheer. This cheer is taken up first by those in the testing-room, then by those on the deck outside, and lastly, is heard to reverberate from the engine-rooms and stoke-holes below, again and again. Hurrah! Hip, hip, hurrah! The cable was now spliced to the portion we had on board. To effect this, the cable had to be taken from the tank, passed through the paying-out gear to the stern, then festooned along the starboard side of the ship, *outside everything*, and passed in again at the bows, to meet the end awaiting it there. The splice was completed by 6.45, and passed over the bow of the ship into the sea; the festoons along the side were then all let go, and, in a few minutes, we were once more actually paying out cable from the stern, and making the best of our way towards Heart's Content. Those who had toiled so unremittingly for the last three weeks were at last rewarded by a glorious success. Hopes, fears, and anxieties were now at an end.

This was truly a great day for Mr Canning, who had first originated the idea of grappling for a rope in the almost unfathomable waters of the Atlantic; and who, in the face of every conceivable discouragement, had at length brought his experiment to a successful termination, and converted an impossibility into an accomplished fact—a fact that will ever be connected with his name, and will tend to make his memory glorious, when his kind and honest face has been forgotten.

We were all very glad to be once more in receipt of news from Europe; and in a few hours after the completion of the splice, Mr Willoughby Smith published the first number of the second series of the *Great Eastern Telegraph*. Here were we, in the middle of the Atlantic, receiving news from both hemispheres at the same time. When we were within ten miles of Heart's Content, a fault occurred in the cable, which became instantly known in the testing-room, owing to Mr Willoughby Smith's excellently devised manner of testing. The ship was at once stopped, the cable cut, and the end tested, when, to our unspeakable joy, it was found that the fault had not gone overboard, so that it was not necessary to go through the hazardous process of 'picking up.' In three hours' time, the splice was completed, and we were going ahead. On making an examination of the fault, it was found to be precisely similar to those of last year: a piece of wire driven through the cable into the core. How the wire got there, it is impossible to say.

By twelve o'clock on September 8, we were at Heart's Content; and by 4 p.m. the shore-end had been landed, by processes exactly similar to those described before. On the following day, we set sail once more, all happy at the thought of returning to England, where many a loving heart was longing to greet us. The journey home was without any very remarkable incident. On Monday, September 17, the 'Wandering Warblers of the Atlantic' had the honour of appearing in the grand saloon before a numerous audience, when was performed a comic operetta, in three tableaux, entitled *Contentina, or the Rope! the Grapple!! and the Yankee Doodle!!!* by J. C. Deane and G. V. Poore. In pleasantries like this the time passed merrily away until we arrived at Liverpool on Wednesday 19th, where we all took leave of each other, and returned to our respective homes,

all proud to be identified with an undertaking which will ever be remembered as the most successful and the most wonderful which even this marvellous age has seen.

THE CURE AND THE PEAS.

Is there such a thing—I ask as a hesitating bachelor, who sometimes contemplates a change—is there such a thing as a married man who is master in his own house? I hate lodgings; living well, and upon food which appears to nourish me, so that if I walk fast, or hurry upstairs, I am apt to grow a little giddy, I have lost my nerve for chambers. Suppose one was to have a fit in the night! Altogether, I prefer living at hotels, especially since these large ones have become so general. Therein one goes to bed by machinery, one has reading-rooms, with lending-library books, smoking-rooms, billiard-rooms, all the comforts of a home and club combined, in fact; and one can travel all over the civilised world without getting beyond the reach of these enormous establishments, which are obliged to advertise themselves as 'Limited,' just as Alexander the modest had to keep a slave at his ear to remind him that he was mortal, not quite believing it, or wishing that any one else should do so.

Still, a man has different functions, and I think, at times, that perhaps I have worked up my palate and digestive organs sufficiently, and that it would be well to take a turn at my heart. I do not, however, want to forfeit any of the liberty I at present enjoy, and wish to know whether I can possibly taste connubial felicity and freedom at the same time. Of course, I am aware that every change in life is necessarily accompanied with risk; I might be inclined to face risk, but have I chance at all? One puts into a lottery with a certain amount of confidence, if one knows a man who once drew a prize in a concern conducted by the same people in a similar manner; one feels tempted to stake money at German watering-places, because one sees others winning, and actually getting paid; but it is absurd to subscribe to a lottery which is all blanks, or to gamble with card-sharpers, who would not allow you to pick out the queen if you could, and could not pay you if you did.

Therefore, I ask, is there such a thing as a man who is master in his own house? If I could only meet with one well-authenticated instance, I might run the risk; but instances are so very difficult to authenticate, and in some half-dozen most promising opportunities I have had for investigation, the theory of marital authority has so miserably broken through.

I thought for a long time that the drunken, brutal wife-beater had it his own way, at all events; but accidental attendance at a police-office for several weeks taught me the difference. A great ruffian goes through a good deal before he takes to knocking his tyrant down, and jumping on her. To adduce his indefensible conduct in proof of his mastership, would be as absurd as to bring forward the excesses of revolted slaves in evidence of their being the oppressors, not the oppressed. Go a few steps lower down in the scale of humanity, and you may indeed find men who are real lords over

their wives, but they are not masters of their own houses, for they have none.

Besides, no gentleman could court a lady by knocking her on the head with his waddy (or weapon to that effect), and dragging her off by the hair (not to mention the insecurity of her *chignon*) to the woods. To lie and smoke and sleep all day, while one's wife procured food and prepared it, would not be so bad; but to have to squat on one's heels all night with a bow and arrow in one's hand, while she and the children slept, would be as indifferent a realisation of connubial bliss as that common in Europe.

In early youth, I always respected the Turks, as being thoroughly masters of their own houses; but it seems, from recent and authentic investigations, that the poor fellows are the worst off of all, plurality of wives meaning so many more hens to peck you. Still later lasted the prestige attached to the Mormon settlement on the Great Salt Lake, but the facetious Mr Artemus Ward has drawn a picture of the domestic affairs of Brigham Young himself not at all calculated to strengthen the impression we had conceived of marital omnipotence in that patriarchal community. One would have thought that a polygamist might apply the principle of 'Divide and govern' to social politics, were it not that Solomon must have been up to that as well as all other stratagems, and he certainly failed most signally. Now, I am not afflicted with false modesty, but I do not consider myself superior in wisdom to Solomon. Besides, I no more want a harem than a stud. What I sometimes feel the want of is a companion at meal-times, a friend to travel about with not too difficult to amuse, some one to go with me to theatre or concert-room and chat during the intervals of performance. I am tired of masculine friends with whom I have no community of interest; if they are busy men, they soon become bores, being always absorbed in matters which I do not care for; if they are idle men, they are listless. Female friends suit me very much better, but their society stimulates this yearning I have towards matrimony to such an extent that I tremble.

I was on the point of striking my colours twice last autumn, first at Scarborough, and then at Spa, and both times to widows; but I managed to hoist my sails and escape by a hairbreadth on each occasion.

My friend Smith laughs at me. 'Pooh!' says he; 'it's the easiest thing in the world to rule a woman: you have only to be firm and kind.' But Smith dare no more take me home with him to dinner without leave first asked and obtained than he dare smoke in his own drawing-room, or commit an assault on Jem Mace.

Brown laughs to scorn the idea of *his* being ruled by his wife, and he certainly blusters and grumbles about all his household arrangements in a way which makes his friends feel quite uncomfortable, and Mrs Brown takes it all in a very humble and submissive manner. But how is it that Brown goes so much into solemn society? Why is he always struggling to get into a set which he thinks a little higher than his present one? All who know Brown are aware that he hates formal parties, and that he thoroughly despises the vulgar ambition which leads men to drop their friends if they think that they can supply their places with acquaintances who are richer or more influentially connected. Can the mere act of marriage have

altered all his tastes and sentiments? Pooh! I want better evidence than his: the most obedient dog I ever possessed, the only one who would sit up for long with a pipe in his mouth, growled and snarled during the whole period of the performance.

I turn my eyes hopelessly round the civilised world. To France, where the women of the middle classes keep the purse and manage the business, allowing their husbands a franc or two, when good, to go and spend at the café; while, as for the ladies and gentlemen, if one may believe the plays and novels which profess to portray Parisian society, female supremacy has brought their matrimonial relations to a very unsatisfactory condition. One cannot imagine an Italian or a Spaniard in any other than a humble attitude in the presence of the fair. The Germans are sure to yield a ready obedience to the sex that holds possession of the kitchen and pickled-cabbage cupboard. As for America, a country unprejudiced by the romantic traditions of the middle ages, a land professing to uphold the freedom of the individual as her one great institution, she is in the worst plight of all. Unless we marry a woman, we are pretty free here, but it seems that anything in a gown can 'fag' anything in a coat on the other side of the Atlantic. You are apt to be called upon to give up your seat, your room, your dinner; to see after luggage, to nurse a baby, anything, by any woman, whether you ever saw her before or not. And you must obey. No, if a man can't be master of his own house in England, he certainly cannot anywhere else.

The worst of it is, that not only do I find it impossible to discover a practical instance, I cannot see, theoretically, how a man should be what I want to find him in this matter; if he loves his wife, he is anxious to please her, and of course she can wheedle him. If he does not, he is anxious to conceal that fact, probably from her, certainly from the world in general; and there is a weak point for her to work upon!

Though history and tradition are silent upon the matter, I am perfectly convinced that it was a woman who first found out that you might guide a horse with a bit in his mouth, and a bull by a ring through his nose.

Now, the intelligent reader, who has had experience of the art of leading up to a story, must have become aware that I have got an anecdote to relate. He is quite right. In the course of my studies upon my favourite topic—for I spent a considerable portion of my life in hunting for some precedent of better authenticity than the trials of Patient Grizzle—I found a narrative, in an old book of French Memoirs, of a certain curé of St Opportune, which bears upon the subject, but which only tends to strengthen me in my determination to 'bear the ills I have,' rather than 'fly to others that [by personal experience] I know not of.'

Take note, if you please, that I do not condemn the present state of the relations between the sexes. I do not by any means assert that it is good for a man to have his own way in everything. I only know that I have been used to it from twenty-one to—say forty-one; and that I have no notion of substituting any one else's will, however charming the willer, for it.

But this is the anecdote. There was once a curé of St Opportune, who was very different from the conventional idea of a priest, being tall, thin, and

delicate-looking; a man with a stoop, though he was still young, and much given to all lawful study. He lived in an age which has long passed away, yet he was behind it, for he held most antiquated opinions upon the obedience which is due from wives to their husbands, and seemed to consider that what St Paul had said upon the subject was to be taken in its strictest sense, that no allowance could be made for the changes which had taken place in the manners and customs of different nations, but that all infringement of the rules laid down by the apostle for the guidance of those in the holy state was sinful.

He found his exhortations treated with unbecoming levity, and thereupon became, of course, more and more earnest upon the subject, till at last he laid rather too much stress upon this one offence, to the overlooking of others. But he did not become unpopular upon this account, rather the reverse; for the men naturally felt great respect for a pastor who pleaded their cause so eloquently, and impressed upon their wives that submission to their will was their first and most solemn duty; while the women of his congregation were glad to have slight attention paid to the confession of other sins of which they were ashamed, and the full phials of clerical wrath poured out upon one which they had the consolation of feeling assured was shared by their entire sex.

But that which most vexed the good curé was the *bonhomie* with which some of the husbands amongst his parishioners submitted to the rule of their wives, and the blind infatuation which caused others, who were equally tame to fancy that their will was law, and that the very women who led them by their noses were their devoted slaves.

Provoked by these last especially, he one day addressed his congregation, after the sermon, thus: 'My garden has been remarkably fruitful this year, especially in peas. Magnificent peas they are—the best I have yet seen; and I here offer a prize of as many peas as he can carry away with him to any married man amongst you who can make it clear to me that he is not under subjection to his wife.'

Peas were valuable, the parishioners of St Opportune were poor, and, as a rule, confident in their marital supremacy, so that there were many applicants for the prize. But the curé, trained by the duties of the confessional, was a keen hand at cross-examination, and under his home-thrusts and pertinent questions, claim after claim was upset, and the candidates sent away abashed and discomfited.

At last came a porter, an obstinate, sturdy fellow, who was confident that he at least had the whip-hand of his wife. The curé questioned him closely, but all his answers were straightforward and satisfactory. Even upon the rock which had upset the pretensions of many who had seemed in a fair way to land safely, the *cabaret*, he did not split. No, he went to the wine-shop or stopped at home, got drunk or kept sober, just as he pleased. His wife had not a word to say to it.

'Well,' said the curé, 'I am glad that I have one man in my parish who knows how to be master in his own house. Come to-morrow morning, and fetch your peas.'

So the next day the porter came to the curé's house with a small sack, which he began to fill.

'You should have brought a larger one,' said the curé.

'Well, now,' replied the porter, pausing in his task, 'I should have done so, only my wife would not let me.'

'Ha!' cried the curé: 'let my peas alone, my man!'

BROUGHT TO LIGHT.

CHAPTER XLII.—A MADWOMAN'S REVENGE.

NIGHT after night, with quiet, stealthy patience, the woman Marie laboured at the task she had set herself to do. But it was not every night that she could so work, for there were quick ears at White Grange; more than once she had been surprised in the dead of the night by the sudden entrance of Peg Orchard, her youthful jailer, who slept in the next room, and who had been disturbed by the rasping of Marie's knife against the iron window-bars; and on one occasion old Nathan himself had put in a sudden appearance, carrying a lighted candle in his hand; but Marie was far too alert and wary to be caught at work, and was always found in bed by her nocturnal visitors, and to all appearance asleep. So it was only when the wintry wind, blowing shrilly round the exposed Grange, shook the crazy old building in its burly arms, causing doors and windows to rattle and creak, and haunting the dark wakefulness of such of the inmates as could not sleep with strange weird noises, never heard at other times, that she could labour at her task with any degree of safety. And now that task was all but done. With the old knife which she had picked up by stealth in the orchard, she had sawn through two of the iron bars with which one of the windows was secured, or so nearly through them that two or three hours more would see her labour accomplished. Had not the bars been rusted and corroded with age, they would probably have baffled all her efforts with the feeble means at her command; but such as they were, she had overcome every difficulty, and now her reward seemed almost within her grasp.

She had been working for freedom. To get away, anywhere, out of that horrible prison, in which she had been shut up for so many weary, weary weeks, was the one absorbing idea that filled her secret thoughts by day and night. What she should do, after getting away—what was to become of her, without money or friends, at that bleak season of the year, was a thought that rarely troubled her: that one passionate longing to escape absorbed all the little mental energy that was left her in these latter days. Whenever she tried to look forward, to calculate future probabilities, there rose before her mental vision a dim blurred picture, in which everything shewed indistinctly, as though seen through a mist that was far too dense for her wearied aching brain to penetrate. It was always the same, too, when she sat down on the floor, and stuffing her fingers into her ears, tried to think out some scheme of vengeance upon the arch-enemy of her life. She knew that Duplessis was beneath the same roof with her; she had heard his voice on two or three occasions, although she had never seen him since the first night of her incarceration; and the sound had filled her with such a secret but intense fury, that had she been able to reach him, she would have flown at his throat like some savage creature of the woods. Yet, with all her hatred of the man, whenever she tried to work out to a definite issue the feelings with which she

regarded him, and looking forward to the time when she should be once more a free woman, strove to trace mentally the outline of some scheme by means of which she should wipe off at once and for ever the accumulated score of many years, her feeble brain would again play her false; and however hard she might strive to retain her gripe of them, her thoughts would begin to slide and veer, and crash one against another, like icebergs in a troubled sea; and then the inevitable fog would swoop suddenly down, and everything would become blurred and dim; and she would wake from her reverie with a start, and a childish treble laugh, and set to work with renewed assiduity at the dressing of her dolls. But when midnight came round, and all the house was still, then she seemed an altogether different creature as she crouched on the window-seat, with her knife in her hand, labouring slowly and steadily, with a sort of concentrated ferocity of patience, in which there was no trace of a weakened intellect. 'You and I, *cher Henri*, have a heavy account to settle,' she would then often murmur to herself. 'It is a debt of long standing, and must be paid to the uttermost farthing.'

The night fixed upon by Duplessis as the one for the secret expedition of himself and Antoine to Belair, was also the one on which Marie had decided, provided the weather were favourable, to carry out her long-cherished plan of escape. During the afternoon there was a light fall of snow, just sufficient to whiten the moorlands, but not deep enough, except here and there, where it had drifted, to impede walking. As night set in, a keen northerly breeze sprang up, which crisped the fallen flakes, and whistled shrilly round the old Grange, grumbling hoarsely in the chimneys, and trying the fastenings of door and window, and making the madwoman's heart beat high with hope. If only it would last till an hour after midnight! She went to bed as usual about ten o'clock: she could trust to her instinct to awake at the first stroke of twelve. When Peg Orchard left her that night, Marie called the girl back after she had got outside the door, to give her another kiss. Then she got into bed, and in five minutes was soundly asleep; but before the clock on the staircase had done striking twelve, she was as wide awake as ever she had been in her life. She sat up in bed, and listened intently. The wind seemed, if anything, more blustering than ever. How lucky that was! She would have dearly liked to scream in chorus with its wild free music, so light-hearted did she feel; but she bit one of her fingers instead till the purple teeth-marks made a deep indented ring round it. Then she slipped noiselessly out of bed, and crept to the door, and put her ear to the keyhole. *Diab!e!* they were not all in bed yet, those beasts there! She could distinguish a faint murmur of voices below stairs; and presently a door opened, and the voices grew louder, and then she recognised them for the voices of Duplessis and Antoine; and she snarled in the dark, as she listened to them, like some ferocious animal. She could not distinguish a word that was said, and in a minute or two the two men seemed to go out at the front door, and then everything but the wind was still. For a full hour longer, she crouched against the door, except for her breathing, as rigid and motionless as a mummy; listening, with all her senses on the alert; but the dead silence inside the house was

unbroken by any sound that owed its origin to human agency. When the clock struck one, she rose up, as silent as a shadow, and stretched out her cramped arms, and pushed the tangled ends of hair out of her eyes, and began to set about her great achievement. An hour's quiet steady labour with her jagged blade, and at the end of that time the first great obstacle was overcome; the two bars, sawn completely through, came away from their places, and were carefully deposited by her on the floor. The window was a considerable height from the ground, but that was a difficulty readily overcome. Taking the sheets and coverlet off the bed, she dexterously twisted and knotted them into a stout serviceable rope, one end of which she proceeded to fasten round the stump of one of the bars, while the other end hung down outside nearly to the ground. But little now remained to be done. Having inducted herself into a little more clothing than she had been in the habit of wearing for some time past, but still with her favourite red flannel dressing-robe outside, and with a white handkerchief thrown over her head, and tied under her chin, she felt herself thoroughly equipped for her undertaking. In one corner of the room was a rude box, in which she had been in the habit of keeping her dolls, and the little scraps of finery out of which their dresses were manufactured. One by one she took up the puppets and kissed them tenderly. 'I am going to leave you, my pretty ones,' she murmured. 'You will look for me to-morrow, but I shall not be here. I am going a long, long journey; whither, as yet, I hardly know; but out into the snow and cold wind, where your tender little buds of life would quickly perish. I leave you to the care of that good child, Peg. She will attend to you when I shall be far away. And now, adieu! I love not to part from you, but freedom is before me, and I cannot stay. Adieu! my little ones, adieu!'

She shut down the lid of the box with a weary sigh, and then stood thinking, or trying to think, for the effort was almost a futile one, with her hands pressed tightly across her temples; but whatever the idea might be that she was striving to grasp, it was gone before she could seize it, so, with an impatient little 'Pouf!' she dismissed the subject from her mind. One more pull, to test the strength of the knots she had made in her rope; she took up her knife, kissed it, and stuck it in her girdle; and then she crept through the open window, and taking the rope in both hands, slid nimbly to the ground, and felt that she was free. There must have been a sort of mental intoxication in the feeling, for no sooner had she reached the ground than she went down on her knees, and seizing her short black hair in both hands, as though to steady herself in some measure, she gave vent to a burst of horrible silent laughter, a sort of laughter that was largely mingled with ferocity, and which seemed almost to tear her in two, so violent was it, leaving her breathless and exhausted when it died out, which it did as suddenly as it had begun. 'I've not been so gay for a long time,' she murmured, as she gathered herself up, and set her face towards the open moors. 'I could sing, to-night; I could dance—oh, how I could dance! only it would not be decorous in a lady circumstanced as I am.'

The window through which she had escaped was at the back of the house, and Marie now found

herself in the rick-yard, as it was called, from which a gate opened at once on to the moors. One source of disquietude was removed from her mind: she knew that Duke, the great house-dog, had gone with one of the young men to a distant fair; Peg had told her so; so there was no fear of an encounter with him. Just outside the rick-yard gate, Marie's eye was caught by something, and she stopped for a moment to think. What she saw was a small grindstone, placed there for the use of the household. Next minute, the stone was going slowly round, with the blade of Marie's knife pressed against its surface.

She went on her way after a time, walking across the moors in a direct line from the back of the Grange. The night was clear and frosty. The heavy snow-clouds had broken here and there, and through the wide rifts the stars were shining brightly. From snow and stars together, there came quite as much light as Marie needed, and she went onward without hesitation, neither knowing nor caring whither her errant footsteps might lead her; knowing and caring only that every step forward removed her so much further from the abhorred prison she had just left. She was not greatly troubled by any thoughts of pursuit; she knew that, in all probability, her escape would not be discovered till daybreak, by which time she should be long miles away; and she had all a lunatic's faith in her own cunning and ability to outwit her enemies. She was the sole living thing to be seen on that white desert; but the loneliness of the situation had no terrors for her, and she went calmly on her way, singing now and again a verse from some *chanson* descriptive of the loves of Corydon and Phyllis à la Française.

She had left the Grange a mile or more behind her, and now the road, or rude footpath, for it was nothing more, to which she had kept, dipping from the higher levels of the moor, began to tend gently downward; as it did so, the sound of falling water took her ear, and in a little while she came to a deep cleft or ravine in the hillside, at the bottom of which a little stream, whose voice the frost had not yet succeeded in silencing, was brawling noisily. This gash in the fair hillside evidently resulted from some throe of nature countless ages ago. It was from eighty to a hundred feet in depth, and from fifteen to twenty feet wide. Both its sides formed sheer precipices of black rock, as bare and devoid of verdure as on the day they were first laid open to the sky; but the margin of the ravine was fringed here and there with thickets of stunted shrubs. The path traversed by Marie led direct to this ravine, across which a rude foot-bridge had been thrown, to accommodate the inmates of the Grange, for this was the nearest way down to the high-road in the valley leading to certain outlying villages where the family at the Grange had sometimes business to transact, and effected, as regards those places, a saving of nearly three miles over the orthodox road; besides which, if there was a heterodox road to anywhere, old Nathan Orchard was just the man to take such road from choice. This bridge over the ravine was of a very primitive character, consisting as it did of nothing more permanent than a few strands of rope stretched across, and fastened on each side to the stumps of trees, with cross-strands of thinner rope, over which were laid a few pieces of planking, pierced at the corners, and tied with strong wire to the cords below. As a further security, a hand-rail of stout

rope was stretched from side to side about three feet above the bridge itself. To any person with weak nerves, the crossing of this rude bridge, which began to sway in an alarming manner the moment you set foot on it, was not unattended with danger, seeing that a single false step would serve to precipitate you to the bottom, and leave but little chance of your being found alive afterwards; but such as it was, it had served the family at the Grange for many years, and was likely to last for many years to come.

Marie stepped fearlessly on to the bridge, and pausing when she reached the middle of it, took hold of the hand-rope, and leaning over, gazed down into the dim caldron at her feet. Eastward, the moon was rising over heathery hills, and the clouds fell away before it as it slowly clomb the great azure plains, and little by little all the wild features of the scene were lighted up under the eyes of the madwoman. She could see the black riven sides of the gorge, looking as if they had been torn asunder only an hour ago; she could see the glinting of the white water where it tumbled over a ledge of rock some twenty feet in height, and again, as it seethed and bubbled angrily among the jagged granite teeth with which its after-course was thickly strewn; and as she gazed and listened, the voice of the water seemed to syllable itself into words intended for her ear alone. 'Come to me, come to me,' it seemed to say; 'here 'tis ever sweet to be—sweet to be.' Nothing more; only those few words, over and over again, in a sort of murmurous sing-song, that awoke vague echoes in her brain. The water spoke to her as plainly as she had ever heard human voice speak. The danger, and she seemed to know it, lay in the perpetual iteration of the words, 'Come to me,' the effect of which upon her excitable nerves was to work her up into a sort of dreamy ecstasy, which might not improbably culminate in her striving to obey the invitation by leaping headlong from the bridge into the gulf below. She strove, however, to break through the spell that was being woven over her, dragging herself slowly and with difficulty, as though she were being plucked at behind by invisible hands, from the spot where she had been standing, to the edge of the ravine, and stumbling forward on her knees the moment she felt herself on firm ground.

'Sorceress, I have escaped thee!' she cried aloud. 'I will not obey thy summons. Thy silvery voice would lure me to destruction. But hark! I hear another voice. One whom I know well is coming this way, and he must not see me. Hush!'

Still kneeling, and with upraised finger in the act of listening, all the pulses of her being seemed to stand still for a moment, while she waited to hear again the voice which had startled her. It came again, and this time nearer than before. There could be no mistaking whose voice it was; and as its familiar tones fell on Marie's ear, she forgot all about the water-sprite's invitation—forgot everything except the one fact, that the man whom she hated with all a lunatic's intensity of hate was close beside her, and that there were now no stone walls, no iron bars between them two. As she realised fully that this was indeed so, a great wave of fire seemed to sweep across her brain; and all at once the moon looked blood-red, and the stars took the same colour, and all her muscles seemed to harden, and her fingers began to grope instinctively for the haft of her knife.

There was a thick clump of underwood growing close to the spot where she was kneeling, and partly overhanging the brink of the ravine. She was only just in time to reach the shelter of these shrubs, when the head and shoulders of a man came into view above the opposite slope of the hill; and the same instant the handsome, crafty face of Duplessis was evanescently lighted up by the blaze of a fusee, as the Canadian paused for a moment in the act of lighting another cigar. As he did so, he spoke again, addressing himself to Antoine, who was toiling painfully up some distance behind his master: 'Another little pull, my cabbage, and we shall be on level ground, and then half an hour's brisk walking will take us to the Grange. An hour of this exercise every morning before breakfast, would soon bring down that overfed carcass of thine to something like reasonable proportions.'

'Oh, Monsieur Henri,' panted Antoine, 'but it is cruel, my faith, to drag persons of delicate stomach up these precipices! Why wasn't the world made without hills? It would have been a much pleasanter place to live in than it is now.' The glowing tip of the cigar was coming nearer and nearer to the madwoman bidden in the thicket. 'But with regard to *La Chatte Rouge*,' continued Antoine, 'has Monsieur given my proposition due consideration? It is simple, it is safe, it is effectual. Let Monsieur go to Paris and enjoy himself, and leave Antoine to clip the claws of *La Chatte*.'

'*Scélérat!*' hissed the madwoman from her hiding-place. '*La Chatte* would like to drink thy heart's blood!'

The glowing tip was very close now. Duplessis, with one foot on the bridge, and one still on firm ground, paused for an instant to answer Antoine.

'Take care, my infant,' he said laughingly, 'that she doesn't claw thine eyes out in the process.' With that he took hold of the hand-rope, and came forward, step by step, slowly and cautiously. The frail structure bent and swayed under his weight in a way that might well have alarmed a man of weaker nerve. He had reached the middle of the bridge, when he looked up suddenly, for the dry branches of brushwood were cracking, as if some one were hidden among them; and then he saw that he stood face to face with the woman of whom he had just been speaking. She rose before him like an avenging spirit, her eyes blazing with madness, and her white face distorted with an intensity of hate such as no words could have expressed.

'I am here, Henri Duplessis,' she said; 'here—*comprends tu?* and thy prisoner no longer. The hour of our reckoning has come at last!'

Her fingers were still nervously seeking something in the folds of the shawl that confined her waist; and as she spoke, she moved a step or two forward. So unlooked for, so utterly unexpected was the apparition of this woman, that for once Duplessis lost his presence of mind. As Marie made a step forward, he took one backward; and as he did so, his foot slipped off the narrow plank on which he was standing, thickly crusted as it was with frozen snow. He slipped and fell, with a wild, inarticulate cry of horror; but as his feet slid from under him, he clutched convulsively at the hand-rope, which yielded fearfully to the sudden strain, but did not break; and so he hung for a few seconds over the ravine, making desperate

efforts to recover his footing on the slippery planks. With a cry that seemed like an echo of his master's, Antoine rushed forward to the assistance of Duplessis; but Marie was at the bridge before him. For one brief instant, the blade of her knife gleamed whitely in the moonlight, and then it came swiftly down on the rope by which Duplessis was hanging, severing the strands one by one with its keen edge; and while Marie's wild maniacal laugh, that was as much a shriek as a laugh, rang shrilly over the moorland, the last strands gave way, and Duplessis, still clinging to the rope, was dashed with frightful violence against the opposite side of the ravine, and falling thence, came down with a dull thud, which chilled the blood of Antoine to hear, on to the sharp-pointed rocks below, round which the angry stream was ever brawling.

Again the maniac's shrill laughter awoke the faint moorland echoes. 'Gone! gone! and Marie is revenged at last,' she shrieked. 'How his eyes glared at me in the moonlight as he hung by the rope! I never felt so merry before—never—never.' And with that she broke into one of her *chansons*, and wandered away towards the head of the ravine, as forgetful, apparently, of the recent tragedy, as though no such person as Henri Duplessis had ever existed; while heart-broken Antoine, calling his master's name aloud, went searching, like one half-crazed, for some path by which he could obtain access to the bottom of the ravine.

CHAPTER XLII.—ANTOINE'S NARRATIVE.

Towards the close of a bright February afternoon, about a month after the events related in the foregoing chapter, a man, well wrapped up from the weather, might have been seen toiling slowly through the park on his way to Belair. To the footman who answered his imperative ring at the side-door, he gave a parcel, done up in brown paper, and sealed with several great splashes of red wax, and charged him to deliver the same without delay into the hands of Lady Spencelaugh, and of no one but her; and then adding that no answer was required, he slunk away from the door, and was presently swallowed up in the dusky park, seeming to melt into and become a portion of the dim shadows that were mustering so thickly under the branches of the old trees.

The packet, on being opened, was found to contain Lady Spencelaugh's stolen jewels: not a single stone was missing. Beside the stolen property, there was a letter addressed to her Ladyship, written in French by Antoine Gaudin, but too lengthy to be given here in its entirety. Of its chief points, however, as explanatory of certain events narrated in the earlier chapters of this history, the following may be taken as a free translation; although it was difficult, here and there, to make out the sense of the original, owing to Antoine's execrable writing, and his curious method of spelling, based, apparently, on some phonetic system of his own.

MY LADY—In the interests of human nature in general, and of the late lamented Monsieur Henri Duplessis in particular, it is requisite that the underwritten explanation of certain events as drawn up by me, Antoine Gaudin, be read with serious attention by your Ladyship. It is a justification to the world of the great heart that has gone from among us. For, alas, Madame, my dearly-loved master is no more! My eyes are

wet as I write these words. But for the moment, I put Sentiment, the generous, the profound, on one side, and will try to set down what I have got to say after the fashion you English love so much—in a 'business-like way.' (Ah, the droll phrase!)

Monsieur Henri Duplessis was born in Canada, of a noble French family that emigrated to that country about a century ago. My mother was his foster-mother, and I was his foster-brother, and so I learned to love him, and devoted myself to his fortunes through life. M. Henri's parents both died when he was quite young; and when he came of age, he found himself master of a handsome fortune, with all the inclination to enjoy it. At that time, he was young, ardent, generous, and impulsive, and as handsome as Apollo's self. We—that is, he and I—set out on our travels; and first we determined to see whatever the American States could shew us that was worthy of our regards. To my dear master, after the studious and secluded life to which he had been condemned during his youth, New York seemed a very Paradise of delights, and he tasted of every pleasure that it had to offer him. Grown tired after a time of city-life, he determined to study nature in some of her wilder moods, and man in some of his more primitive aspects, and we set out for the Far West. It was while we were taking this journey, on our way to the prairies, at a little town in one of the western states, that my dear master first encountered the evil genius of his life in the person of Marie Fevriez. Marie was an actress, born in America, of French parents; young and enchanting enough at that time, I must admit, with a certain devil's beauty about her, which had for M. Henri an irresistible but fatal attraction. It was on the stage that he first saw her. She was performing her great part in a piece adapted from the French, entitled *La Chatte Rouge*, in which she appeared in a flame-coloured robe, and in a certain dark scene with real phosphorescent flames playing about her head; and enacted a sort of beneficent fiend, avenging her own wrongs, and those of the good people of the play at the same time. She was not an actress that would please a first-class audience; she lacked both education and refinement; but she was not without power of a certain kind, and was much run after in the rough country towns where she commonly played.

Well, my master fell in love with *La Chatte* at first sight. It was not difficult for a man in his position to obtain an introduction to her, and he was not the less fascinated when he saw her off the stage. Certainly, she was a splendid animal at that time. My master made love ardently, proved to her the extent of his fortune, overwhelmed her with lavish presents, and ended by asking her to become his wife, and accompany him to Europe. In a brief three weeks from the night on which he first saw her, they were husband and wife.

They went to Europe, but I was left behind. Madame did not like me, and I did not like Madame; and M. Henri was so infatuated just then that he was persuaded into giving me my *congé*. They spent five years on the continent, at the end of which time Monsieur returned to his own country, beggared in purse, and separated from his wife; and little by little the wretched story came out. Gambling, and extravagance of every kind, leading by easy but rapid steps to bankruptcy and general ruin; and combined therewith, the bitter

certainly that the woman he had loved with such foolish madness had only cared for him because of his money—and to his proud spirit that was the bitterest stroke of all. My master was a man of strong passions—a hot lover and a fierce hater—and he now hated the woman to whom he was chained for life with a depth of hatred equal to the love he had formerly borne her. Of all his fortune, nothing now remained to him but a little farm in a wild part of the country, and thither he and I now retired from the world, and spent three or four quiet years. Those years at Petit-Maison I believe to have been the happiest of my dear master's life. No longer able to move in that society which he loved so much, and of which he had ever been so bright an ornament, he fell into his new and narrow mode of life with the native cheerfulness of a true gentleman, whom nothing can ever really disturb so long as he retains his faith in himself. He looked after his farm, and read his books; and by way of variety, he and I would often go on long fishing-excursions to the lakes. But by and by, an aunt of M. Henri died, and left him another fortune—a little one, this time, and by no means equal to the fortune he had spent; and with it came the desire to go out once more into the world, and resume his position in society. Of Madame, we had heard nothing positive for a long time. We only knew that she had taken to her old mode of life, and was wandering somewhere among the outlying states with an itinerant troop of players. Among his friends in Toronto and Montreal, it was, of course, known that M. Henri had been married; but as no one there had ever seen his wife, and as it was known that he had been living *en garçon* for the last three or four years, people concluded that Madame was dead, and, for reasons of his own, my dear master was desirous that such a belief should be universally adopted. What, then, was our surprise and disgust when, one morning, about a fortnight after our arrival at Montreal, Madame Marie turned up at our hotel, and demanded to see M. Henri. To deny her was out of the question. By some means, best known to herself, she had heard that my master was once more a rich man, and she had come with the intention of doing her best to ruin him for the second time. She demanded one of two things: either to be acknowledged as the wife of M. Duplessis, and received as such by his friends; or else to be subsidised by a sum equivalent to half his annual income, on condition that she kept the marriage secret, and never entered Canada again.

To no other terms would the harpy listen; and my master was fain, at last, to accede to her second proposition, and so rid himself of her presence for ever. Having settled everything so much to her own advantage, she set out on her return to the States, but had only left Montreal a few hours when she was seized with illness so severe as to be unable to continue her journey. An address found on her person caused my master to be sent for; and on reaching the hotel where she lay, we found her far gone in a severe attack of brain-fever. She ran a close race for her life; ultimately, she recovered; but the fever had left her with a twist of the brain, which made it doubtful whether she would ever be fit to mingle with sane people again. It seems that there was a hereditary taint of insanity in her family, and now the blight had fallen upon her. My master had her placed in a private asylum, kept by a man of the name of Van Goost; and it

was fully understood between them that Madame was to be considered as insane during the remainder of her life; Van Goost, in fact, constituted himself her jailer for life, for which service he was of course handsomely paid.

After this little episode, M. Henri, accompanied by your humble servant, set out for Europe for the second time; and it was in the course of this tour that we first had the honour of meeting your Ladyship and the late excellent Sir Philip. Your Ladyship knows how the acquaintance began; how we all came to England together; how my master took up his residence at Lilac Lodge; and what a great favourite he was with Sir Philip. It was some time before this that the brilliant idea had first struck him, which he now began to elaborate carefully. Marie was shut up for life; he himself was, to all intents and purposes, a free man; he would marry an heiress, and make his own fortune and mine at the same time. Ah, the beautiful scheme! it was worthy the genius of M. Henri. The charming Mademoiselle Frederica was the object of his adoration; and he would have married her, Madame, as surely as you read these lines (and what an excellent husband he would have made her! for he had the good, the noble heart), but for a most unhappy accident. That accident was the escape of *La Chatte Rouge* from the custody of the Herr Van Goost. She got into Van Goost's private room the night she went away, and ransacked his papers till she found a letter containing M. Henri's address in England; and in less than a month from that night, she arrived at Kingsthorpe Station. She was disagreeable at first, and seemed inclined to spoil everything; but ultimately she fell into M. Henri's views, and agreed to pass as his sister, but insisted upon being introduced as such to his friends at Belair. With an understanding to that effect, my master left her; but to introduce this uncultured creature—who required winding up with cognac every morning, and whose manners and conversation had a coarse theatrical tinge—as his sister to the refined and courtly Sir Philip, and to the beautiful miss who was to be his wife, was more than he could bear to do. In this emergency, Antoine proved himself a useful ally.

On the third day of Madame's stay at Kingsthorpe, M. Henri went to fetch her away, on pretence of taking her to more comfortable apartments in a neighbouring town. He drove her round by way of the old coast-road, as being more lonely and suitable for the purpose he had in view. Half-way along this road, in a curve of the moors, there lay perdue a covered cart, in attendance on which were your humble servant, and another individual whom it is unnecessary to name. Madame was evidently distrustful of M. Henri's intentions; and when, shortly after leaving Kingsthorpe, her nose began to bleed, her superstitious nature at once put down that little incident as a bad omen, and she implored him to take her back; but he only laughed at her ridiculous fancies, as he called them, and drove on faster. When opposite the spot where we lay hidden, M. Henri requested Madame to alight, on the plea that something was wrong with one of the wheels of the gig. She got down, and seated herself on the grass, close by the spot known as Martell's Leap. The signal agreed upon as a summons to us who were in hiding was a shrill whistle. The signal was so long in coming, that I grew curious at last, and popped my head over a hillock to see how affairs were progressing;

when what should I see but Monsieur and Madame struggling together like two mad people, and apparently trying which could throw the other over the precipice. One of them was really mad, and that was Madame, as we were not long in discovering, when we succeeded in separating them, which we did only just in time—another minute would have seen one or both of them tumbled from the cliff. Madame's old malady had suddenly come back upon her as she sat there on the grass; and when M. Henri approached her, she sprang up, and seized him by the throat, and swore that she would fling him over the precipice. 'In the sudden surprise of such an attack, I forgot everything except the very proper desire I had to keep my neck unbroken,' said M. Henri, afterwards. 'I forgot entirely that a single cry for help would have brought you two worthy fellows to my assistance; and I believe I should have gone over the cliff in grim silence, had you not appeared just at that last opportune moment which is always provided in plays and romances for the rescue of virtue in distress.'

It was a ravaging madwoman, tied tightly down among the straw at the bottom of the light cart, that we took that evening across the moors to a certain house, where her coming as a sane woman had been provided for. Shut up here from the world, she was at liberty to be mad or not, as pleased her best; what would be her ultimate fate, was a question left open for future decision; she was removed from my master's path, and M. Henri was now at liberty to act as though no such creature were in existence.

Who was the writer of the mysterious letter received by my master one night about two months after Madame Marie had been so judiciously disposed of? That is a question which neither M. Henri nor I was ever able to answer. It was a letter written under a wrong impression—written under the impression that M. Henri had committed a murder; warning him that his crime was discovered, and that the police were on his track; and advising him to flee while he had yet an opportunity of doing so. He did flee—not that he had committed the crime imputed to him, but because his staying would have involved the discovery to the world of that dark secret which he had been at such pains to hide from it; and, as he afterwards confessed, he lacked the courage to go through such an ordeal. His hopes were crushed at one fell blow; the edifice which he had been patiently building for so long a time had crumbled into ruins at his feet; and there was nothing left for him but to get away as quickly as possible. He lay hid in London for several weeks, and then he ventured down to Monkshire in disguise, and took up his abode for a time in the very house where his mad wife was shut up; and there I joined him. By this time, his second fortune was almost gone; for, without being extravagant in any way, his expenses had been heavy, and so long as the prospect of a wealthy marriage lured him on, he hardly cared how his money went. But it was now, when the dreadful eyes of poverty were staring him in the face, that the happy genius of M. Henri shewed at its brightest. He conceived a brilliant scheme, which, if it proved successful, would rehabilitate his broken fortunes at a single coup. You, Madame, as the victim of that plot, are scarcely perhaps the proper personage to appreciate its brilliancy; but I will venture to state that

no disinterested person could become acquainted with its details, without passing a eulogy on the daring and ingenuity with which its every step was characterised.

How we sped that night at Belair, your Ladyship knows as well as he who writes these lines, for your two visitors were none other than M. Henri Duplessis and Antoine Gaudin; and the survivor of the two now craves your Ladyship's pardon for the violence which the necessities of the case compelled him to resort to. We had succeeded, M. Henri and I, almost beyond our expectations: the gems which my master had on his person when we left Belair that night, would, in that New World to which we were bound, have formed the nucleus of the colossal fortune which M. Henri had determined on devoting all his future energies to building up; and that he would have succeeded, who that knew him could gainsay? But for him no such bright future was ever to dawn. We were walking across the moors on our way home, when that wretch—that tigress—that fiend incarnate, who with devilish cunning had contrived to make her escape, suddenly confronted my master, who was walking a short distance in front of me; and before I had time to interfere in any way, he was no longer among the living. The precise mode of his death, it is needless to detail here. It is sufficient to say that that woman is his murderess; and had I been able to reach her at the time, she would not have escaped with life. My dear master lies buried under the wild moorland: these hands dug his grave, and these eyes were the last that looked on him before the turf was laid over his head that covered him up from human ken for ever. It was better so; all the 'inquests' in the world could not have brought him back to life for a single moment; and he will sleep none the worse in that he does not rest under the shadow of one of your churches. I return you the gems and other articles borrowed by M. Duplessis from your Ladyship. Now that his dear master is dead, Antoine cares not to retain them.

From this narrative, your Ladyship will perceive how largely M. Duplessis was the victim of unfortunate circumstances; and remembering this, you will not fail to do him justice in your recollections. You, Madame, know what he was in society—how handsome, how witty, how accomplished; but the silver lining of his character—his goodness, his generosity, the thorough nobility of his disposition, can never, alas! be known fully to any one but to him who writes these lines—that is to say, Madame, to your Ladyship's humble and devoted servant,

ANTOINE GAUDIN.

THE MONTH.

SCIENCE AND ARTS.

THE opening of the first of the schools where the middle classes of London may get their sons well educated for four guineas a year, has been attended by results that justify to the full the expectations of the promoters. Four hundred boys have already entered; many more are waiting their opportunity, and so pressing is the demand, that the school premises are forthwith to be made large enough to accommodate a thousand boys. At the same time, a site is being looked for in the suburbs on the 'Surrey side' on which to build another school—

house; and considering how numerous are the middle-class residents in that quarter, there can be no doubt of their appreciating the offered advantage. There are hundreds of clerks in London, with salaries ranging from one hundred and fifty pounds to two hundred and fifty a year, who will now be able to give their boys an excellent English education with but a slight strain on their income when compared with former payments. One of the regulations of the new school (which all other schools ought to adopt) is to require a quarter's payment in advance. If a boy has not paid his guinea by the third day after his entrance, he is summarily dismissed. In addition to the school lessons, a course of drill is given by a drill-sergeant, which is good exercise for the boys, and a means of recreation.

As is well known to many readers, numerous observations of the sun have been made of late years, and conclusions more or less satisfactory have been arrived at as to the physical constitution of the great luminary. In science, however, as in other subjects, there is much to be said on both sides, or on all the sides of a question. Mr Dauge, of the Academy of Sciences, Brussels, shews that all the striking phenomena noted by recent observers of the sun may be fully accounted for by the refraction of the emergent rays in the atmosphere exterior to the sun's photosphere; and he demonstrates that such an atmosphere will produce by its refraction certain effects, thus classified: augmentation of the apparent diameter of the sun—augmentation of the mean period of the sun's rotation—retardation of the apparent motion of a spot in proportion as the same recedes from the centre towards the rim of the sun, besides others in the same class of phenomena. If, on further experiment, all this can be shewn to be an effect of refraction, astronomers and physicists will have much to rectify in their present conclusions. Meanwhile, we may be sure that an active course of observation and discussion will be instituted, with a view to determine which class of observers is in the right.

Foucault, whose improvements in the optical parts of telescopes are recognised among astronomers, has discovered that a coating of gold or silver leaf on the object-glass enables an observer to look at the sun for a length of time without injury to the eye, and without loss of definition in the solar disc. This discovery will materially facilitate observations of the sun. It has further been found beneficial in cases of weak eyes, or of photophobia, when applied to the glasses of spectacles. The light which passes through gold-leaf appears green, and blue when the gold is intermixed with silver. Consequently, the tint can be varied to suit the nature of the case, and afford the desired relief.

A self-winding clock has been invented by Mr Horstmann, of Bath, in which the inconvenience and inaccuracy, so often complained of in ordinary clocks, are for the most part obviated. One element of accuracy is enclosing the whole in an air-tight case, which secures a more equable motion of the pendulum than is possible in a case made in the usual way. The winding part of the works, which is entirely independent of the time-keeping movement, consists of a cylinder into which naphtha or 'any other expansive fluid' flows from a cistern conveniently placed, with a piston and chain. The piston moved by the fluid is connected

by the chain with the winding apparatus, and thus whatever the temperature, the winding goes on without any opening of the case or stoppage of the pendulum.

Train-signalling—that is, telegraphic communication between passengers and guard—is to be introduced on the Great Western Railway, on a plan invented by Mr Spagnoletti. The carriages will be coupled with iron bars instead of the usual chains, and through those bars the electro-magnetic current will pass, to connections fitted in each carriage. The working apparatus is similar to that by the same inventor, which was exhibited at the scientific soirees of last season. The passenger pulls a knob or turns a handle, and thereby sends a signal to the guard and engine-driver at the same time, while a disc starts out from the side of the carriage to indicate the compartment whence the signal was sent. In all this, there appears to be nothing complicated. We have seen Mr Spagnoletti's apparatus working experimentally, and with satisfactory results: we hope that in actual practice it will be equally successful.

The photozincographic process by which Sir Henry James reproduces ordnance maps, and has copied Domesday Book and other ancient documents, is to be employed in the Lord Clerk Register's offices at Edinburgh, for the copying of such legal documents as are to appear on the Register. This is a proceeding favourable to accuracy; for if the original paper be accurate, all the copies will be the same: there will be no risk of tearing or blotting the paper, and the cost will be not more than one-fourth of papers copied in the ordinary way by hand.

Boiler-explosions have been so frequent of late, that by the end of the year the sum of disaster will perhaps be greater than in 1865, when fifty-five steam-boilers exploded within the kingdom, fifty-six persons were thereby killed, many more injured, and much property was destroyed. With these facts before us, we have greater satisfaction in noticing a paper *On the Corrosion of Locomotive Boilers, and the Means of Prevention*, published in the *Proceedings* of the Institution of Mechanical Engineers. Boilers of the kind here referred to are subjected to a strain and wear and tear almost incredible, by the high and concentrated pressure of the steam, and by the prodigious quantity of water they evaporate. The wear of a locomotive boiler in from five to eight years, during which it will have evaporated ten million gallons of water, is equivalent to thirty years' wear of a stationary boiler. The waste of the boiler-plates is occasioned by chemical and mechanical means. In certain locomotives, running in Yorkshire, where the water was of a very acid quality, it was noticed that the boilers fitted with iron tubes were scarcely injured after five or six years of work, while similar boilers, fitted with brass tubes, were 'very badly pitted all over,' on the inside of the plates, owing, as is supposed, to some galvanic action between the brass and iron. Another cause of weakness is the change of temperature produced by the supply of cold water to the boiler, which, however, can be remedied by care in feeding.

Mr Kirtley, the author of the paper above referred to, shews that all these sources of weakness and of danger may be avoided by an improved mode of constructing boilers. Since the tyres of wheels have been manufactured of one single piece, without joint or weld, the breaking of tyres has

become much less frequent than before. Therefore, if a boiler is made of one great hoop, instead of a number of plates, it will be much less liable to explosion than one made in the ordinary way. Machinery has been constructed for the manufacture of the big hoops, and it is expected that hoops will be rolled four feet in diameter, and long enough for an entire boiler. The cost will be somewhat higher than at present; but there will be a great saving in after-repairs, to say nothing of diminution of risk.

This is not mere theory. For six years past, nineteen of these welded boilers have been in constant use on the Midland Railway, and with such satisfactory results, that the same mode of construction has been permanently adopted for all the engines on the line. Each of the boilers has travelled 175,000 miles, and has proved, on examination, 'to be in good condition.'

It is well known to experts that, given time and ingenuity sufficient, the best of locks can be picked. The great gold-robbery on the South-eastern Railway a few years ago, is a case in point, for the depredators spent some months in making their counterfeit keys. Perfect security could only be achieved by making a lock without a keyhole, or without direct access to the works within. Mr J. Beverley Fenby, of Birmingham, has invented such a lock, which is said to 'afford real security against all fraudulent attempts.' The keyhole may be described as a small tube, which will admit the stem of the key, but offers no access to the works; and an important result of this mode of construction is, that the lock cannot be burst open by gunpowder, neither can any hold be obtained for the drilling-machine with which burglars pierce the strongest locks of iron safes. The bit of the key is separate from the stem, whereby the success of a counterfeit is rendered impossible. Another advantage is, that the stem of the key only is used in locking the lock. The stem therefore could be left in charge of a subordinate in an office, but the bit, which is the essential part of the key required in opening the lock, need never be used or seen by any one but the principal himself. One stem would suffice for a dozen safes, but the bits would all be different; and these are of such small size and convenient shape, that a number of them might readily be kept in the pocket, without the inconvenience attending a large bunch of ordinary keys.

To these particulars about a new lock, we may add a notice of a newly-invented latch, called the 'needle-latch,' which is simple in construction and moderate in cost. The 'needles' are steel wires, and these being attached in a particular way to that inner portion of the lock known to locksmiths as the 'stump,' are operated on by the key, and moving in various directions, can be brought to their true position with the proper key only. If a counterfeit key be used, the needles fall into traps, which at once check their movement, and detect the surreptitious attempt to open the latch.

For the past two hundred years, schemers and inventors have been trying to shew that a vessel may be propelled through the water by the force of a jet of water rushing rapidly from its interior. And now the thing has been realised in the *Waterwitch*, a new ship belonging to the royal navy. Numerous holes are pierced in her bottom, the water enters, and fills a turbine, which is set in motion by a steam-engine. The turbine drives the

water with great velocity through pipes leading in various directions, and opening out at the sides of the vessel. The friction of the water thus driven out against the water in which the vessel floats, sets her moving in the opposite direction; and it is an important advantage that the direction can be changed without stopping the engine. The speed of the *Waterwitch* at her trial was such as to give a successful result to the experiment.

S A T U R N.

'Tis noon's bright stillness : on the cliff he lies ;
Within his dreamy ears, a hushing sound
Of distant waves ; the air and arching skies
Seem breathing ceaseless sighs that die around.

Far down, a summer plain of waters spreads ;
Blue from the deep horizon to the bay,
Where the white marge of Ocean's mantle sheds
In lacy folds the seeming-silent spray.

Round him the solitudes of sun-warm downs,
The close minute-flowered turf, more soft than moss,
Whose breeze-blown wilds the blazing day embrowns,
Haunt of the light-blue wing that flits across.

O'er the wide pavement of the seas below,
No eyes but his with such lulled pleasure look ;
Time knows no other of his shining brow,
His life on Time's vast sands the single brook.

What shall he do who ne'er beheld his like,
But watch the deep to violet change and green ;
Or note the sudden gust descend and strike,
Setting the fretted swell with diamonds keen.

Approaching voice or step he ne'er hath heard ;
The chalk's white bastions built upon the sea
Send forth the skimming, glossy-purpled bird,
The night-black cormorant, or velvet bee.

The rush of some sea-monster breaks the deeps
Into white flashes of the quarried blue ;
The shoal in darkly-rippling thousands leaps ;
Or stoops on long gray wings the snowy mew.

And this is all.—Within his mind he turns,
Pacing his mighty courts, a silent life,
A searching soul, the lonely flame that burns
Before great Jove, or Earth's Titanic strife.

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TO PERSONS ABOUT TO FIND THEMSELVES FAMOUS.

IN THREE CHAPTERS.—CHAPTER I.

ONCE upon a time, there was no such profession as Literature ; a Golden Age, when not only no books were printed—not even 'trajective' primers—but no manuscripts were written. Again there was a later time, the Silver Age of soft-speaking dedications to grandees, when men of letters were almost as distinguishable a body as men of war ; when no other calling encroached upon theirs, nor did they (with few exceptions) pay to literature a divided allegiance. And now, behold, matters are so changed, that out of every ten educated persons there is at least one who secretly nourishes the design of appearing in print ; besides a very considerable percentage of the uneducated. This estimate is by no means a high one, and will certainly not be gainsayed by those few persons—namely, Editors—who alone are in a position to judge. The present writer is an editor of long standing ; has been a contributor to everything under the sun (although not to 'the Sun'), and knows very well what he is talking about. Therefore, it behoves those concerned in the matter to listen.

This last epoch, or Brazen Age, wherein so vast a multitude think themselves qualified to write, was without doubt brought about by the intervention of periodical literature. At the beginning of the present century, there was scarcely any such thing ; and such monthly publications as there were, employed but a few pens at a low price. Nay, in the early days of our serials, contributors were often not remunerated at all ; 'the circumstances of our new venture being at present such as must preclude any pecuniary recompense.' Such was the delicate rejoinder in at least one instance (as I have good reason for knowing) to an author's demand for payment. The proprietor dispensed praise, but no pudding. Articles were 'communicated'—a suspicious phrase, that even now snacks of the Gratuitous—and editors (as a rule) were much more civil to their correspondents than they now trouble themselves to

be. On the other hand, to appear in print was something to talk about in those days, and contributors, of a certain sort, were well satisfied. Nevertheless, the well-known proverb respecting the small value of things one gets for nothing, was very applicable to those 'communicated' articles, the majority of which would now a days find great difficulty in being accepted by any moderately good periodical, even at their own modest price, namely, 0. The few good original articles were paid for (although at a cheap rate), or were written by men of letters who had an interest in the publication : the rest of the magazine—the 'padding,' as it is now called—was made up of extracts from books or newspapers.

As magazines and periodicals of all sorts increased, competition began to shew its usual symptoms. Those which did not keep on a level with the front rank, got all the dust of the better-stepping—that is to say, their rejected articles. Many dropped so far behind, that, one by one, they were lost to sight altogether ; one fine morning—which happened to be its day of publication—each, sooner or later, omitted to appear on the literary horizon at all. Generally speaking, they deserved to die ; for the cause of decess could commonly be traced either to bad editorship or to parsimony in their pecuniary management : but some, victims to sudden veerings of the *aura popularis*, and unable to put their helms about in time, lost way in a really pitiable manner, and are even now neither unremembered nor unregretted. In the meantime, the little body of literary militia which had once been sufficient to perform magazine duty, swelled to a great standing army. (*I am speaking solely of the contributors to literary periodicals.* Newspaper writers and critics form a cohort of their own ; although it is true that many of them take service with the other troops.) Each publication got to have its own staff : persons, that is, whose special qualifications were known to the editor, in whose hands he placed particular subjects for manipulation, and upon whose trustworthiness he could (or flattered himself he could) rely. The Brazen Age had not come even yet. Literature

was still a profession, although it had vastly increased, since it included the periodical writers as well as the authors; at that time, two distinct classes. But presently began the Great Literary Volunteer Movement, compared to which, the little exhibitions at Brighton or Wimbledon sink into numerical insignificance. Everybody who could read had already begun to take in the magazines; everybody who could spell (and some who couldn't) now began to write for them. The contagious disorder called *cacoëthes scribendi* broke out in Great Britain (and even Ireland), and spared neither sex nor age. It overran the whole United Kingdom with unexampled rapidity; and it is foolish to imagine that it will ever leave it. We cannot 'stamp it out,' like the cattle disease, by rejection; nor can it even be mitigated by inoculation—that is to say, by Good Advice. It only remains for us to deal with it as an admitted fact, and make the best of it.

This desire for appearing in print, besides being as natural to some persons as hunger and thirst, is far from being without its redeeming points. It may be, and often is, the offspring of the merest vanity. The examples of it (as we *We's* well know) are often mean and vulgar to a sad degree; it sometimes owes its existence to no higher motive than that which prompts Jones to carve his uninteresting name (and even address) upon the bark of a tree or the wall of a summer-house. He likes to see it there, and (especially) that other people should see it there. But there are many who really find themselves prompted to express their thoughts, and some of these thoughts are found by the patient editor to be, with some assistance from his winnowing-machine, very well worth printing. It is true that some magazines will even now admit no volunteer contributors at all, entirely relying upon their staff; but this—although it spares the editor a world of trouble—is, in my humble judgment, a mistake. The staff could not have been born in that position, any more than an *aide-de-camp* is born with a cocked-hat and spurs, but must have served some sort of apprenticeship themselves; and, again, the exclusive employment of the same writers—however excellent—gives, in time, a monotonous character to a publication. However small the percentage of 'accepted' among our volunteer contributors, it is worth having; and however great the trouble of sifting the chaff from the few grains of wheat, it should, I think, be undertaken, for the grains are sometimes really fine, and may produce whole harvests. However, the following words of advice are not addressed to editors, but to their contributors, and especially to that very inuch more numerous class, their *would-be* contributors.

What an army it is to whom I speak! I was talking to an editor of a periodical of the cheaper class, on this subject, and he told me that the average of rejected prose contributions he received *per week* was twenty-five (the verse was not only numerous but innumerable); about five of these unsuccessful writers—not more—tried their luck

with him again, either of their own free-will, or encouraged by him to do so; so that this one serial numbered one thousand rejected contributors *per annum*! Some of these unfortunate persons had, without doubt, been knocking at other doors in vain before, or went from his office elsewhere; going about from magazine to magazine, seeking admittance, and finding none, to the end of their days. But the vast majority were probably satisfied with that round with their first editor, and, once floored, threw up the sponge. There are at least twenty respectable literary periodicals in London alone—I am speaking much within the mark—and each of them, I suppose, has its greater or less tale of victims of this sort. Imagine, therefore, the sum-total—the holocaust offered up at the shrine of periodical literature by those high-priests the *We's*! It is not only to this unhappy multitude that I propose to address a few words of advice (and mayhap comfort), but to those more fortunate few who have obtained some footing on this or that literary chariot, and hope to find it firmer. It is very unpleasant hanging on behind like a footman, with the spikes of possible rejection close to one's calves. I do not, of course, propose to supply intelligence to those who are without that absolutely indispensable qualification for a writer; I can put no weapons into the hands of the volunteer; but if his regulation rifle is furnished with the proper ammunition—that is, if he has wits as well as a pen—I can shew him how to use it, and tell him why it is he so often misses fire.

Mr Lewes has lately given to us (in his *Fortnightly Review*) a very philosophical exposition of 'the Principles of Success in Literature,' but his essay will scarcely be of much service to the gentlemen and ladies I have in view. His ideas, indeed, are a little too high-flying for most of us. The fact is, that although men of real genius are without doubt called to the profession of letters after a nobler sort of fashion—more instinctively, and of their own proper motion—than men are called to the bar (for instance) or to the practice of physic, yet they are not to be considered as mere spiritual folk, actuated only by sublime motives: they have the like wants and necessities—or, at all events, their wives and children have—in the way of meat, drink, and clothing, as mere material lawyers and surgeons. There is an immense deal of twaddle talked upon this subject; and under the pretence of treating these gentlemen as ethereal beings, there have been several attempts to starve them. A judge on the English bench had once the effrontery to state that no law of copyright should exist, because Fame was a sufficient reward to any person of genius. His lordship was probably sufficiently self-conscious to know that there was no chance of his losing his five thousand pounds a year by ever coming under that category himself. The labourer in the fields of literature is as worthy of his hire as any other labourer; and although Genius can afford to be its own reward in the case of a young gentleman who indites 'promising' poems or essays under his father's roof; when he comes to be a full-fledged *littérateur*, with a wife and an increasing family, he may want a little money from his publishers. Moreover, it has been

ascertained by experiment that all contributors to literary periodicals are not persons of genius, although most of them have some talent. And in the case of this rank-and-file of the literary army, they take service for pay at least as much as for the glory that belongs to the calling. Thus, far from being virtuously indignant when a contributor tells me he writes for bread, whether for others or himself, I think it the most natural thing in the world, and see nothing disgraceful in the confession. 'By all means,' says that well-known contributor to the oldest periodical in England, Samuel Johnson, 'let us clear our minds of Cant.'

Writers to magazines comprehend all classes—all conditions of men and women—from archbishops to convicts, from peeresses to washerwomen. Those examples of extremes I cull from my own personal experience. One archbishop, two convicts, one peeress, and one washerwoman, were among the would-be contributors to the magazine I had the honour to conduct; the contributions of the peeress and of one convict were rejected; those of the others were accepted. There is no profession in which the competitors are so numerous and varied; and the reason is pretty obvious. The outfit for this calling, a goose-quill and a sheet of foolscap (*about omen*), is very cheap, and easily procured. The desire of seeing one's self in print has become a universal one; and almost everybody has some story of their own, some (to them) interesting reminiscence, or (more rarely) some ideas upon a particular subject, which they believe to be of public utility. Above all, five-sixths of these good folks imagine that they are born poets and poetesses. Volunteer verse is the great trial of the Editorial profession: only about one poetic contribution in fifty being really good. The fiftieth, the acceptable poem, is, however, very good. Compare the magazine verse of to-day with that of half a century ago, and you will find a vast improvement in this respect. I could select a volume of poems from certain modern periodicals—not from all, for some editors don't know what is poetry and what is not—every one of which shall have the ring of the true metal. The motives, however, beside this supposed inspiration of the Muse, which cause such a large proportion of the human family to become would-be contributors to magazines, are as various as are their positions in the social scale. Those which principally actuate them may be thus stated. First, Vanity, which, it must be confessed, moves the great majority. Secondly, Necessity, or rather a wish to add to a scanty income by doing pleasant work in leisure hours. [At the same time, nobody (not even the archbishop) has any intention—and small blame to them—of working for nothing.] Thirdly, Fitness.

I shall not, I hope, be considered ungallant, when I now add that by far the most numerous section of would-be contributors are ladies. Not necessarily because they are more vain than men: we must remember that they have generally more spare time, and also less money. Next to the ladies, clergymen are the most numerous class. Then lawyers—briefless barristers, or youthful attorneys, into whose web no flies have as yet been enticed. Fourthly, persons of humble life; artisans, not small trades-people. Fifthly, naval and military men, and doctors. Sixthly, the aristocracy. And lastly, the criminal classes.

Having thus classed my audience, I propose in

my next chapter to tell them why it is they fail in the object they seek; and how, supposing that they really possess the materials for success within them, they may use them to the best advantage.

BROUGHT TO LIGHT.

CHAPTER XLIII.—A GHOSTLY VISITOR.

GURNEY BRACKENRIDGE fleeing from the consequences of the deed he had done, made the best of his way to London, and lay in hiding there in a low water-side tavern on the Surrey side of the river. He had not intended, in the first instance, to stay there more than a few days, but to get out of the country altogether as soon as he should see an opportunity of doing so in safety. But when, the fourth morning after his arrival in London, he read in one of the daily papers a long extract from a Monks' journal describing the finding of Jerry's body in the shut-up house—found the afternoon following the lad's death, in consequence of a statement made by Griggs the cobbler, who had heard that Mrs Winch was making anxious inquiries after her missing son; and when he read the account of the inquest, and how it had resulted in the issue of a warrant for the apprehension of himself, he began to see that his scheme for getting out of the country, at least for some time to come, was not so entirely free from danger as he had at first imagined it would be. A minute and accurate description of his personal appearance would have already been sent to every large seaport in the kingdom; and to go down to the docks in search of a vessel either at London or Liverpool, would be like putting his head into the lion's den. It was true that he had disguised himself in some measure, having shaved off his whiskers, and had his hair cut close, and altered the style of his dress; but he had all an ignorant man's belief in the infallibility of the police, and he felt that his disguise would stand him in poor stead under the keen eyes of a detective in whose memory a certain paragraph of the *Hue and Cry* was busily fermenting.

No; he had better lie quietly by for a few weeks, till something fresher and more important should have engaged the attention of the blue-coated gentry; and then take an opportunity of dropping down the river by some night-sailing steamer, bound he hardly cared whither. He was not without funds, having brought away with him, in addition to what money of his own he had by him at the time, a hundred and twenty pounds belonging to Mrs Winch, which had been intrusted to his hands on the preceding day, for the purpose of being deposited by him in the county bank at Eastringham; and he knew from the evidence as given in the newspaper, that a charge of absconding with this money had been brought against him by the indignant widow, and that he was 'wanted' by Justice to answer for a double crime. Sometimes he thought that had it not been for that cursed money, which he had put into his pocket on the impulse of the moment when coming away, he would have gone back, and have given himself up, and have borne the brunt of whatever charge might have been brought against him. That Jerry Winch owed his death to him, he could not disprove; but no one but himself knew the real reason why the chloroform had been administered; and it would not be difficult to trump up some

plausible story to account for having made use of it, which, if credited by a jury, would soften Jerry's premature death from a crime into a mere error of judgment; and, at the worst, they could but record a verdict of manslaughter against him, which a few months' imprisonment would expiate in full.

It may, however, be doubted, whether, in any case, Brackenridge would have had the courage to take a course so apparently straightforward, because, even then, he would have had to piece together some story that would bear cross-examination, to account for Jerry's death; and he felt himself deficient both in the audacity and invention requisite for such a course; but, now that he had taken the hundred and twenty pounds as his own, such a step was utterly out of the question: should he be captured, nothing less than a prosecution for felony awaited him.

So Gurney Brackenridge lay in hiding at the dirty little water-side public known as the *Three Fishes*, situated in the heart of a frowzy and disreputable neighbourhood. They were not in the habit of letting out beds at the *Three Fishes*, their profits being arrived at by a much readier process; but the landlord was one of those men who cared little how he turned a penny, so long as he did turn it; and when the chemist, wayworn, dusty, and utterly fagged out, put the question to him five minutes before closing-time one night, whether he could be accommodated till morning, he had promptly answered in the affirmative, and had at once turned his sister and two children out of their warm bed in order to accommodate this white-faced stranger. And there Brackenridge had stayed. His bedroom accommodation was of the poorest; his meals were served up in a style very different from what he had been accustomed to at home; and he was waited on by a saucy, slatternly girl, whose ears he felt a longing to box twenty times a day; besides which, both house and neighbourhood were thoroughly detestable; but then—no one ever asked him any questions; no one ever seemed to suspect his reasons for lingering there, one day after another; every atom of that seething mass of humanity by which he was surrounded was too intent on its own bitter struggle for the needful daily crust, or too absorbed in the enjoyment of its own fierce pleasures, to heed him in any way; and he almost felt that he was safe. 'Expecting some relation from the East Indies, are you?' said the landlord one day, in reply to some mumbled explanation from Brackenridge of his long stay at the *Three Fishes*. 'That's all right enough, I daresay; but you may as well understand Bob Jarvis once for all. So long as a man pays his way like a man, and ain't stuck up, I axes no questions. Whether a cove's on the square, or whether he's under a cloud, don't matter a penn'orth to me.'

Brackenridge began to find his life intolerably dull. He sent out for a newspaper every morning, which he contrived to make last him till his one-o'clock dinner was brought up; but when that was over, he had no resource left but to smoke and sleep away the long dreary afternoons, which seemed as if they would never come to an end. He never ventured out of doors while the faintest glimmer of daylight lingered in the sky; but as soon as night had fairly set in, and the *Three Fishes*, waking up from the semi-lethargy of its daylight existence, lighted all its lamps, indoors and out,

and began to grow jovial, not to say uproarious, after its own fashion, which was far from being a pleasant one, then would the forlorn chemist steal out at the back-door, and tramp the frowzy streets for hours. He rarely ventured more than a mile away from the *Three Fishes*, but found his way back to it again and again in the course of each evening's peregrination, or rather to some point from which its lamps could be seen; for no sooner had he left it behind him, than he became possessed by an uneasy sense of the insecurity of its existence, a dread of fire or of some other unforeseen calamity overtaking it while he was away, which dragged him back times without number against his better sense, as it were, that he might satisfy himself with his own eyes that the crazy old building was still intact. He was not without a reason for this anxiety. Behind a loose piece of skirting-board at the back of his bed lay hidden away the canvas-bag containing the hundred and twenty sovereigns which he had brought with him from the country: to have walked about such a neighbourhood with such a sum of money on his person, would have been sheer madness; and that was the only place of security he could think of.

The last thing every night before turning in, he crept down the short street, of which the *Three Fishes* formed the corner house abutting on the main thoroughfare, to look at the river. Not that much of it could be seen on a dark night by looking through the gateway at the bottom of the street, and so across the little disused grain-wharf; nothing, in fact, but a great patch of blackness with a fringe of fire-flies on the opposite shore; but such as it was, he loved to gaze on it, no one less able than himself to explain the reason why; and when the tide ran high, and the wind was at all rough, he could hear the melancholy plish-plash of the water against the stone lip of the wharf, and it was a sound that drove him back to his room with a chilled heart, and dim forebodings of coming ill: but none the less would he go down to the wharf on the following night, and strain his eyes into the darkness, and listen, as though he were expecting the coming of some grim boatman, with whom he had an appointment that must not be broken.

Yes, Gurney Brackenridge began to find the life he was leading intolerably dull. No wonder, then, that he began to look to his old friend, the brandy bottle, for solace and companionship. Under the wing of this trusty friend, he could forget half his troubles, or afford to view them with as much equanimity as though they were the property of some one else; so, little by little, the alluring habit grew upon him, and day by day his power of resistance grew weaker. The landlord of the *Three Fishes* made no difficulty about procuring as much French brandy as his lodger asked for, so long as his privilege of a hundred per cent. profit was not objected to.

One evening, while rambling about, Brackenridge got wet through, and took a severe cold; and after that time he lay in bed almost day and night, drinking more than ever, and rarely going outside the house, except now and then to steal down the street, and gaze through the bars for a minute or two at the river, and then creep back with a shiver to his cheerless room. He slept so much in the daytime now that he could no longer rest soundly at night, and his pillow was often haunted by frightful dreams, from which he would wake up in

an agony so intense as made him dread the thought of ever going to sleep again. As each morning came round, he told himself that it should be the last of his stay at the *Three Fishes*; that on the following day he would go down to the docks and secure a berth on board the first ship he could find that was about to sail at once for a foreign port, no matter whither. Surely sufficient time had now elapsed for his little affair to be buried under the pressure of other and more immediate interests, and such a step as he contemplated could no longer be attended with much danger. Yes, he would go and look for a ship next morning without fail, and get out of this cursed country as quickly as possible. But when next morning came, bringing with it a nasty headache, and a feeling of languor and utter distaste for exertion of any kind, the soul of his resolution had vanished; and after refreshing himself in some measure with a volley or two of curses, invoked on his own head for his own laziness and lack of purpose, he would make another appointment with himself for the following morning, which would be broken in turn.

'I call him the Bottle Conjuror,' said the landlord to his wife one night, in allusion to their lodger. 'He has an almighty swallow, and no mistake. And so quiet as he is over it all! No noise, no blether. I like a fellow that can take his tipple without rowing.'

Waking up one night from an ugly dream, Brackenridge started up in bed, and gazed fearfully round, as though half expecting to see some of the horrid shapes with which his sleep had been crowded. With a sigh of relief, he recognised where he was; and scrambling out of bed, he lighted another candle in addition to the one that was already burning, and mended his fire, and put on a few articles of dress, and drew his chair up to the blaze, and poured himself out a tumbler of brandy, and sat down to make himself as comfortable as possible till morning. His daylight slumbers were rarely troubled with bad dreams; and after this last experience, he determined within himself that he would turn day into night in future, and go to bed no more during the dark hours. He heard a distant clock strike, and looking at his watch, he found that it was two hours past midnight. How quiet everything was! All the world but himself seemed to be asleep. He would have liked just now to go down and have a peep at the black river; but it would never do to disturb the household at such an untimely hour. Suddenly he started, and gazed over his shoulder with straining eyes. Was there not somebody outside trying the casement? But next moment he laughed aloud to think what a timorous fool he was. 'I ought to know by this time,' he muttered, 'that it's only that blustering old Boreas in want of a night's lodging somewhere. I shall be frightened at my own shadow next.'

With that he took a long pull at the tumbler of brandy; and then with his slipped feet resting on the fender, and half crouching over the fire, he fell to brooding darkly over his past life, more especially over that string of strange events which had ended by landing him, a skulking thief, at the hostelry of the *Three Fishes*.—More brandy, or he should go mad!—A long pull and a strong pull.—Why, he was better already, and could afford to snap his fingers at Black Care, and at the troop of demons that dog his heels and dance with red-hot

feet on the brains of poor sinners. Elixir of life truly, to work such a sudden change in the miserable wretch of a few minutes ago! There were cakes and ale in store yet, even for such as he; and the world was a devilish pleasant place to live in.

Another hour striking by the distant clock. 'One—two—three. The Miller of Dee so jolly was he, he cared for nobody, no, not he.'

'Come in.' He had heard no noise of footsteps on the stairs, but there was certainly a knock at his room-door.

'Jerry Winch!' He almost screamed the words as he started up from his chair, and pressed his fingers to his burning eyeballs for a moment, as if to shut out the dread apparition which his diseased imagination had conjured up. But it was still there when he looked again; so he took the half-emptied bottle in his hand, and drained a draught that would have scorched the vitals of any one less case-hardened than himself. 'That's better,' he muttered. 'I don't care a damn now for all the ghosts in the world.' There was a wild glare of defiance in his bloodshot eyes, and his hands shook like those of a man stricken with palsy as he waved his arm for the phantom to enter.

'Curse you, why don't you come in!' he exclaimed. 'Don't stand there, staring at me with those dead man's eyes. Shut the door after you, and take that chair. No nearer, if you please, or else I must draw back: ghosts ain't pleasant companions at close quarters. You look awfully cold.—You always are cold now, and I shall be the same when I'm like you!—By Jove! though, I say, that's serious; especially for a fellow like me, that never could stand cold. And, I say, Jerry, my buck, why do you have your jaw tied up with that white cloth? It ain't nice; there's a churchyard flavour about it that I can't stomach.—What do you say? It's the custom of the country where you are now for jaws to be tied up in that fashion. Then it's a custom that ought to be abolished. Ugh! it makes me feel as if my veins were full of worms, to look at you.—While you are here, Jerry, I may as well tell you that what happened to you at my house was quite accidental—it wasn't intended, on my soul; and I hope you bear no malice.—You don't? That's kind—that's good of you.—Idaresay, now, that unsubstantial fellows like you have conceit enough to fancy that they know a heap of things; but I'd wager my two ears that you can't tell me where I shall be and what I shall be doing twelve hours from this time.—What do you say? I shall be down by Deptford Creek? That's a lie, anyhow; I shall be nothing of the sort. But never mind, my young romancer; go ahead, and tell me what I shall be doing down by Deptford Creek to-morrow afternoon. You shake your head; you won't answer. I thought that would be a poser for you. Come, now, I'll put my question another way. How shall I go down to Deptford Creek to-morrow afternoon?—By water, do you say? You are a liar, Jerry. But never mind; tell me what will happen when I get down to the Creek?—There will be a crowd of people, and two men will hook a body from among the mud and piles, and nobody there will know whose it is—is that what I understand you to say? Very interesting, certainly; only I don't quite see in what way it concerns me. I must have another nip of brandy to take the taste of your last remark out of my mouth. A drowned body! Faugh! let's talk of something

else.—You must be going, do you say? With all my heart, for it is rather late, you know. Next time you pay me a visit, come at a more seasonable hour—by daylight, if possible. And I say, Jerry, do leave off wearing that white cloth round your face; and there's a cold fishy look about your eyes that I don't like; and there's a bluish tinge about your complexion that I don't remember to have noticed before. Do, my dear fellow, pay a little more attention to your appearance.—You want me to go with you, do you say? Much obliged, but I'd rather stay where I am.—There's something outside you want to shew me? What, in the fiend's name, can there be outside worth my going to look at, at this time of the night? Oh, you won't stir, won't you, unless I'll go a bit of the way with you? You're an infernal old nuisance, Jerry, to say so; and I shan't fret if I don't see your ugly phiz again for a blue moon. I suppose I must do as you want me, or I shall never get rid of you; so start at once.'

Having fortified himself with another pull at his long-necked favourite, Brackenridge was ready, without further preparation, to accompany his ghostly visitor. He rose, pushed back his chair, and with his eyes intently fixed on the figure which his disordered brain had conjured up, he crossed the floor, and opening the door, passed into the corridor outside, which was lighted at its further end by a window that opened direct on to the roof of the next house. Towards this window, through which a white stream of moonlight was now falling, the chemist advanced, still following that something invisible to all eyes but his own.

'Not there, Jerry—not there, man!' he said in an excited whisper. 'That window opens on to the leads, and your way lies down the staircase. What's that you say? You are going to take a walk on the leads, and I must go with you? Well, go ahead, my hearty; G. B. is not the man to shirk anything he has promised. It would have been more mannerly of you, though, Jerry, to have left the window open behind you, instead of flitting through in that queer fashion, and leaving me to bungle over it as I best can. Ecod! though, but it blows cool out here.'

By this time Brackenridge was standing on the leads of the house next to the *Three Fishes*, in the little street leading down to the river. The houses in this street were of one uniform height, and were built after an antiquated style, with dormer windows in the roof, in front of which was a flat leaded space, and outside that a broad raised parapet. On to this parapet Brackenridge now stepped without hesitation, following his phantom guide. A single false step would have precipitated him into the street below; but there was this to be remarked, that the state in which Brackenridge then was in so far resembled somnambulism that he was apparently enabled to dispense with the use of his eyes as a safeguard for his feet. He seemed to see nothing save the gliding phantom before him; he looked neither to the right hand nor to the left; he saw nothing of the vast panorama of house-tops stretching out interminably on three sides of him; he saw nothing of the dark river in front of him, towards which his steps were tending; but with eyes that never winked, or broke away for a single instant from their intense stare at vacancy, and with unflinching feet, he went onward to his doom.

'A regular wild-geese chase this, and no mis-

take,' he muttered. 'Jerry, Jerry, you imp of Satan, where are you leading me to? Not up there, you nincompoop! Well, if we must, we must; but we can't get much further, at anyrate, for the river's just below.' While the chemist was speaking, he came to the end of the parapet along which he had been walking, and close before him rose the higher roof of the disused granary, which was built on to the last house of the street, and ran flush up to the river, with a penthouse, and a crane, for convenience in hoisting grain into and out of the barges which occasionally moored alongside. Behind the stack of chimneys belonging to the last house, a small iron ladder gave access to the roof of the granary, which had probably been put there as a means of escape in case of fire, and up this ladder Brackenridge now mounted.

'Not another step will I follow you, Jerry, my buck,' said the chemist in a positive tone as he stepped on to the roof; 'and it's my belief that I'm a confounded ass for having come so far. Now, shew me what you have got to shew me, and let me go back to my room, for it's awfully cold here. O no, of course you don't feel it; you've got no— Jerry, Jerry! don't! don't!' screamed the wretched man, starting from the spot on which he had been standing, his white drawn face all distorted with terror, while a light foam began to gather on his lips. With the suddenness of a flash of lightning, the air-drawn phantom which he had been following had changed its semblance. It was no longer the likeness of Jerry in the flesh that he saw before him, but the likeness of Jerry out of the flesh. It was neither more nor less than a skeleton clothed in the habiliments Jerry had been wont to wear—the home-spun suit, the conical hat, the hob-nailed shoes, were all there; there was even a peculiar little self-conceited pose of the head common to Jerry when the poor simpleton was more than usually well pleased with himself; and, more terrible than all else, there, too, were Mogaddo and Pipanta, writhing and coiling round the fleshless arms and neck of their master, as Brackenridge had often seen them do when alive.

Almost before Brackenridge had time to note this horrible transformation, the phantom swiftly altered its position, and placed itself between him and the ladder. With another scream, even more shrill than the first one, the haunted wretch fell back. 'O Jerry, lad, have mercy, have mercy!' he cried. 'What have I done, to be tormented thus? I will confess everything; I will go back, and give myself up; only leave me—leave me, or I shall go mad!'

Trembling in every limb, the chemist retreated step by step along the flat roof of the granary, and step by step the phantom followed him up, leering at him horribly from under its conical hat; while the glittering eyes of Mogaddo and Pipanta fixed full on his eyes, seemed to pierce his brain like spikes of flame. He had either forgotten how close he was to the river, or was heedless of his danger in the great dread that lay upon him. Nearer and nearer to the fatal spot, slowly pursued by the remorseless foe which his own fancy had conjured up.

'Have mercy, have mercy!' he wailed with clasped hands, but still retreating. 'Let me keep my senses; let me have time to—'

Not another word on earth. A sudden fall backward from the roof of the granary; a wild

shriek, borne far through the night-air; a heavy splash in the swift-flowing river; and Gurney Brackenridge was no longer among the living. That wild cry and that heavy splash were heard by the crew of the Thames police-boat on duty no great distance away. They were quickly on the spot, and rowed about it for nearly an hour; but nothing more was seen or heard. On the afternoon of the same day—for it was early morning when all this took place—a little crowd was assembled down Deptford way, watching two men drag a drowned body from among the piles and mud, where it had been left by the receding tide.

CHAPTER XLIV.—P. P. C.

Pour prendre congé. Yes, we have at length reached that point of our narrative at which nothing is left for the story-teller to do, save to tie up the knots of a few scattered threads, and bid his readers a kindly farewell.

Lady Spencelaugh never rallied from the effects of the rough treatment she received at the hands of Duplessis and his accomplice, and the subsequent hour of awful suspense, when Death in one of his most terrible aspects stared her in the face. Her nervous system had been overtaxed, too, by the mental excitement of the few preceding weeks, culminating in her confession in the vault; and now that he whom she had too credulously believed to be dead, had made his appearance once more on the scene, and had indeed saved her life at the risk of his own, it seemed to the lone miserable woman that there was nothing left worth living for, and that the sooner she was done with the world and its vanities, the better for every one. The one great scheme of her life was irretrievably wrecked, and all her earthly hopes were drowned with it.

For the four days following the night of her rescue she lay in bed, and refused to see any one but the woman who took her meals; interdicting both Gaston and Martha Winch from entering her room; but on the morning of the fifth day she sent for John and her son.

'I have sent for you, Sir Arthur Spencelaugh,' she said, turning on the young man a worn, wan face, 'to ask your forgiveness for the great wrong I have done you; and to claim your kind offices for Gaston when I shall be no more. You will believe me when I say that my son was utterly ignorant of his mother's crime. What I did was done to benefit him, but he knew nothing of the base means by which my ends were to be accomplished. For myself, I think that during the little remaining time that is left me here, it would be a comfort to me to know that you had forgiven me. That you are brave, I have had ample proof, and brave natures are always generous.'

John had flushed at hearing himself thus acknowledged as Sir Arthur Spencelaugh; but the feeling which had evoked the rush of colour quickly died away, and both his eyes and voice were full of grave tenderness as he answered Lady Spencelaugh.

'For whatever wrong or injury your Ladyship may at any time have done me,' he said, 'I pray you to accept my full and entire forgiveness. Let such wrong be as utterly forgotten between us as though it had never existed. You were my father's wife, Lady Spencelaugh, and that fact renders you sacred in my eyes; and in time to come, I trust

that you will allow me to regard you with somewhat of the respect and devotion due from a son to a mother: from this day, try to remember that you have two children.—And as for Gaston here,' he added, turning towards the sullen young man standing on the opposite side of the bed, 'I admit that it must seem very hard for him to be disposed of by a stranger of what he has been brought up to look upon as his own. But I hope that after a little time, he will learn to look upon that stranger as a brother; and, in any case, he will find that I am not disposed to act ungenerously by him.'

Gaston pretended not to see the proffered hand. 'But the proofs,' he said in an aggrieved voice, addressing his mother. 'Mr Greenhough told me no longer ago than yesterday afternoon, that the proofs of the identity of this—this gentleman, with the person he states himself to be, were by no means clear at present. It seems to me that we are getting on a little too fast just now.'

'This gentleman is Arthur Spencelaugh, your father's eldest son,' said her Ladyship solemnly to Gaston. 'Whatever further proofs Mr Greenhough may think proper to ask for, cannot alter that fact. I committed a great crime, Gaston, to benefit you, as I thought; but I now charge you earnestly not to perpetuate that crime by striving to ignore facts which must ultimately be acknowledged by the world. I tell you again, this is Sir Arthur Spencelaugh, and your brother.'

'Your son is right, Lady Spencelaugh,' said John. 'In his position, he has no right to accept anything on hearsay. I will meet him to-morrow, together with Mr Greenhough, and will lay before them such proofs that I really am the person I claim myself to be, as cannot, I think, be met by any reasonable doubt.'

Accordingly the three met together next morning, when John entered into a detailed account of the result of his visit to America, which account, as far as it now concerns us, may be compressed into a few sentences. John's first efforts had been directed to finding Ike Yarnold, the old squatter, to whose charge he had been committed by Kreefe; and in this attempt he had happily succeeded. The old man recognised John before the latter spoke to him; and when he was made to understand the service that was required at his hands, and satisfied that no harm should happen to himself, he at once agreed to go before the mayor of the nearest town, and there have his deposition as to the identity of John taken in proper form. The only son of Yarnold now living at home also deposed before the same functionary to the identity of John with the youth who had lived under his father's roof for so many years. Before leaving, the old squatter presented John with two or three faded notes written by Kreefe, and all referring, more or less to 'the boy,' which notes had been treasured up by Ike, as the only post-letters he had ever received in his life. Encouraged by this first success, John's next effort was directed to finding out the particular Mullinsville to which, if the information given him by an old inhabitant of Willsburgh might be relied upon, the Kreefes had removed on their departure from the latter place. Mullinsville, in the state of Massachusetts, proved to be the town of which he was in quest. Here he had little difficulty in picking up ample particulars respecting the Kreefes. The little property possessed by

Barbara at her death had been bequeathed by her to one of the charitable institutions of the town. Her furniture had been sold by auction; and the broker who had purchased the greater portion of it, hearing that an Englishman was making inquiries respecting Kreefe and his wife, brought John a lot of papers which he had found in the secret drawer of an old bureau bought by him at the sale, and which had doubtless escaped the notice of Barbara when she made a holocaust of her husband's letters. Some of the documents thus strangely recovered proved to be of no small value to John. Among them were several receipts given by Yarnold to Kreefe for sums paid him for the maintenance of the boy intrusted to his care. Besides these, there were two or three letters from Martha Winch to her brother, in which the same subject was guardedly alluded to, in connection with several references to a certain 'Lady S.' The broker made no difficulty about parting with these documents for a small consideration, nor of further annexing to them a written statement, duly witnessed, stating by what means they had come into his possession. Armed thus with a double set of proofs, John at once made his way back to England.

'We have by no means a bad case, in a legal point of view,' said Mr Greenhough to Lady Spencelaugh, when he went to visit her at the close of his interview with John. 'We have possession in our favour, and that goes a long way. The armour of this Mr John English is by no means armour of proof; there are several flaws in it, and if your Ladyship'—

'No, no, Mr Greenhough!' said Lady Spencelaugh vehemently. 'I tell you this young gentleman is the man he professes to be, and you are as well aware of it as I am. Knowing what you do, would you drag this wretched business into a court of law, and call up me to give evidence on oath! How could Gaston ever hold up his head among honourable men again? You have been a faithful friend, Mr Greenhough, and I thank you from my heart; but this must not be, no, never—never!'

And thus it fell out at last that Sir Arthur Spencelaugh stepped into his title and estates as quietly and easily as though no one had ever dreamed of disputing his claim to those possessions. The few people who knew the real truth of the matter, found it to their interest to keep a close tongue thereon; and the world, ever ready to welcome a story with a spice of romance in it, was not difficult to satisfy. The eldest son of the late Sir Philip Spencelaugh had been abducted in childhood, and Sir Philip and his wife had been led to believe him dead; but the naughty people who had taken him away ever so many years ago, having confessed their crime, he had come back, to be welcomed with open arms by Lady Spencelaugh, and to be gracefully bowed into the seat of honour by the chivalrous Gaston, who had at once conceded new-found honours to the long-lost heir. Thus he rumour ran; and to rumours, three-fourths of mankind are ever ready to pin their faith, facts being such awkward things to get at. So the world of polite society, figuratively speaking, opened its arms to welcome the long-lost Sir Arthur, and would doubtless have welcomed him to its heart also, but that such an incumbrance forms no part of its anatomy.

Lady Spencelaugh lingered on for several weeks, growing weaker from day to day, fading out of life like a lamp that dies slowly, but surely, for

lack of oil. Frederica was with her almost constantly; and the bond between these two women, so soon to be severed by the hand of Death, had more strength and vitality in it during these few latter days than it had had during all the years that went before. Gaston, restless and moody, lounged in and out of his mother's room a dozen times a day. He was the last person in the house to apprehend the loss that was coming upon him; he never thought otherwise than that a few weeks would see his mother's health as completely re-established as he ever remembered it to have been, for his mother had been a semi-invalid as long as he could recollect; till Frederica broke the truth to him only two days before the end.

Sir Arthur, too, was a frequent and a welcome visitor in that little room. All that had happened between himself and Lady Spencelaugh in past days seemed as completely forgotten as though it had never been; and the dying woman's eyes lighted up with true pleasure whenever he entered her room.

'What love and tender regard might have been mine through all those weary years!' she said on almost the last morning of her life. 'But I threw them wilfully away to grasp at a bauble, which turned to ashes in my hand the moment I thought it was my own.'

Gaston had no reason to complain of any want of generosity on the part of Sir Arthur. The weight of debt that had hung like a millstone round his neck, was at once cleared off; a liberal allowance was settled on him; and, at his own request, a commission was procured for him in a regiment, which, shortly afterwards, was ordered abroad. With all his faults and follies, there was some sterling stuff in the young man. He has seen good service already, has lost an arm, and won a captaincy. Last time he was down in Monksbury, he was lionised to his heart's content; and had he been matrimonially inclined, he might have had the pick of half the eligible girls in the county. He and Sir Arthur are on the best of terms; and it was only the other week, in the smoking-room of a certain house where both of us happened to be visiting, and towards the small-hours of the morning, that Captain Spencelaugh, in a moment of confidence, spoke his mind to the present chronicler as follows: 'Tell you what, my boy, it was a deuced good thing for this child that the title and estates went from him in the way they did. I should have made ducks and drakes of the property, as sure as eggs are eggs, and have done no credit to an old name. But look at me now. Having to fight my way up has done me all the good in the world. I've made myself known in a small way; I've as much tin as I want, and more; I'm liked by a heap of fellows; and I've got the best brother in the world. Yes, Arthur is a brother to be proud of, and I am proud of him.'

Belair was not burned down. The fire did not extend beyond the wing where it originated, and which had been at once picturesque and uncomfortable. A new wing, more suited to the requirements of modern living, and more in accord, architecturally, with the rest of the mansion, rose before long on the spot made vacant by the fire.

A week or two after Lady Spencelaugh's death, Mrs Winch, having disposed of her business by secret treaty, departed suddenly from Normanford, and was no more seen by the inhabitants

of that little town. It was supposed that she had emigrated to New Zealand, where it was known that she had relatives living; and in the lack of positive information, we may accept this supposition as correct.

Of Jane Garrod, what can I say, except that the master of Belair never ceased to remember how much he owed to her indefatigable exertions in his behalf. In a worldly point of view, he could do nothing for either her or Abel, simply because they were in want of nothing. The situation held by Abel suited his tastes exactly, and was quite up to the height of his abilities; while his income, small though it was, was more than sufficient to meet the inexpensive tastes of Jane and himself. Of worldly store or increase, they stood in no need; but Sir Arthur and Frederica could give them what they valued infinitely higher—true friendship, and that was given without grudging: none of the ordinary conventional barriers of society were allowed to touch, however remotely, the bond of genuine friendship existing between the inmates of Belair and the humble dwellers in the little station-house at Kingsthorpe.

Of Antoine the faithful, authentic tidings have come to hand quite recently. Sir Arthur, while in London a few months ago, recognised the ex-valet in the street, without being seen himself; and had the curiosity to follow him for half a mile, till he tracked him into a small café near Leicester Square, of which place Antoine and his brother proved, on inquiry, to be joint-proprietors. Behind the counter, and flanked by two huge jars of chocolate and sweetmeats, and effulgent in the lustre of black satin and cheap jewellery, sat Clotilde, the imperious, less blooming, and more vicious-looking than of old. Believing, as he did, that Antoine had never been anything more than a willing instrument in the hands of his crafty master, and glad to find that he had now taken to such an honest mode of getting a living, Sir Arthur was well pleased to leave him in peace, and go unobserved on his way.

But one more duty remains to be done before the green curtain comes down, and that is, to bring my hero and heroine together for the last time in front of the stage, that, hand in hand, they may make their bow to the audience. That they two—Arthur and Frederica—would inevitably come together, that nothing but death could them part, might be predicated without fear of contradiction from what had gone before. But it is too late in the day for me to report any of the little love-passages between them, or set down any of their foolish-wise speeches or tender confessions one to the other; neither can I undertake to furnish any detailed account of the wedding which followed in due course; indeed, I am so woefully ignorant in these matters, that I could not even tell you what the bridesmaids wore on the happy occasion. We may, however, take one last peep at them on the threshold of their new life, before bidding them a friendly farewell.

It is a pleasant autumn evening, the evening of the day of their return from their wedding-tour. Sir Arthur and Frederica have dined quietly together without company; and now, just as the sun is beginning to dip behind the great Belair woods, and all the western front of the old Hall glows, and winks, and basks in the golden light, as though it were alive, they come stepping through the open windows of the dining-room on to the

shaven lawn outside; and plucking here and there a flower as they go, they wind slowly down till they come to a moss-grown wicket, and so pass out into the park, the great reaches of which are chequered with light or shade as the trees stand open or close. A few leaves scattered here and there on the yellow footway, that fades into a thread in the dim distance, speak of the year's fruition and the fulfilment of many hopes; and as the new lord of Belair and his wife pace slowly under the overarching trees, the ever-busy squirrel peers down at them with curious eyes from the upper boughs; from bracken and coppice the timid hare and the sly rabbit peep out at them wonderingly; all the happy songsters of the grove take note of them; the gaudy peacock on the terrace screams a shrill good-night ere he shuts up his fan, and goes within doors; while the inquisitive deer follow them watchfully from afar.

Frederica's arm is within that of her husband, and she looks up fondly into his face as she speaks. 'I am glad we are home again, dear,' she says. 'With all its attractions, I was beginning to weary of the continent—beginning to long to be back in my own sweet English nest.'

'In which I hope that you and I together will pass many, many happy years,' answers Sir Arthur; and with that, he stoops and kisses his bride, believing himself unseen. But a one-eyed black-bird of misanthropical habits, who happens to be taking the air on the branch of an oak close by, is a witness of the sweet transaction, and resolves to consult his Brother Rook in the morning concerning this curious custom of the unfeathered bipeds.

'You remember that day at Naples,' says Frederica, 'when we sat in the balcony outside our hotel, and discussed our plans for the future—what alterations we were to make here and there; what improvements of various kinds we were to try to effect; the good we were to strive to do in many ways; and the general rule that was to regulate our life and conduct, as far as such things can be regulated for a future of which we know so little: do you remember the evening I speak of?'

'Perfectly,' answers Sir Arthur. 'I seemed to know you better from that hour than I had ever known you before.'

'And all those resolves, hopes, and wishes still hold good in both our minds,' resumes Frederica; 'but I sometimes fear that the corrosion which wealth and ease so often bring with them will not be without its effect upon us; that our good intentions will lose their edge, and slowly rust into inefficiency; that all our fine resolutions and philanthropical schemes, having no vital principle of necessity at the back of them, will never bear fruit, but wither one by one, and die of inanition; and that as you and I grow in years, we shall gradually fade into a couple of good-natured nonentities, living for ourselves alone; not actively selfish, so long as our own little comforts are not interfered with; charitable to a certain extent, but charitable without trouble; and coming at last to a state of mind that will look back upon all the schemes, hopes, and resolutions of which we are brimful just now, as upon the wild day-dreams of two children, who looked out at the world, and all its belongings, through the rose-coloured spectacles of youth and love. Does the dread of such a future never haunt you?'

'Never,' replies Sir Arthur decisively. 'I cannot conceive of myself as coming to such a pass; and

with you by my side, I shall feel doubly armed against it. Genteel sloth has been the ruin of many a promising life. Let us try to make our lives healthily active; let us never be without some object to strive for, something to look forward to; and if our ends have not been ignoble ones, so much the better for us when the evening shall come.—But see, there is the spire of the little church shewing above the trees.'

Frederica pressed closer to her husband's arm, and they walked on in silence. They had dedicated this the first evening of their return to a visit to the little church where lay the remains of him they both had loved so well. The old sexton was there ready with the keys. In reverent silence, they went in. Frederica's cheek was wet with tears when they came out ten minutes later. The autumn mists were rising, and the trees looked dim and ghostlike as they took their way back through the park, neither wholly sorrowful nor wholly glad. So let us leave them.

THE END.

THE PARIS EXHIBITION OF 1867.

THE notion of Industrial Exhibitions is not a nineteenth-century one, and did not originate in our country; it is purely French in its origin, and dates back as far as the early part of the eighteenth century. 'The idea of periodical exhibitions,' writes M. Duruy, 'is entirely French. It dates from the age of Louis XIV., for the Fine Arts, and from the time of the Revolution for Industry. France, having given the idea to the world, has since unceasingly laboured effectually to develop it.' The first Industrial Exhibition was opened in Paris in September 1798; one hundred and ten exhibitors, from sixteen of the French departments, furnishing the contents. The dates of this and of subsequent exhibitions (shewing their gradual progress) are given in the following table:

	Date.	Place of Exhibition.	Number of Exhibitors.
First Exhibition,	1798	The Louvre,	110
Second "	1801	"	220
Third "	1802	"	540
Fourth "	1806	"	1422
Fifth "	1819	"	1500
Sixth "	1823	"	1648
Seventh "	1827	"	1725
Eighth "	1834	{ Place de la } Concorde	2447
Ninth "	1839	{ Carré Marigny, } { Champs-Élysées }	3381
Tenth "	1844	"	3960
Eleventh "	1849	"	4532

Many other nations having by this time adopted the idea, and opened Industrial Exhibitions, the scheme of an International Exhibition, to embrace the products of various countries and climates, presented itself to the Emperor Napoleon, who, in the year 1849, suggested to the Chambers of Commerce its feasibility. The honour, however, of thoroughly realising its importance, and of successfully carrying it out, belongs to the late Prince Consort, to whom the Great Exhibition of 1851 and its important results are almost entirely due. The number of exhibitors on this occasion was 14,837. The 1851 Exhibition was followed by one of similar kind at Paris in 1855, at which no less than 24,000 exhibitors were represented; and afterwards by the Great Exhibition at Brompton.

It has now been resolved to hold a fourth Exhibi-

tion on a grand scale in 1867 at Paris; and this 'Exposition Universelle' bids fair to eclipse all its predecessors in the scale of magnitude on which it is being carried out, the quantity and variety of its contents, and the great care bestowed on every detail of arrangement. The important question of a suitable site long occupied the attention of the imperial commission appointed to carry out the project, and finally resulted in the selection of the Champ de Mars, a field of about a hundred acres, on the south bank of the Seine, a little to the west of the Hôtel des Invalides, the property of the government, and chiefly used for military evolutions and reviews. The willingness with which the Parisians consented to be debarred for three years from their accustomed military spectacles on this site, reflects great credit upon them; and the amount of thought and skill that have been brought to bear upon the arrangements for the 1867 Exhibition, will deserve, and, it can hardly be doubted, will meet with the reward of complete success.

It having been decided to accept the offer of the government, and to make use of the Champ de Mars as the site, several important new features were at once found to be feasible, and have been adopted. The shape of the building is to be an oblong, with rounded corners, the length being greater by one-fifth than the width. It will contain a central garden, more than five hundred feet long, and it will be surrounded by a spacious park. There will be no galleries, the enormous space available rendering it possible to display everything on one level. Including its covered vestibules, the building will measure nearly one-third of a mile in length, and about a quarter of a mile in width; and it will be divided into a series of concentric zones, each zone being devoted to a distinct classification. Sixteen radiating passages, of the minimum width of seventeen feet, will traverse, intersect, and connect these zones. One result of this arrangement is, that by separating the spaces allotted to each nation by radiating lines corresponding more or less with these passages, each nation will follow precisely the same order of classification; and a visitor who may traverse the length of any one zone, will have passed through the products of one particular class as exhibited in succession by each nation. The principal vestibule will, at its northern extremity, measure nearly eighty feet in width; at its narrowest part, about fifty feet; the smaller vestibules will be about thirty-five feet wide.

The general outlines of the building as thus arranged will be of a comparatively permanent kind; but all the internal partitions, as well as the ceilings, will be of a very varying description as to length, width, height, and material, according to the requirements of the class exhibited. Thus, in the zone set apart for machinery in motion, the ceiling will be nearly eighty feet in height; while the ceiling in the adjoining compartment will rise only to the height of twenty feet.

The classification adopted is founded on very simple principles, and follows these main divisions: 1. Food, in all its ramifications, animal, vegetable. 2. Clothing and Personal Ornaments. 3. Habitation: Furniture, Decoration of Dwellings, &c. 4. Work and Industry, in their broadest acceptance. 5. The Liberal Arts employed in developing the intellectual and physical powers. 6. The Fine Arts. These six classes are divided (as before observed) into ten divisions or zones; the

outer, and consequently the largest, of which are devoted to the first class; and the interior and smallest zone, immediately surrounding the central garden, being devoted to the Fine Arts. In this department, one very interesting section will be allotted to the History of Labour, as illustrated by the weapons, tools, and sculptures formed by man in all ages, commencing with the so-called 'ages' of 'stone,' 'bronze,' and 'iron,' and continued in historical sequence to our own days.

In the next division will be found specimens of the printing-press and its kindred arts, as well as of photography, and musical instruments.

The third zone, devoted to objects connected with human habitation, will exhibit, in addition to furniture and decoration in all their branches, specimens of the arts of clock and watch making, as well as of the production of those articles of ornament which are unconnected with costume.

The fourth division will include articles of utility or of ornament that belong more or less to dress, including the military and naval uniforms, and the religious vestments of various nations and churches.

The fifth compartment will contain rough industrial products, such as rocks, metals, the produce of the chase and of the fishing-line, and generally all the substances operated upon in the next division.

The sixth will undoubtedly be one of the most interesting groups in the building. Human industry, in all its developments, will here be seen in full activity. Machines of every shape, size, and construction will be at work in an imposing area, a hundred and ten feet in width, and eighty feet in height; and it is hoped that every process of manufacture that can possibly be represented will be witnessed in active operation; one point to which the efforts of the Commission have been directed being that of inducing workmen from every nation, in every department of skilled labour, to come to Paris, and occupy themselves in their several departments in the Exhibition building.

The seventh zone will be occupied with the manufacture of food in all its forms. Here will be produced daily a large portion of the material to be consumed at the restaurants and refreshment rooms of various nationalities within the building. The width of this department will be forty-five feet, and its height twenty feet.

The preceding seven classes will all be contained under the roof of the building itself; the two following will be ranged on a similar plan within the grounds or park surrounding it, the radiating lines separating the different nationalities being also continued through the outdoor zones.

The eighth division will be devoted to agriculture, comprising both living specimens of farming-stock and agricultural implements of every kind. In addition to these, will be exhibited bees, silkworms, the cochineal insect, fish, &c. in various parts of this department of the grounds.

The ninth group will consist of horticultural productions and buildings, and will afford great opportunities for displaying the taste and skill of those who undertake this portion of the work.

The remainder of the park will be laid out as a pleasure-ground, a portion of it, however, being devoted to the steam-engines required for the machinery within the building, as well as to other manufactures more suitable to be carried on in the open air. In various parts of the grounds, aquariums, rustic buildings, model stables, winter-

gardens, fountains, and statuary will be erected, and a space will be set apart for the display and exercise of carriages and horses. An extensive experimental laboratory, hydraulic machines, observatories, theatres, and concert-halls, restaurants, cafés, and the usual outdoor games and amusements of an English fair, form part of the programme. An artificial river winding through the grounds will, no doubt, add greatly to their beauty, and will render it still more difficult to recognise in its metamorphosed state the well-known 'Champ de Mars,' with its military and dusty associations. One group remains to be mentioned, which will be found (divided into seven subdivisions) either in a transverse passage of the building or in the park, according to the nature of the articles exhibited. The title of this division is, 'Objects specially exhibited for the amelioration of the physical and moral condition of man;' and it will include educational system and apparatus for the young, libraries and educational appliances for adults, specimens of national costumes, and specialties of national production, models of dwellings constructed with a view to health and hygiene, and specimens of various kinds of tools and of workmanship, in many instances illustrated by the workman himself, in every variety both of kind and of nationality.

Such is a slight and necessarily very imperfect sketch of the contemplated Exhibition of 1867. It remains to say a few words as to the financial part of the scheme. The French government has guaranteed the sum of six millions of francs (L.240,000), and the city of Paris has made itself responsible for a similar amount. A private subscription has been raised to guarantee a further sum of eight millions of francs (L.320,000), on condition that any profit remaining after all expenses shall be handed over to the subscribers; and the popularity of the scheme may be judged by the fact, that this subscription quickly reached the amount of ten million francs! Let us hope that our own country will on this occasion be fully and worthily represented, and that large numbers from every part of Great Britain and Ireland will avail themselves of so rare an opportunity to increase their knowledge of the industrial products of our globe, in their multiplied ramifications.

The Exhibition is to be opened on the first of April, and to remain open until the thirty-first of October.

THE LAST RECORDS OF CHARLES LAMB.

Few men are fortunate in their biographers. A biography—which would seem such an easy matter—is really among the most difficult feats of authorship, for it demands all the usual requirements of a writer, and in addition, judgment of a very high order. It is necessary, if the work is to be what it should be—the true life-history of a man—that he who takes it in hand should have been an intimate friend of the Departed, and should have loved him, and been loved in return. How hard, then, to write without bias, without partisanship (if the subject of the memoir has been attacked in his lifetime), without extenuation of his short-comings, and without putting down aught in malice against his opponents! When a man is dead, even if he be our enemy, we are slow to speak of his faults; but how much more difficult is the task when he

has been near and dear to us! Yet, if we leave out his faults, we do not paint the man, but a monster, in whom, very naturally, the world refuses to believe. I suppose one of the best biographies we possess, not written by a personal friend of the man described, is Forster's *Life of Goldsmith*; but even in that, how we miss the one thing needful which no intelligence can supply. How much better is Boswell's *Life of Johnson*, though written by a far less able man; because he knew the man he writes of—not as the historian knows the character of Julius Cæsar or William I., but as Jones knows Smith. True, Jones in this case was Smith's toady, but the excellence of his description is only the more remarkable upon that account. How faultless would the work have been, had he been capable of being his friend. The same objection, although certainly in a far less degree, lies against Lockhart's *Life of Scott*. We have not only the biographer, but the Worshipper and the Partisan.

With such examples before our eyes, we may well say that few men are fortunate in their literary legatees, even when they are of their own choice and appointment. How far fewer, then, when their lives have been written by persons to whom no such task has been delegated, but who have undertaken it of their own will, often for pecuniary profit, or for the sake of a little reflected fame. Some men of eminence, shrinking from this 'new terror added to death'—a bad biographer—write their own story beforehand up to the very last, just as others compose their epitaph, and leave nothing but the date of their demise to be added thereto; and they shew their wisdom in so doing.

Unusual, however, as it is for a dead man to have a good biographer, there is one Departed Great One who has been so exceedingly fortunate as to have had two. Charles Lamb was introduced to us by Talfourd in such a manner that we all seem to know him through that common friend; and now, behold! here is Barry Cornwall leading his sacred shade by the hand once more, and performing a similar ceremony with the utmost success. The two presentments are, of course, the same, but the second one is by no means superfluous; it is the corroboration, but also the complement of the other. The reason of this satisfactory result lies not in the fact, that both biographers are men of genius and sensibility, but in the character of the subject of their memoirs. While Lamb's virtues were great and undeniable, his failings were not only of that sort which it is not painful to have to confess to, but which absolutely endear to us their possessor. He had a pity for the scoundrels of the earth far beyond charity; and, indeed, he rather sympathised with them. He liked his glass, 'and even glasses.' He was a thorough and irredeemable Cockney, and was always uncomfortable when out of town. Exquisitely alive to the description of country-life in poetry—Keats's *Ode to the Nightingale* was one of his chief favourites—he did not at all care for the beauties of nature. But, then, with what humorous frankness he acknowledges this! He goes to see Coleridge at the Lakes, and although at first sight the mountains impress him—'Glorious creatures, Skiddaw, &c. I shall never forget how ye lay about that night like an intrenchment gone to bed for the night'—he resented the feeling, transitory as it was, as one would resent an imposition. He thought of the

Ham and Beef shop in St Martin's Lane, in order to bring his mind to due propriety. Mountains were very well 'to look at,' but 'the houses in streets were the places to live in.' He loved 'the sweet security of the streets,' he says, 'and would set up his tabernacle there.' Lamb's tastes were much restricted, too, even in literature. He liked old books because they were old; and on that account sometimes eulogised works that are very stupid. He liked coteries and cliques (not political ones, however), and now and then set up an idol (but never a golden calf) scarcely worthy of worship. Who of us, when we are dead, shall leave so little to be said to our discredit as this man, the first, or among the first, of English humorists, and exposed to all the temptations of popularity? The category of his shortcomings ends here. Stay, we forget; he lacked something yet. 'It is reported of some person,' writes his present biographer, 'that he had not merit enough to create a foe. In Lamb's case, I suppose, he did not possess that peculiar merit; for he lived and died without an enemy.'

The history of Charles Lamb is a wholly uneventful one, with one terrible exception—the death of his mother by the hand of his beloved sister, Mary, during a paroxysm of madness. From that awful moment, the innocent murderer, suffering unimaginable pangs of remorse in her intervals of sanity, became his constant care. To this tender purpose, he directed his whole life. 'We read of men giving up all their days to a single object, to religion, to vengeance, to some overpowering selfish wish; of daring acts done to avert death or disgrace, or some oppressing misfortune. We read mythical tales of friendship; but we do not recollect any instance in which a great object has been so unremittingly carried out throughout a whole life, in defiance of a thousand difficulties, and of numberless temptations, straining the good resolution to its utmost, except in the case of our poor clerk of the India House.' There was an hereditary taint of madness in Lamb's family, and he himself was in confinement for a few weeks. The danger in his own case never recurred; but again, and again, and again it was necessary to place his sister under restraint. Whenever the approach of one of her fits of insanity was announced, by some irritability or change of manner, he would take her under his arm to Hoxton Asylum. 'It was very afflictive to encounter the young brother and sister walking together (weeping together) on this painful errand; Mary herself, although sad, very conscious of the necessity for temporary separation from her only friend. They used to carry a strait-jacket between them.' The other side of this melancholy picture was Charles Lamb, 'the frolic and the gentle,' as Wordsworth calls him, the bright jester, the humorist who has touched us all with tears of laughter. Surely we may say of this man:

His worst [i. e., his saddest] he kept, his best [i. e., his brightest] he gave.

Lamb's love for literature was of very early growth, and was greatly fostered by association with Coleridge, his fellow-student at Christ's Hospital. But at first his studies were almost entirely confined to serious subjects. Even poetry had less attractions than religious themes—the history of Quakers; the biography of Wesley; and the controversial works of Priestley. His first writings

were religious verse, or secular criticism; or grave dramas, the offspring of his passion for the ancient dramatists. His peculiar humour caught its colour from the scenes among which his lot was cast. 'Born in the Temple, educated in Christ's Hospital, and passed onwards to the South Sea House, his first visions were necessarily of antiquity. The grave old buildings, tenanted by lawyers and their clerks, were replaced by "the old and awful cloisters" of the school of Edward; and these, in turn, gave way to the palace of the famous Bubble, now desolate, with its unpeopled Committee-rooms, its pictures of governors of Queen Anne's time, "its dusty maps of Mexico, dim as dreams, and soundings of the Bay of Panama." Thus, it is easy to believe what Barry Cornwall tells us of Lamb's jests, that they were not—as in the case of other humorists—the outflowing of animal spirits (for he was seldom in high spirits), but rather 'exercises of the mind.' He brought the wisdom of old times and old writers to bear upon the taste and intellect of his day. But he would not stand being bored, or seeing others bored, by dry and lengthy talk; and when folks grew too foggy and metaphysical, he broke in with some light jest, 'not quite irrelevant' to the matter in hand, and rescued the company. Long talkers, he says, 'hated him,' which is surely very much to his credit.

Above all, he never fell into the error, so common with men of genius of all times, of seeking, or allowing himself to be dragged into, what is called (by a curious misnomer) 'good society.' He did not love a lord. Probably, he never spoke with a person of title throughout his life, or wished to speak with such. The companionship of tried friends satisfied him. Intelligence and wit, and (above all) kindness of heart, were the properties he required in his intimates; he did not sit at rich men's tables, or desire their dainties. He liked tripe and good-fellowship. The opinion of the world was nothing to him; and when it attacked his friends, he stuck to them closer than a brother. William Hazlitt—to whose great talents proper justice is for the first time paid in this honest volume—was in his day the best abused man in Great Britain; it was dangerous to be his companion, so many stones were always flying about his ears. But when Hazlitt was reviled by Southey (also a friend of his own), Lamb came out of his corner, and did battle, in print, for the calumniated man, in noble words. 'So far from being ashamed of the intimacy,' he says, 'it is my boast that I was able, for so many years, to have preserved it entire; and I think I shall go to my grave without finding, or expecting to find, such another companion.' And yet, Lamb had many friends: a glorious company of wits and genial men of letters met around his frugal board. He did not give dinner-parties. But every Wednesday evening there was open-house and supper, nor without the blessed plant tobacco, under whose influence Conversation most doth flourish.

In those two far from luxurious parlours—very literally, talking-rooms—of his, only decorated by half-a-dozen engravings in black frames—four of them from his favourite Hogarth—and where neither flower nor image nor musical instrument were ever seen, but in their place a fine litter of ancient books, met once a week a considerable number of persons, 'not of fashion, nor of any political importance,' but every one of whom was

noteworthy. Their opinions were often very opposite, but their common relation to Lamb kept them all together, and forbade them under that charitable roof to indulge in any acrimonious controversies. There was a whist-table, at which Lamb himself was generally to be found, but it was not 'silent whist' by any means. Some of his most pungent observations [notably: 'If dirt was trumps, Martin, what a hand you would hold!'] were delivered over that board, sacred to the memory of Sarah Battle. Around it assembled, more or less often, Coleridge, Manning, Hazlitt, Haydon, Wordsworth, Leigh Hunt, Sheridan Knowles, Talfourd, Godwin, Payne Collier, and Mr Procter himself, better known as Barry Cornwall. Could any drawing-room or dining-room in Mayfair shew half so eminent a company as this, which ate their cold meat and drank their porter over that brasier's shop in Russell Street, Bow Street! Lamb himself was in evening attire, as far as black clothes were concerned, but those he always wore, making the raven's apology (in the fable) for that circumstance—namely, that 'he had no other;' but it is probable that for the rest of the company, 'the restriction, with respect to evening costume,' was (as the sensible opera-managers now begin to express it) 'altogether suspended.' There was no 'Mayfair clothes-horses' there. No one out-topped the others. No one—not even Coleridge—was permitted to out-talk the rest. 'I never,' says our author, 'in all my life, heard so much unpretending good-sense as at these social parties. Often a piece of sparkling humour was shot out that illuminated the whole evening. Sometimes there was a flight of high and earnest talk, that took one half-way towards the stars.'

Not only was Lamb entirely exempt from 'snobism,' but he had no admiration for mere cleverness, which is a weakness now almost as common. To be able to say a 'savage thing' was quite the reverse of a passport to his society.

His wit in the combat, as gentle as bright,
Ne'er carried a heart's-stain away on its blade.

So genial was his disposition, that it almost disqualified him for that lower office of the critic, fault-finding, although for the higher, that of discovering beauties, few men could touch him. His charity extended to all things. He was never heard to utter a spiteful word. He was ready to defend man or beast when unjustly attacked. 'I remember,' says Mr Procter, 'at one of the monthly (London) Magazine dinners, when John Wilkes was too roughly handled, Lamb told the story (not generally known), of his replying, when the black-birds were reported to have stolen all his cherries: "Poor birds, they are welcome." He could not endure backbiters and cynics. It was not so necessary to win his friendship to be clever as to be kind. Good-heartedness once proven, a man might hold any opinions he pleased, and express them, without costing him Lamb's friendship. Every one valued that who came near him; and indeed his personal influence seems to have fallen little short of that of Coleridge. Mr Procter seems to doubt whether it fell short at all, and, indeed, exhibits some jealousy at the superior reputation which the author of the *Ancient Mariner* enjoys when compared to *Elia*. Not so Lamb himself. He always considered Coleridge to be the greatest man he knew, as well as his nearest friend. He never recovered from the shock of his

death, and was heard unconsciously repeating to himself months after its occurrence: 'Coleridge is dead, Coleridge is dead!' One of the most marvellous evidences of Coleridge's powers on record is that they evoked a joke from Wordsworth. The latter was stating that he had suffered his philosophic friend to expatiate to the full extent of his lungs at breakfast upon a certain morning.

'How could you permit him to weary himself thus?' said Rogers. 'Why, we were to meet him at dinner this evening.'

'Yes, yes,' chuckled the bard of Rydal, 'I knew that very well; but I like to take the sting out of him beforehand.'

Lamb revered all things really deserving of veneration; but his worship of antiquity was almost idolatrous. After reading something out of Chapman or Sir Philip Sidney, the Holy Dying or the Urn Burial, he would, in his unaffected gratitude and devotion, absolutely kiss the volume; and in return, ancient books no doubt imparted a fine flavour to his mind. 'He has, indeed,' as Mr Procter graphically says, 'extracted the beauty and innermost value of antiquity whenever he has pressed it into his service.' Our author also well defines the characters (and the differences of character) of that triumvirate of friends, Charles Lamb, William Hazlitt, and Leigh Hunt—of the two last of whom the world at large knows far too little.

'Only one of them (Hunt) cared much for praise. Hazlitt's sole ambition was to sell his essays, which he rated scarcely beyond their marketable value; and Lamb saw enough of the manner in which praise and censure were at that time distributed, to place any high value on immediate success. Of posterity, neither of them thought. Leigh Hunt, from temperament, was more alive to pleasant influences (sunshine, freedom for work, rural walks, complimentary words) than the others.'

'Hunt was somewhat indifferent to persons as well as to things, except in the cases of Shelley and Keats, and his own family; yet he liked poetry and poetical subjects. Hazlitt (who was ordinarily very shy) was the best talker of the three. Lamb said the most pithy and brilliant things. Hunt displayed the most ingenuity. All three sympathised often with the same persons or the same books; and this, no doubt, cemented the intimacy that existed between them for so many years. Moreover, each of them understood the others, and placed just value on their objections, when any difference of opinion (not unfrequent) arose between them. Without being debaters, they were accomplished talkers. They did not argue for the sake of conquest, but to strip off the mists and perplexities which sometimes obscure truth. These men—who lived long ago—had a great share of my regard. They were all slandered chiefly by men who knew little of them, and nothing of their good qualities, or by men who saw them only through the mist of political or religious animosity. Perhaps it was partly for this reason that they came nearer to my heart.'

Neither Hunt nor Hazlitt, although both good talkers, were sayers of 'good things.' In this department of conversation, Lamb was pre-eminent among his friends, and perhaps never had a superior, except in Douglas Jerrold or Sydney Smith, who, besides, were wits of a different class.

Not being a family-man, he did not pretend to take that interest in infants which so many think it necessary to affect.

Mrs K—, after expressing her love for very young children, added tenderly: 'And how do you like babies, Mr Lamb?'

His stuttering but precipitate answer was: 'Boi-boi-boiled, ma'am.'

Hood, tempting Lamb to dine with him, said: 'We have a hare.'

'And many fuf-fuf-friends?' inquired Lamb.

Mr R. C. Robinson, just called to the bar, tells him, extinglingly, that he is retained in a cause in the King's Bench. 'Ah,' said Lamb, 'the great First Cause least understood.'

This very interesting volume, however, does not profess to chronicle Lamb's witticisms, far less to speak of his writings, with which all educated persons are sufficiently familiar. It merely describes his characteristics and social life from early manhood to the sad end, when he writes: 'My bed-fellows are cough and cramp. We sleep three in a bed.' Never was a more touching record of an honest life. In addition to its merits of execution, it has the great interest belonging to it of having been written by the last living contemporary and friend of the great man it describes.

THE UNPROTECTED FEMALE.

I REMEMBER, a few years ago, how merry Mr Punch made himself with the miseries of 'an unprotected female.' The poor creature was always worrying the railway porters—poking at them with her umbrella, because her hundred-and-one parcels and boxes were not visible. These pictures made such an impression on me, that I resolved, when I should come to years of discretion, and have an opportunity of travelling alone, to prove to the world that women could behave like rational creatures, and yet reach their journey's end safely.

Now, whether it is that I am too careless, I don't know; but very certain it is that I am always meeting with adventures—such as losing my luggage, and, while looking for it, losing my train too; and then having to telegraph to my friends that I must remain at a railway hotel for the night, &c. But these are minor miseries, and of such frequent occurrence that nobody thinks anything of them; and if I do not arrive at the expected time, my friends quietly remark: 'Something has gone wrong with Sally and her boxes; no doubt they will turn up some time to-morrow.'

Twice, however, in my life, I have met with dismal episodes in my journeyings to and fro.

I crossed from Ostend to London one calm August evening; and we had such a good passage, that we were in the docks two hours before we were expected, so, consequently, not a cab was to be procured in that early morning. To add to the discomfort, the rain came pelting down; and the passengers crowded into a dismal little waiting-room at the docks, where I vainly watched and waited for the appearance of my brother-in-law, who had settled to meet me in London, as he could not cross to Ostend. At last some cabs arrived, and I thought I had better tarry no longer, as some accident might have prevented Alfred from coming—so I asked the superintendent of the docks what the fare to Paddington was.

'Three shillings,' said he.

'Oh!' exclaimed a dirty-looking foreigner, in an immense Tuscan hat, 'I will go with the lady to Paddington: dat is where I go also.'

The man was so detestably dirty and repulsive—

looking, that I hastened to decline his proposal, and hurried away; whilst the superintendent laughed and said: 'Ah, ah! you frightened the lady with your beard!'

Just as I reached the cab-stand, a tall, gentlemanly person, elegantly dressed, came forward and said: 'Did you order a cab to Paddington Station, madam?'

'Yes.'

'This way, then, please.'

And while I wondered what he could be, he carefully placed me in a cab, saw to my luggage, and prepared to mount the box. Then up came the man who had called the cab, and demanded a shilling for his trouble. This seemed exorbitant to me, but the cabman got down again, said it was quite a fair price, and added: 'You know what my fare is?'

'Yes—three shillings.'

'Oh, dear no; I don't go to Paddington for less than five this rainy morning; and if you don't like to give it, I can get another fare directly.'

This I knew to be perfectly true, so I agreed to pay five shillings; and we were just starting, when my evil genius, the porter, ran back, shouting: 'Camberwell Terrace!'

'No,' said the cabman; 'too far out.'

'Well, Paddington Station, then?'

'Yes, that may do.'

I now looked out, and asked why we were waiting.

'Only for a gentleman who wants to go to Paddington,' said the obliging cabman.

'But I have engaged this cab.'

'Well, ma'am, you see, it's a shocking bad day, and if we can make an extra penny'—

'Yes, yes; I admitted all that when I agreed to give you two shillings more than your fare; but if I cannot have this cab to myself, I will wait for another.'

The cabman, seeing I was firm, begged pardon, said I should not be disturbed; but the man should sit on the box if I had no objection. I was quite willing to agree to this, and had just said so, when the porter arrived with a collection of rolls of paper and sundry bundles, all of which he arranged on the seat opposite me. Then how great was my terror when I saw the horrid Italian appear at the cab-door, and insist on getting in! Of course, I resolved to take another vehicle if he entered; but at present I thought the cabman might reason with him. After a storm of words, he was induced to get on the box; and I had just drawn a deep sigh of relief that that trouble was over, when the man scowled down at me through the front window. No sooner were we clear of the docks, than the cab stopped, and down got the man. He entered a neighbouring gin-palace, and presently returned with a lighted cigar in his mouth. He came straight to the cab-door, opened it, and I thought was about to get in, now that we were away from the docks, and I could no longer apply to the people there for protection; I was just thinking I would insist on being driven to a police-station, if he should do this, when the man threw his Tuscan hat on the seat, replaced it by a less superb one, puffed the smoke into my face, and climbed up again to the box. Three minutes afterwards, we came to another dead stop. This time it was to allow the cabman to take off his greatcoat, to give to his companion. I began to weary of these delays, and thought how foolish I had been to pay the cabman before starting. Had

I not done so, thought I, he would not dare behave in this manner. But a new annoyance began to engross all my attention. The parcels on the back seat were insecurely packed, and began to roll from their places. The gigantic rolls of paper slipped down first, then the hat fell, and lastly, a bundle of something done up in an old pillow-case rolled fairly into my lap. It fell partly open, and disclosed the very dirtiest of all dirty linen. In great disgust, I seized my umbrella, and poked the bundle back to the seat, where I kept it at arm's-length whilst we jolted through the rain to Paddington. At last we arrived there; and greatly ashamed I was of the array of bundles on the back-seat, when a sturdy young porter opened the door to help me out. He looked at me in amazement, and then at the horrid rags; so I compelled myself to say: 'Never mind those things; they don't belong to me.'

'Belong to t'other party on the box, ma'am?'

'Yes, I believe so; my boxes are outside the cab, if you will please see to them.'

Now appeared the cabman, saying: 'Well, ma'am, here we are all right; and that poor fellow did not do any harm to anybody, as I see.'

'No; but that is not the question. If I pay for a cab, it is mine entirely for the time being.' He then drove off; and so ended that adventure.

About eighteen months ago, I had a bewildering night-drive through the streets of London. Picture me having travelled through the north of Germany, arrived at Hamburg, and sailed thence to London. The long-dreaded German journey over, I thought my troubles were at an end, and congratulated myself as I stood on the deck of the good steamer *Falcon*. Alas! we were no sooner at sea than a terrific gale arose, which obliged the captain to cast anchor for six hours in Cuxhaven; little did we think to what unpleasanties these six hours would introduce us, for instead of arriving in England in the early evening, we landed as the clocks boomed out midnight. Now, we were told that as soon as the passengers were put ashore, the vessel was to go out into deep water; that any one who disliked leaving at night, might remain on board till the next morning; but I dreaded descending the vessel into a little boat, and resolved to land at night. However, unfortunately, I had no friends in London; and as my horror of London hotels was great, I formed the sapient idea of driving to Paddington, and remaining in one of the waiting-rooms till the earliest train left for the country. Nor was this all; a young German lady was so taken with the scheme, that she begged me to allow her to accompany me, which I gladly agreed to, after we had consulted the captain, who said he thought it a very good plan. So we engaged a cab, and started; but scarcely were we fairly en route, before, having met another vehicle of the like description, our driver came to a full stop.

'What is the matter?' cried we.

'Nothing, ladies; only I can't take ye no further; mine ain't a night-cab, and you must please get out. I'll move all your boxes right enough, and you'll pay this man just what you promised me.'

It was very vexatious, but there was no help for it, and out we got; and after a little time, rattled off anew in the night-cab. It was a lovely night, everything looking glorious in the moonlight; but what with the terrible scenes we saw

as we drove past the gin-palaces, and the noisy groups leaving the theatres and dancing-rooms, and a sobbing companion at my side, it was a drive that I did not enjoy at the time, and have no pleasure in recalling.

'Why did I ever wish to come?' sobbed poor Fräulein R. 'Why did you ever let me? How do you know that the cabman won't take us somewhere, where we shall be robbed and murdered? Oh, I am so frightened! Oh, what shall we do? what shall we do?'

'Come, come,' I said; 'do cheer up; we shall soon be at the station, and then all our troubles will be over.'

But lo! when we reached the bustling railway, it seemed like the city of the dead; everything quiet, hushed, and still: our cab awoke the echoes, but no living creature was to be seen. We looked at each other in dismay; the clocks chimed *one*; and the cabman got down and hammered away at a door till at last it flew open, and a very civil and very much amazed guard stepped out.

He seemed too much surprised to speak, so I asked him when the next train would start.

'6.10 A.M.'

'Can we go to the waiting-rooms?'

'Waiting-rooms locked for the night.'

'The refreshment-rooms, then?'

'Locked up for the night.'

'Well, but we have only just arrived in England, and wish to remain here till the first morning-train.'

'Very sorry, ma'am, but you can't do nothing of the kind; you had better just go to the *Great Western Hotel*.'

Here my companion recovered her voice. 'No, no, no! No London hotel for me! What will my friends say?' &c.

I asked the good-natured guard if he could recommend a respectable private house where we could take shelter for the night, and he at once gave the cabman a card with the address of a neighbouring boarding-house; and after leaving our luggage in his charge, we started for W—— Terrace.

The poor cabman drove about in a bewildered style for a quarter of an hour, and at length pulled up at a lamp-post to read the card anew. Now, several wild young men were clustered at a neighbouring corner, to one of whom he called, and instantly the cab was surrounded. I confess I now began to feel frightened; but before I had time for more than one thrill of anxiety, a policeman appeared, to whom we instantly called, and explained our difficulties. He fortunately knew the house, and walked with us to it, ringing the bell vigorously until a light shone in the kitchen; and he and the cabman waited until we were assured that we could have a room there; when we rewarded the cabman for his extra trouble, and thanked the policeman for his assistance (and very sorry I have always felt that we only gave him barren thanks).

The door closed on us, and we followed a little wizened old woman up-stairs to a large airy bedroom. Telling her to call us at five, I closed and locked the door, with a feeling of great relief; but when I turned to congratulate my companion on the happy termination of our various difficulties, I found her past all consolation. She sobbed and sighed, declared she could never see her friends again—she had slept in a London house; had driven through London streets in the dead of night;

and what did she know of *me* but my name? And as to going to bed, she would do nothing of the kind, but sit up all night. With this she began to shriek and storm, until I thought she would go into hysterics.

I was so tired, that I soon fell asleep—leaving Fräulein R. seated bolt upright; but when I awoke at four, she was sleeping as peacefully as possible, and only wakened when the old woman called us, for we had to be at the station by half-past five, to claim our luggage from the guard before he went off duty.

My companion was now as rational and gay as she had previously been desponding; and after a rapid toilet, we started for the station, where we hoped to find the rooms at last open. But we were still too early, and wandered up and down the weary platform until the clock struck six, when we ordered breakfast; and after the meal, we went to the waiting-rooms, but these were in possession of a dirty housemaid, who raised such clouds of dust that we fled from room to room, and finally took refuge on the platform, where we remained till half-past seven, when I had the pleasure of seeing my friend of the day and night off; and have heard no more of her from that day to this. A few minutes afterwards, I entered a carriage, and was scarcely seated, before a timid old lady looked in at the door, and immediately stepped in, saying: 'I was looking at all the carriages to find one with a female in it; and I was glad to see you here, my dear.'

I bowed my acknowledgments; secretly amused to find that, having chaperoned a girl of eighteen to her great disgust, during the night, I was again elected to the office by an old lady of seventy—who seemed far more grateful for the protection of my presence than poor Fräulein R. had been; and whose only anxiety was that I should not leave the train before her journey ended.

THE SHADOW OF DEATH.

TURN, turn away those mild pathetic eyes;
A world of thought in their expression lies,
And care that seems too serious for thy years,
That speaks of one whose soul is full of tears.
And yet it is a conquered grief that sits
On that grave brow—a grief that scarcely fits
Into thy youth. The shadow of thy doom
Across the sweetness of that lovely face
Flings its sad twilight. In these lines I trace
That thou and sorrow most familiar are.
Ah, dear one! was there, then, no kindly star
To shine upon the birth of one so rare,
And save the best we had to love, from care?
The answer is—Go, read it on her tomb.

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DR MUSPRATT'S PATIENTS.

IN SEVEN CHAPTERS.

CHAPTER I.—LETTER FROM 'GILLY WILLIAMS' TO
GEORGE SELWYN.

CHAM, Friday Morning.

A THOUSAND thanks, my dear George, for your long letter. Your constant supply of intelligence makes the arrival of the post, that most precious of moments in the country, more than ever pleasant to me. The least I can do is to return you letter for letter; but the poverty of incidents in this place won't let me pay you in kind. And yet the place entertains me, and for a while would not displease you, I fancy. We eat well, drink deep, play high, and plunder Coventry, who holds a Faro-bank to us every night; his pretty countess standing by in her prettiest attitude, smiling her sweetest, with the reddest of red and the whitest of white on her pretty face, and the silliest of notions in her silly pate. Yet, do we not all love her the more for her silliness, and is she not the best-tempered as she is the most beautiful woman in England? Her beauty wanes, however, I think, and the poor soul suffers a good deal, I fear, though her wise-dull lord takes no heed of it. But have I not said all this to you before? . . . That mad Powerscourt has been setting us laughing at breakfast this morning until we cried again. What is this story about you and a doctor? What is his name? Pratt, is it? You were seen on Monday, it appears, with Harry Fox, out Tyburn way, on the top of an unfinished house, reckless of the wind and the rain and your birthday coat, so interested were you, after your manner, in the scene below. And yet it seems—so at least the tale runs—your interest was obtained from you under something like false pretences; the criminal did not pay forfeit after all. Though he hung for an hour, the doctor revived him, and the man is still quick. What is to come of it all? Are you and the law to have your due? Is your culprit to be *aus. per coll.* over again? Is the story true? And why, dear George, in Heaven's name, have you not

writ me all about it? To think of your being hoodwinked in such a way! Fobbed off with mere play-acting! As well sit in a side-box at Covent Garden, and watch Barry, like a newly-caught sturgeon, floundering and wriggling pathetically to death on the tragedy green baize. I can fancy your demure mock-earnest lamentations that a gentleman of your position should be so shamefully bubbled. I laugh aloud as I think of it. . . . God bless you, and adieu. Write, my dear George, as soon and as often as you have leisure to remember—Your sincere friend,

GEORGE JAMES WILLIAMS.

[It may be noted that Mr Jesse, the excellent editor of the *Selwyn Correspondence*, has not included the above in his collection, probably seeing reason to question its authenticity; and that no letter from Mr Selwyn, containing any reference to the subject mentioned in the latter part of Mr Williams's letter, has yet been discovered.]

CHAPTER II.

About the middle of the last century, there lived in Great Newport Street, Soho, one Viccismus Muspratt, who, though generally designated 'Doctor' Muspratt by his neighbours, was not, in truth, a member of the College of Physicians, and held no doctor's degree. He was a surgeon of high repute, attached to St Bartholomew's Hospital, and a Fellow of the Royal Society. He had acquired distinction by the extent of his anatomical and pathological investigations, and by the production of various medical works of value. His *Treatise on the Economy of Ossification* first gained for him the consideration of his professional brethren. Other proofs of his learning and ability followed; and Muspratt *On the Membranes* was for many years a standard authority, although long since superseded by more modern and exhaustive publications. The researches and discoveries of Mr Muspratt were of note in their day, but have been necessarily displaced and distanced as surgical science has pressed forward to its present advanced position.

Mr Muspratt's lectures at St Bartholomew were well attended, and from his pupils he received large fees. Concerning his private practice, he did not much trouble himself. He was without the courtly address of the successful medical practitioner. His manner was rough and abrupt, rather from abstractedness and ignorance of worldly ways, than from any definite intention to give offence. With the general public, he was not greatly in favour. Few patients knocked at his door in Great Newport Street, and when any did so, there was a chance, unless their malady happened to have attached to it a certain surgical interest, that their coming would be resented as an intrusion. He followed his profession, indeed, far more for its own sake than for its emoluments. The money he earned he expended forthwith in the most laborious efforts to arrive at the penetralia of science, and in the collection of precious specimens and preparations illustrative of human and comparative anatomy and physiology.

Yet, when Mr Muspratt first went to live in Soho, a quarter of the town at that time justly pretending to fashion, it was probable that he had contemplated the active following of his profession both publicly and privately; had proposed to himself to journey methodically upon the road which had led so many of his colleagues to success and opulence. But he had undervalued his passion for knowledge; he had miscalculated his power of adapting himself to a situation foreign to his natural bent; he had failed to comprehend how complete a hold science had obtained upon his life. As the years went by, the attractions of his museum and dissecting-room absorbed him more and more; for intercourse with the world outside, he grew less and less fitted. His duties at the hospital accomplished, he hurried home to seclusion and study. He dressed shabbily, fed irregularly and scantily, disregarded social usages, suffered his fine house to fall into a state of dilapidation, lived a life of almost squalid isolation. But the discomforts and privations to which he subjected himself, and which to another had been matters of serious self-denial, were rather a sort of self-indulgence in the case of Mr Vicesimus Muspratt. He enjoyed his existence amongst dust and cobwebs, and begrimed ceilings and blackened wainscots, certain of finding his books and his bones, his spirit-bottles and preparations, his instruments and specimens, precisely as he had left them from day to day, in what seemed the most desperate confusion to every one else, though in his eyes it was the most admired and excellent order. It was little wonder, however, all things considered, that his neighbours viewed with astonishment his small, spare figure, most rustily clothed, with many a button-hole frayed and rent, and many a button missing altogether; his worn, scanty tie-wig, a dingy brown in hue, from lack of powder; his old black worsted stockings, and shoes without buckles, and slashed at the sides, for the greater ease of his feet; and that the children of the district called after him: 'Miser

Muspratt,' as he shuffled down the street on his way to the hospital, a crumpled, three-cornered hat pressed tight upon his forehead, shading his purblind-looking eyes; a rabbit-skin muff slung round his waist, to warm his lean, yellow hands; an ebony stick, with a knob at the top, containing a miniature vinaigrette, thrust under his arm; and his pockets distended by the manuscript notes of his lecture, and a selection of specimens for exhibition at its reading to the students of St Bartholomew's. His neighbours, and, indeed, the world generally, did not appreciate Vicesimus Muspratt; but then it should be added that he did not court appreciation, would not have gone across the road to secure it, cared for it not one straw. He asked but to be permitted to pursue his own devices. It was not so very much to ask. For fame, he valued it no more than—nay, not so much as—a dry bone.

One morning, a gentleman, fashionably dressed in fawn-coloured velvet, broadly edged with gold-lace, bag-wigged and sworded, with a feather-fringed *tricorne* under his arm, left his sedan-chair in Great Newport Street, approached, and sought admission to Mr Muspratt's house. It was not without much hesitation on the part of the doctor's servant—a crouching old woman, who half hid herself behind the street-door as she opened it—that the visitor was permitted to enter further than the hall of the house. At last, however, in answer to his urgent solicitations, backed, possibly, by some pecuniary gift, the old woman nodded her head, and pointed to an oaken door. The gentleman rapped with the agate head of his clouded cane upon the panel of the door, pushed it, entered a room, and found himself in the presence of Mr Muspratt. The intruder bowed, smiled, and extended his hand. 'I have the pleasure of speaking to the eminent and ingenious Mr Muspratt,' he said.

Mr Muspratt was seated at a very untidy writing-table. He rose, scowling (or was it that he could see better when he lowered his bulbous forehead, and glanced from under his bushy eyebrows?), and (whether by accident or design, it was not clear) misinterpreting his visitor's intention, he took the hand proffered him by the wrist, retaining it for a moment between his finger and thumb.

'The usual pulse of a man of fashion,' he said contemptuously, and he flung the hand from him—'feeble, febrile, irregular. Eat less, drink less, keep better hours, give up play, work, earn your living—if you can; at anyrate, try to—and give your constitution a chance. I've no other prescription for you, Mr Selwyn.'

'You've given me one that can't be made up, I fear; the ingredients are almost unknown. But I'm vitally obliged, Mr Muspratt.' He bowed again as he spoke.

'A disorganised digestion, a diseased liver, a ruined stomach, and the heart of—a gentleman of pleasure. Those are your complaints, Mr Selwyn.'

'I'd no notion I carried about with me so interesting a museum.'

Mr Selwyn found himself glancing at certain curious specimens in vials on the shelves over Mr Muspratt's head.

'You'd like to be put in a bottle, perhaps?' said the doctor with a grim sneer.

'It would be a just retribution, possibly; the bottle has often been put into me,' observed Mr Selwyn.

The doctor turned away scornfully. 'I have said all I've got to say. I can do no more for you, Mr Selwyn. There are some things out of which we can't make a good job, try hard as we may.'

'There are some jobs out of which we may make a good thing, however, if we try hard,' murmured Mr Selwyn.

'But it wasn't about yourself that you came,' said the doctor suddenly.

'I did myself the pleasure of calling upon you the other day at St Bartholomew's.'

'I could not attend to you. My time at the hospital is devoted to the students and my patients. If you had wanted an operation to be performed upon you'—

'Heaven forbid!' exclaimed Mr Selwyn. 'Not but that you would have performed it perfectly, I'm sure.' He bowed, and continued: 'It was not wholly, I own, Mr Muspratt, in regard to professional objects that I desired to see you. You have a vote for Gloucester.' (Mr Selwyn was the member of parliament for that city.)

'It is my native place,' said Mr Muspratt; 'but, as you know, I never go there, and I never vote. For my political opinions—if I can be said to have any—possibly you do not know that they are comprised in this: I hate a place-holder.' (Mr Selwyn, among other lucrative posts, had enjoyed for many years the sinecure of 'Clerk of the Irons, and Surveyor of the Meltings at the Mint.')

Mr Selwyn bowed and smiled. 'I am indebted to you for your forbearance—you know you might have voted against me—and for your frankness. I adore frankness. I will be frank too. Pray, resume your seat. Thank you.' (The doctor had motioned an abrupt, reluctant invitation to his visitor to take a chair.) 'I'll stand for the present.' He placed on the table his hat, and cane, and gloves, and leaned gracefully against the tall mantel-piece, unconscious that, so doing, he was taking off, in dust, the impression of its carved outline upon his velvet sleeve. He was tall, and straight, and slight; his face, a long oval, very pallid; his expression curiously grave and demure, with a formal, rather drawling seriousness in his way of speaking. It was only now and then, by a furtive twinkling in his eyes, that he evidenced that his solemnity of manner was assumed, to heighten the effect of his levity of speech. It was his particular humour to talk drolly the while he was turning his eyes up, and drawing his lips down, as though he were preaching devoutly. When he looked most staid and sober, then his friends were made aware that some absurd jest was imminent.

With languid deliberation, Mr Selwyn took a pinch of snuff from a handsome box, in the lid of which, framed with diamonds, was set the enamelled portrait of an Italian songstress, in much favour at the time.

'Frankly, then, I am not here to trouble you about your vote for Gloucester city, or anything of the kind. My visit comes about in this wise,' he said. 'On Monday morning last, I happened to be at Tyburn, in the neighbourhood of the ugly contrivance there known by the vulgar as the "Three-legged Man." Certain unhappy persons had been—to quote the vulgar again—"riding

backwards up Holborn Hill." I was present while those persons paid the penalty for their misdeeds, whatever they may have been. Concerning one of the sufferers, a curious story is abroad. It is but whispered at present; it will doubtless be roared at street-corners before long, at the service of every apprentice and link-boy, shoeblack and chair-porter of them all. A recent act of parliament, in its zeal for science, has handed to the medical profession, by way of perquisite of a curious kind, the remains of the law's victims. The final officer of the legislature having done his worst, the doctors, it seems, are at liberty to do theirs. Whether that arrangement is, or not, complimentary to the faculty, I do not take upon myself to decide. Well, for purposes of autopsy and anatomy, the body of a certain malefactor, who rode to Tyburn last Monday, has come to your hands, Mr Muspratt. So I am informed. But the operator at Tyburn was unskilful; his duty was incompletely performed. In the hands of a practitioner of far greater ingenuity—need I mention your name, Mr Muspratt?—the man has revived, I should rather say has been restored to life.'

'The final officer of the legislature, as you call him, is a bungler and a brute; he knows nothing of his business. Any medical man will tell you the same.'

'Quite my view;' and Mr Selwyn looked more than ordinarily grave. 'I have always maintained that there is nothing like employing a qualified practitioner for making a sure end of a poor fellow.'

The doctor was somewhat impervious to jests; this sally fell upon him quite harmlessly. Mr Selwyn's eyes twinkled. Somehow, he seemed to enjoy the more, himself, the jokes which his auditors failed to prize, probably finding fresh matter for amusement in their obtuseness.

On a side-table stood a marble bust of Vicesimus Muspratt, presented to him some years before by admiring students of St Bartholomew's. He had not cared greatly for the gift, it seemed. It was covered with dust, in dense layers, deep in every crevice and line; resting on every, the minutest, projection. Mr Muspratt took a red wafer from the inkstand before him, and approached the bust. He wetted the wafer, and poised it for a moment on the tip of his forefinger; he then suddenly touched the marble just beneath the ear of the head, leaving the wafer sticking.

'Let the knot of your rope come *there*, and there is no hope for your man, Mr Selwyn, nor a shadow of one. Tie it anywhere else—*here*—*here*—or *here*' (he pointed to different parts of the neck), 'and you introduce an element of chance into the operation.'

'I see; it all *depends*'—

'Upon a thousand things' (the doctor went on unconscious of the quip)—'the length of the rope, the suddenness of the fall, the man's age, constitution, muscular strength, vital power, the time he may be left suspended, the means employed to restore him, the manner of cutting him down. But tie your rope *here*,' he repeated, 'and you make your man safe indeed.'

'My man? Thank you. I never contemplated operating myself, personally,' said the visitor gravely.

'You have witnessed many executions, however, Mr Selwyn.'

'I don't remember ever attending one without

having had the pleasure of seeing Mr Muspratt there also.'

'My profession, Mr Selwyn—the interests of science'—

'My dear Mr Muspratt, I ask for no explanations. I never dreamed of imputing motives, and I'm sure you will not be less forbearing in my respect.' And Mr Selwyn bowed. 'For your most lucid explanation, I am deeply indebted. For your courage in illustrating your remarks by reference to your own excellent bust—hanging yourself in effigy, as it were—I have the sincerest admiration. I shall permit myself, however, to regard your so doing only as the rehearsal of a performance which will never really take place. Science has to submit to sacrifices; may it never know such a one as that, I pray fervently.'

The doctor was not listening; he was staring at his own bust, with the red wafer fixed under its ear. Presently he began talking aloud abstractedly, as though he were lecturing a large, invisible audience.

'You may call it suffocation, or apoplexia. By compression of the veins, you stop the circulation; the current of blood, hindered from returning to the heart, mounts to the brain, and the patient dies. Or if the circulation be only partially interfered with, still the ligature round the thorax cuts off the supply of air from the lungs; and again, I say, the patient dies. If both operations be complete, death is inevitable; if one operation be complete, death is inevitable; if both be incomplete—if the carotid arteries be not so compressed but that the blood can circulate, and not determine wholly to the head; if the ligature round the thorax be not so effectually tightened but that some supply of air can reach the lungs—then death will not ensue otherwise than accidentally, and from extraneous causes.'

'We have then a case of suspended animation simply,' remarked Mr Selwyn, after a gape behind a jewelled hand.

'A case of suspended animation simply,' Mr Muspratt repeated gravely.

'Such as happened to one of the gentlemen I had the melancholy pleasure of seeing at Tyburn on Monday last,' said Mr Selwyn significantly.

The doctor roused himself. 'What is that man to you, sir?' he asked sharply.

Mr Selwyn regaled himself with a pinch of snuff before he replied. 'We have agreed to be frank; that's quite settled between us. Frankly, then, I desire to see again that man whom I saw, as I believed, put to death on Monday last, and whom your skillful treatment has restored to life. Why do I wish to see him, you inquire? I should like to answer you satisfactorily, if I could. If I say, like the man in the play, "because it is my humour," will that do? If I plead "the empty curiosity of an idle man," will that suffice? If I answer like a woman, "I wish it because I wish it," will you accept such an explanation? Roll all these answers into one, and then have you a sufficiently stout and good excuse for complying with my desires?'

'I should like some better reason than these.'

'Reason from a man of fashion! It was so you termed me, I think. My dear Mr Muspratt, such a remark is hardly worthy of you. For this same culprit'—

'I know nothing of him,' said the doctor sturdily.

'A fib, a fib! Nay, I will not be put off with a fib! Fie! fie! Mr Muspratt.' And the visitor, with a mock-air of reprehension, shook his forefinger at Mr Muspratt.

'I know nothing of the law,' the doctor began after a pause, during which he had moved uncomfortably in his chair.

'Do I? My dear Mr Muspratt, do me more justice. I know nothing of it; I seek to know nothing of it.'

'This wretched man, in strictness, may be doomed to suffer over again. I, who have restored him, may be bound to give him up to the proper officers. By delay in doing so, I may possibly be making myself in some way responsible to justice. It can hardly be your purpose to betray the man!'

'For whom do you take me, my dear sir? I am not Mr Jonathan Wild.'

'Yet, if you forbear to give him up, you connive at his avoidance of the law; you share my responsibility.'

'I'll take the risk,' said Mr Selwyn readily. The doctor shook his head.

'You are without my excuse. The law is nothing to me; medicine is my profession. It is a rule with us to ask no questions—to set the science of healing above everything. A patient is to me simply a patient; a man who suffers, and whom it is my duty to relieve, if I can. The nature of his malady is all I seek to know. When he is cured, he may go where he lists; he is nothing more to me. Well, this one of whom we were speaking'—

'Our Tyburn friend?' Mr Selwyn's attention had wandered a little during the doctor's speech.

'Yes; he has been to me simply a patient suffering from an accident—strangulation.'

'An accident which generally terminates fatally.'

'Yes. If you were one of the profession'—

'But I am not; it is my misfortune; it is my hourly regret. I cannot therefore ask to see your patient on that score. To presume to consult with you concerning his cure would be an impertinence to which I am absolutely unequal; still, I have a claim as a subscriber to the excellent institution which has the enormous advantage of your services.'

'I never saw your name in the list of benefactors of St Bartholomew's, Mr Selwyn.'

Mr Selwyn, with some appearance of effort—he was reputed to be loath to part with his money—drew forth his pocket-book, and flung upon the table a crumpled roll of notes. 'There,' he said, 'I have just given to the hospital a donation of twenty pounds.'

'A bribe!' cried the doctor.

'My dear sir, you misconceive me. I said distinctly, a donation to the funds of the hospital.'

The doctor hesitated. He took up the notes—weighing them in his hand irresolutely. Then he murmured: 'They would be very welcome—they would help to do great good. Does the motive matter much?'

'Now, my dear sir, may I be permitted to see your patient?'

'This is not a theatre—I am not a showman. You don't pay money here for a box to see a stage-play'—The doctor was proceeding somewhat angrily, when a door behind him opened noiselessly, and a third person entered the room.

Mr Selwyn took a pinch of snuff. 'The debate

is closed; he said calmly; 'the ayes have it. My dear Mr Muspratt, I can never sufficiently thank you for this privilege: I can never praise highly enough your most amazing skill. Our Tyburn friend, by all that's wonderful!' And Mr Selwyn fixed his eyes upon the new-comer.

PRIVILEGE OF PARLIAMENT.

'PRIVILEGE! Privilege!' These were the words that greeted the ears of Charles I. as he quitted the House of Commons—'where never king was (as they say), but once King Henry VIII.'—after his bootless errand in quest of the Five Members. Speaker Lenthall had made way for him in the chair; and in answer to his command that the five members should be pointed out to him, had spoken the words which have shed a sort of historical glory round a life not otherwise illustrious: 'I have neither eyes to see nor tongue to speak in this place but as the House is pleased to direct me, whose servant I am here; and I humbly beg your majesty's pardon that I cannot give any other answer than this to what your majesty is pleased to demand of me.'

The Five Members, so obnoxious to the king that he came himself to seize them in the very sanctuary of political freedom, had been duly warned by the Countess of Carlisle, and were not in the House. The king, baffled in his attempt, said something about his assurance that the House would send him the missing five, and walked to the door. Before the door had been closed behind him, he heard repeated again and again the words which are quoted at the beginning of this article. It is proposed to consider what these words meant, and to trace their history from their first appearance to the time when their meaning was fully declared.

It is customary for the Speaker, at the opening of every parliament, to ask the sovereign to recognise the rights and privileges of the House of Commons, in a form of address which was first adopted in the sixth year of Henry VIII., and which, 'by humble petition to Her Majesty, lays claim to their ancient and undoubted rights and privileges, especially to freedom from arrest and molestation of their persons and servants; to freedom of speech in debate; and free access to Her Majesty whenever occasion shall require; and that the most favourable construction should be put upon all their proceedings.' Some of these 'ancient and undoubted rights and privileges' are almost coeval with the common law, and like it are unwritten; others of them are secured by statutes, and form part of the written law of the land.

The first time that any formal demand was made for the recognition of parliamentary privilege was in the first parliament of Henry IV., when Sir John Cheyne, after being presented to the king by the Commons as their Speaker, entreated the king's forbearance on account of any faults which might thereafter be seen in him; and for his companions he asked 'qu'ils pourroient avoir leur libertee en parlement, come ils ont ewe devant ces heures; et que ceste protestation soit entree de record en Rolle de Parlement.' Upon this the Roll says that the king thought the request 'honest and reasonable,' and granted it.

The privilege first particularly mentioned in the Speaker's petition is, 'freedom from arrest and molestation of their persons and servants;' and by this is meant immunity from process and execution

issuing out of the law-courts of the kingdom, as well as from arrest upon the warrant of the king or a magistrate. It was considered so great an indignity to parliament that its members should be arrested by legal process, or assaulted by any violence; and the inconvenience of disabling a man who was a representative of so many others, and not merely a unit in the population, was considered to be so extreme, that at a very early period of its existence the House of Commons strove to establish 'privilege' in both these respects; and, as we find by reference to the first statute of privilege that was passed, they procured an extension of this privilege to their servants.

This first statute of privilege recites, 'because that Richard Chedder, Esquire, who was come to this parliament with Thomas Broke, knight, one of the knights chosen to the same parliament for the county of Somerset, and household servant with the said Thomas, was horribly beaten, wounded, blemished, and maimed by one John Salage, otherwise called John Savage; it is ordained and established that inasmuch as the same horrible deed was done within the time of the said parliament'—proclamation was to be made in the place where the deed was done; and if Savage should not surrender to the Court of King's Bench within three months, he was to pay double damages for the injury he had done, and also a fine to the king. 'And moreover it is accorded in the same parliament, that in like manner shall it be done in time to come in like case.'

By the 8 Henry VI. c. 1, the clergy of convocation and their 'servants and familiars,' are secured in the enjoyment of the same rights and privileges as the Lords and Commons of parliament; and the 11 Henry VI. c. 11, passed in consequence of the unheeded remonstrances of the House against several breaches of privilege, enacts that if any assault be made on any lord, knight of the shire, citizen, or burgess coming to parliament, 'or to the council of the king by his commandment,' the offender shall pay double damages to the party aggrieved, and a fine to the king. Although they thus protected themselves against gross common violence, the House does not seem to have established until a much later date the present measure of their privilege, which gives the members an immunity from all criminal process except in charges of treason, felony, breach of the peace, and contempts of court, which are in the nature of a crime; and even in such cases, before arrest can be properly made, the cause of it should be communicated to the House, in order that it may judge whether the offence charged be really such as to take it out of the protection of privilege.

In the 31 Henry VI., Thomas Thorp, Speaker of the House, was arrested at the suit of the Duke of York. The Commons complained, and demanded Thorp's release; the question was referred to the judges, who said that 'they ought not to answer to that question, for it hath not been used aforetime that the judges should in any wise determine the privilege of this high court of parliament, for it is so high and so mighty in its nature that it may make law, and that that is law it may make no law; and the determination and knowledge of that privilege belongeth to the lords of the parliament, and not to the justices.' They said, however, that except in cases of treason, felony, or breach of the peace, the custom had ever been to release members of parliament who had been arrested.

Notwithstanding this opinion, Thorp was kept in prison two years, and a new Speaker was chosen.

In Edward IV.'s time, the Commons tried to establish their privilege against any civil suit during the time of their session; but they had, as on several previous occasions, to pass special acts of parliament for the liberation of some of their members who had been sued; and it was not till the reign of Henry VIII. that privilege was fully established.

In 1512, occurred Strode's case. Richard Strode was member for Plympton in Devonshire, and he introduced a bill into parliament for the removal of some corruptions which had crept into the government of the Cornish tin-mines. His general measure came foul of some local interests, and John Furse, under-steward of the Stannaries, prosecuted him in the court of the warden, where he was fined £120. This fine he refused to pay, so Furse got a warrant to arrest him, and Strode was 'taken and imprisoned in a dungeon and a deep pit under ground in the castle of Lidford,' a place which the parliamentary commissioners described as 'one of the most heinous, contagious, and detestable places in the realm.' He was, moreover, heavily ironed. The House of Commons took umbrage at these proceedings; set forth the facts in a petition to the king, and passed a bill which enacted 'that all suits, accusations, condemnations, executions, fines, &c. put or had, or hereafter to be put or had, unto or upon the said Richard, and to every other of the person or persons afore specified that now be of this present parliament, or that of any parliament that hereafter shall be, for any bill, speaking, reasoning, or declaring of any matter or matters concerning the parliament to be communed and treated of, be utterly void and of none effect.'

In 1543, George Ferrers, a member, was arrested on civil process, on his way to the House. The Commons sent their sergeant to demand his release; and when the jailers and sheriffs of London refused compliance, and also ill-treated the sergeant, they summoned the offenders, together with the plaintiff who had sued Ferrers, to the bar of the House, when they committed them to prison. In the course of the arguments which followed this act, the Commons took the ground, that 'all commandments and other acts proceeding from the nether House were to be done and executed by their sergeant without writ, only by show of his mace, which was his warrant;' and in this position they were sustained by the king.

In Mary's reign, the members who were unfavourable to the court being too few to resist, discontinued their attendance in the House, and for this they were indicted in the Queen's Bench, fined, and imprisoned. Under Elizabeth, though there were many instances of arrest for outspokenness, as will be shewn presently, there were not any proceeding upon private civil suits; but under her successor there came a case which Mr Hallam mentions as having given occasion to a statute which is 'the first legislative recognition of privilege.' Sir Thomas Shirley, a member, was arrested for debt before the meeting of parliament. The House claimed him, and the warden of the Fleet refused to give him up, being under the impression that if he did so he should have to pay the debt out of his own pocket. The House sent him to the Tower, and kept him there till Sir Thomas was released by order

of the king. In 1626, Sir Dudley Digges and Sir John Eliot were imprisoned on account of their conduct on the impeachment of Buckingham; and in the same year several members were imprisoned for refusing to subscribe to a general loan. In 1629, six members were flung into prison for their conduct on the occasion of Sir John Eliot's remonstrance being passed; and Sir John Eliot, Hollis, and Valentine were put upon their trial for seditious speeches uttered in parliament. In 1640, Sir John Hotham and Mr Bellasis were imprisoned for refusing to account to the council for their conduct in the House; and Crewe, the chairman of the committee on religion, was sent to the Tower for refusing to give up the petitions and complaints in his possession. Then came the attempted arrest of the Five Members—that last straw of kingly folly which broke the patient camel-back of the House of Commons. The circumstances are too well known to need repetition here; but it may be as well to notice the peculiar nature of the charge made against the members, and the peculiar method adopted to arrest them, in order better to understand the meaning of the resolutions which the House agreed to in consequence of the act.

The charge may be stated in the words of the king, taken from his speech to the House on the occasion of his coming to make the arrest. 'Yesterday I sent a sergeant-at-arms upon a very important occasion to apprehend some that by my command were accused of high treason; whereunto I did expect obedience, and not a message. And I must declare unto you here, that albeit no king that ever was in England shall be more careful of your privileges, to maintain them to the uttermost of his power, than I shall be, yet you must know that in cases of treason no person hath a privilege.' The specific charges of treason had been made by the Attorney-general in the House of Lords on the memorable 31 of January, and included accusations more or less connected with the conduct of the members in parliament, and also of having tampered with the army, and having invited the Scots to invade England. Mr Francis, the king's sergeant, on the same day came to the House of Commons, and demanded in his majesty's name that Denzil Hollis, Sir Arthur Haslerig, John Pym, John Hampden, and William Strode, who were accused of high treason, should be delivered to him. The House sent a deputation to the king to say that they would consider his message with all the attention the gravity of it deserved. They adjourned till the next morning at ten, when they were to sit as a Grand Committee; and the Speaker enjoined the accused members one by one to attend *de die in diem* in the House until further direction. Next day, Charles came himself, having found his sergeant unsuccessful; and the result of his attempt is well known. The coming of the king for such a purpose was an aggravation of the outrage, for the reason given by Chief-justice Markham to Edward IV.: 'A subject may arrest for treason; the king cannot; for if the arrest be illegal, the party has no remedy against the king.' And on the motion of Sir Simonds d'Ewes in the Commons' Committee at Guildhall, it was declared a breach of privilege of parliament, and of the liberty of the subject, for any person to arrest any of the members by warrants under the king's own hand. If any of the members should be accused in a

proper, legal way, the House was careful to say it would bring them to justice; but the proper way was for some subject to accuse, and also to inform the House thereof before proceeding to arrest, in order that the House might judge as to the propriety or otherwise of the proposed arrest. 'There is a double privilege we have in parliament,' said Sir Simonds—'the one final, the other temporary. Our final privilege extends to all civil causes and suits in law, and this continues during the parliament; the other privilege, which is temporary, extends to all capital causes, as treason or the like, in which the persons and goods of the members of both Houses are only freed from seizure till the Houses be first satisfied of their crimes, and so do deliver their bodies up to be committed to safe custody.'

On the 21st December 1670, Sir John Coventry, a member of the House, was waylaid in Pall Mall by some officers of the Guards and their friends, who wounded him severely, slit his nose, and otherwise disfigured him. The reason for this cowardly act was, that in a question of supply, it had been proposed that a tax should be levied upon playhouses, to which proposal the courtiers objected, saying that the king took his pleasure in them, and would the House tax the king's pleasure? Upon this, Sir John Coventry rose and asked whether his majesty's pleasure lay in the actors or the actresses; and this witticism being repeated from one to another, the Guards' officers got to hear it, and set upon Sir John in the manner described, 'in order to teach him better manners.' Parliament, however, took a very unfavourable view of their proceedings, and the 22 and 23 Car. II. c. 1, was passed, called an Act to prevent malicious Maiming and Wounding.

The members of the House of Commons at one time claimed the privilege of being exempted from all civil suits, on the ground that they must not be distracted from their duties in parliament; and so early as the time of Edward II., they sent writs of *superedeas* to the justices in cases where any of their members were parties to actions. In James I.'s time, suits were stayed by a letter from the Speaker to the justices; and this practice continued down to the end of the seventeenth century, when it was found to be so inconvenient, and to be the cause of so much obstruction to justice, that the 12 and 13 Will. III. c. 3, was passed, authorising suits against privileged persons in the courts at Westminster and those of the Duchy of Lancaster, to be instituted immediately after the dissolution or prorogation of parliament, till the meeting of the next parliament, and during any adjournment for more than fourteen days. The 11 Geo. II. c. 24, extended this right to suits in any court of record; and 10 Geo. III. c. 50, and subsequent acts, went still further, by providing that members of parliament might be coerced by any legal means in civil suits, by which other people might be coerced, excepting only that they should not be liable to arrest or imprisonment. In this act of George III. the servants of members were not included, so that without any formal declaration of the fact, privilege of parliament was thenceforth lost to them.

The duration of privilege has never been ascertained by statute; but it seems, from the reports of several decided cases, that immemorial usage has fixed it at forty days before, and forty days after each session. Originally, it was intended that

privilege should be in force sufficient time to allow of members coming to and going from their business in parliament.

Such contempts of court as are in the nature of a criminal offence, tending to a breach of the peace, &c. are not covered by privilege. In 1836, Mr Lechmere Charlton, member for Ludlow, and a barrister, appeared as counsel in a case which was to be heard before Mr Brougham, then Master in Chancery. After the case had been part heard, Mr Charlton sent a letter to Master Brougham, challenging some of his opinions, and threatening him in case of his refusal to alter them. Lord Chancellor Cottenham sent Mr Charlton to the Fleet, and a committee of privileges reported to the House, that in their opinion Mr Charlton was not protected by privilege of parliament. In 1831, Mr Long Wellesley, a member, carried off his infant daughter, a ward of Chancery, from the keeping of the guardians appointed by the court; and refusing to declare whither he had taken her, though asked in open court, was committed to the Fleet, for contempt.

The exceptions of treason, felony, or breach of the peace, for which members were ever held liable to arrest if pursued in the right way, were extended by a resolution of the Commons in 1641 to all indictable offences; in 1697, to forcible detainers and entries; and in 1763, on the occasion of John Wilkes's seizure, to printing and publishing seditious libels.

The right of 'freedom of speech in debate' is coeval with the foundation of parliament, and instances of interference with it are nearly as ancient. Richard Haxey, in the time of Richard II., was a member of parliament, and in that capacity said that the excessive charges of the king's household ought to be diminished, 'arising from the multitude of bishops and ladies who are there maintained at his cost.' The king was very angry, and demanded that Haxey should be given up to him. The Commons surrendered him, and his life was saved by the Archbishop of Canterbury, who claimed him as a clerk, 'not of right, but of royal grace.'

In the 33 Henry VI., Thomas Young, member for Bristol, was seized by the king, because of a motion he had brought forward, 'that the king having no issue, the Duke of York be declared heir.' But these were in troublous times. Henry VII., when advised to notice the conduct of More (afterwards Sir Thomas More) in recommending the House to refuse a subsidy required by the king for his daughter Margaret's dowry, declined to touch him, being unwilling 'to infringe the ancient liberties of that House, which would have been odiously taken.' Henry VIII. seems to have equally respected the privileges of parliament. In Mary's time, 'the French ambassador says several members of parliament were imprisoned for freedom of speech.'

Under Elizabeth, there are abundant instances of breach of privilege in the matter of speech. Paul Wentworth was imprisoned for his language in a debate upon the Succession question; Strickland for his bill on liturgical reform; Bell was reprimanded by the council for his bill against monopolies; Peter Wentworth was committed for sketching out a plan of civil and religious freedom—he refused to plead before the Star Chamber, and was released by the House of Commons. Later on, Peter Wentworth was again in trouble with three

other members, for meddling with church affairs; and Morrice was imprisoned for having brought forward a motion against the abuses of the High Commission. This was in 1593, the year in which the Lord Keeper, when opening parliament, told the Commons: 'Liberty of speech is granted you, but you must know what privilege you have, not to speak every man what he listeth, or what cometh in his brain to utter; but your privilege is "aye" or "no."' The House acted in most of these cases as became its dignity, and the queen always yielded in time to avoid any serious conflict. Her successor was not so prudent, and was more violent, and besides imprisoning some of the leading members, he had the hardihood to erase with his own hand, from the Journal of the House, the famous protestation of 18th December 1621, which asserted 'that the liberties, franchises, privileges, and jurisdictions of parliament are the ancient and undoubted birthright and inheritance of the subjects of England.'

The principal affront offered to parliament in the succeeding reign has been already noticed, and the greater contains the many less. The ninth article of the Bill of Rights declares 'that freedom of speech and debate on proceedings in parliament ought not to be impeached or questioned in any court or place out of parliament;' and in 1668, the House of Lords had already reversed the judgment of the Court of King's Bench given in 1641, against Sir John Eliot, Mr Hollis, and Mr Valentine, in the last case where freedom of speech was directly impeached.

Privilege, although it covers anything spoken in the House, does not cover published speeches; and it has been held that where a newspaper published an incorrect report of a speech delivered in the House, and the member corrected his speech, which was then republished, he was liable to be sued in damages for a libel contained in the speech, although it had been delivered in parliament.

Free access to the sovereign, the third privilege claimed for the Commons by the Speaker, means free access for the whole House collectively only, and not for the members individually. This latter privilege is enjoyed by Peers, as members of the sovereign's grand council.

Breaches of privilege may be many; an enumeration of some of them will best point out those heads of privilege which rest not so much upon statutory declarations as upon the *lex non scripta* of parliament.

1. It is breach of privilege to notice anything which is passing in the House, as when Elizabeth sent an order forbidding the Commons to proceed with the bill on religion; when she reprimanded them for a bill against purveyance; when James I. ordered the House not to go on with the bill for enforcing the recusancy laws; and when Charles I., by the Lord Keeper, directed the Commons not to meddle in charges against the Duke of Buckingham.

2. It is a breach of privilege to print or publish anything relating to the proceedings of either House without leave of the House; but although the daily reports of the newspapers are consequently within this rule, the House, for obvious reasons, forbears to notice them so long as they are faithful accounts of what has been said and done in the House. When, however, the report is unfaithful or untrue, the House may take notice of it as a breach of privilege, and commit the wrong-doer to

custody. Such a step was taken in 1801 against the publisher of one of the daily papers. On the other hand, it was held, up to the beginning of the present reign, that privilege did not protect from an action for libel a person who published parliamentary proceedings, and who in doing so published a libel, which so long as it did not go beyond the walls of the House, was covered by the privilege of the place. An action having been sustained against Messrs Hansard on this account, the 3 and 4 Vict. c. 9, was passed to give summary protection to persons publishing by order of the House; and a certificate from the Speaker of such order having been given, would now stop a suit.

3. It is a breach of privilege to publish evidence taken before a select committee until it has been reported to the House; to challenge a member; to offer him a bribe; to tamper with witnesses; to misrepresent a member; to speak or write insulting words about the character or proceedings of parliament; to disobey the general or particular orders of either House; to interfere with the officers of either House in the discharge of their duty; to threaten members—as in 1827, when H. C. Jennings wrote to Mr Secretary Peel, and threatened to contradict his speeches from the gallery; to summon a member on a jury, or to serve him with a *sub-pœna*. The exemption from jury service and *sub-pœnas* rests upon the supposition, that members must be always attending to their duties in parliament; but if asked to give evidence in a case, a member might be compelled to give it by order of the House.

The method by which the House enforces its orders is by a warrant under the Speaker's hand to the sergeant-at-arms, who may even break doors to secure his prisoner, though he must not get admission to an intended prisoner's house, and wait till the owner comes. The Lords can imprison for a fixed time, but the Commons only to the end of the session, and prisoners in the custody of the sergeant-at-arms are liberated by the mere fact of the termination of the session. When a person is committed to custody by the House, he cannot be discharged by the judges, nor can the court inquire into the cause of commitment, nor into the form of it, though it may be objectionable on the ground of informality.

Breach of privilege is purged by submission to the mercy of the House, an act which, according to custom, must be done in person, on the offender's knees, at the bar of the House.

TO PERSONS ABOUT TO FIND THEMSELVES FAMOUS.

IN THREE CHAPTERS.—CHAPTER II.

IN the case of most professions which persons propose to themselves to follow, they take some pains to ascertain what it will require of them, or, at all events, comply with the initiatory Regulations which that calling has laid down. When a man determines on being a barrister, for instance, he is not so foolish as to imagine that he has only to buy a wig at second-hand, and stand at the corner of Chancery Lane in an attitude of expectancy. There are sureties, and examinations, and dinners, and benchers, and all sorts of animate and inanimate obstacles to be surmounted before he can

assume that position; and he makes himself acquainted with their nature, and overcomes them if he can. But I am sorry to say that those ladies and gentlemen who condescend to favour editors with their lucubrations, often do not think it necessary to pay any attention to the rules—simple as they are—laid down by the periodical to which they aspire to contribute.

A young gentleman, possessed, as he imagines, of a light and pleasant vein of satire, has dashed off in a moment of inspiration an essay, which he decides upon sending to the *Westminster Review*. Setting aside the manifest unsuitability of the matter to the proposed channel—for that is a consideration but very rarely entertained—what shall we think of this gentleman's intelligence when we find him addressing his manuscript to the '*Westminster Magazine*'? Nay—what is of more consequence—what must the editor think of it before he breaks the seal of that misdirected document? Can he augur well of the judgment, the carefulness, or even the trustworthiness of a person who has not even troubled himself to discover the proper address of the serial in whose columns he wishes to appear? Moreover, even an editor is human, and does not like that which he conducts to be miscalled; he resents it as he would resent any one giving him the name of another man. What surpassing ignorance not to know that his periodical is not a magazine, but a *Review*! Thus, to begin with, the young gentleman has not conciliated his editor. If the contents of the manuscript did not happen to be as inappropriate as their address, the author would have already somewhat diminished his chances of success; and I think deservedly.*

Again, most magazines have some simple regulations addressed to contributors, and printed in every number; they are very easy to comply with, and if not complied with, contributors (doubtless unconsciously) give a world of trouble and some expense. I allude to 'writing upon one side of the page only,' 'placing their name and address upon the manuscripts themselves,' 'enclosing stamps for retransmission;' &c. These are little things, but those who neglect them exhibit great folly, and have nobody to blame but themselves if all their labour goes for nothing, and their papers into the waste-basket. It is the troublesome conduct of these foolish persons which has caused many magazines to publish a statement that they will not return rejected manuscripts *at all*! We consider this, however, a harsh and unjustifiable step;† for the trouble and expense of returning papers—supposing the above regulations are complied with—are very small in comparison with the loss thus occasioned to the author. Of course, the rejoinder—'We don't *want* his writings; we can do without

the one possibly available contributor out of the hundred incompetents'—is unanswerable. But it is also rather Brutal, and does not speak well for the refining qualities of editorial pursuits. However, we may say in confidence, that the bite of these Unremitting Gentry is not so bad as their bark. They *do* return manuscripts—sent with proper precautions—although, to defend themselves from the incursion of a crowd of foolish folk, they print the terrible words, *Rejected papers cannot be returned*: just as a landed proprietor puts up his notice-board of *Man-traps* and *Spring-guns* in some beautiful spot he wishes to be sacred from Excursionists, but which, if you respectfully request permission to view, leaving your card in the usual manner, you will be treated with courtesy, even if not actually admitted. It would, however, it must be confessed, be much more honest, as well as dignified, if these magazine notices were made to run thus: 'We receive no volunteer contributions at all.' At present, they imply that, though they make use of any possible advantage that the volunteer system may confer, they decline all its responsibilities and duties.

Large as is the class of would-be contributors who exhibit such gross carelessness as I have described, there is another section, almost as large, who err in what may be called the opposite direction. Instead of not taking pains to make themselves acquainted with the style and nature of the periodical they favour with their attentions, they take a great deal too much pains. They seek out such individuals as may be the common friends of the editor, or even of the proprietor, and send their manuscripts through their hands, instead of by the usual channel. They could scarcely make a greater mistake; for, taking an extreme case—what they would call 'the best' case—namely, that they themselves are the private friends of the editor, and that upon that ground they (more or less) claim to be his contributors, what an invidious position are they placing him in! Their contributions must be either fit for insertion or unfit. If the former, why is it necessary to remind the editor of the private acquaintance which happens to exist between themselves and him? If the latter, they are simply endeavouring to make him act contrary to his conscience, and to the interest of his employers and the public. Mr Thackeray's stereotyped reply to such applications, while he conducted the *Cornhill*, was: 'My dear sir' (or madam, as the case might be), 'editors have no friends.' Of course, private friends of editors have as much right to contribute to his periodical as any other folk, but they should forward their proposed contributions as others do; and when rejected, instead of making it a matter of huff and quarrel (as they often do), they ought to be well aware that the fault must lie wholly with themselves, since it is only reasonable to suppose, had it been a case of doubt—whether or not the article in question should be accepted—friendship would have turned the scale in their favour. What a lesson is read to this class of would-be contributors

* This carelessness in the matter of addressing a manuscript is not made more venial by an accompanying note stating that the writer has been a subscriber to 'your esteemed periodical' for a quarter of a century.

† In the case of newspapers, this rule is of course not only excusable, but necessary.

in the life of the late Miss Procter, who, though an intimate friend of Mr Dickens, never sent her charming poems to his periodical in her own name, or written in her own hand, lest she should cause him embarrassment in rejecting them.

It cannot be too emphatically stated that, in the case of any well-conducted magazine, intrinsic merit is the sole thing that causes a paper to be accepted. If it is not well conducted, personal acquaintance may have its weight, of course; but that magazine is not destined to be long-lived. The reasons which writers put forward for the acceptance of their papers, independent of literary merit, are almost incredible. One writes that he is only just sixteen, and although he is aware he is not fully master of the principles of prose composition, he hopes his youth may be taken into account. A mother forwards a contribution from her offspring, written before he has attained his tenth year. A young lady takes the liberty of enclosing 'a fragment recently thrown off by her grandfather [as if he was suffering from ossification], who is actually in his ninetieth year.' Now, however interesting these lucubrations may appear to those who are aware of the circumstances under which they are composed, unless they are in themselves meritorious (which they are not), they have necessarily no chance of being accepted. The general public cares nothing about such phenomena, even if it could be persuaded to believe in the statements aforesaid. Similarly, the plea of poverty is totally idle and irrelevant, when it is used for this purpose. A case of genuine distress may be a reason why the editor (if he can afford it) should send his guinea by return of post; but the manuscript, unless it has something else to recommend it, must be sent back with it; otherwise, the editor has performed an act of charity indeed, but at his proprietor's expense, and perhaps to the serious depreciation of the thing committed to his charge. It is scarcely necessary to add that this plea is not bettered by the fact of it being made on behalf of another person or object than the actual contributor. Clergymen's wives sometimes demand for their lucubrations admittance upon the ground that the chancel of their church is under repair, and money is wanted to pay for it. Quite a number of persons claim to be accepted contributors upon the ground that they have 'subscribed' to 'your interesting periodical' from its earliest commencement. Warnings against folly of this sort will doubtless be considered superfluous by many who read this paper, but that is only because they are not editors.

Some young gentlemen are good enough to write that they purpose to become contributors, but beg that they may be favoured by return of post with congenial topics to write about. They don't know the style of articles suitable for your columns. These are extreme cases of stupidity; but it is extraordinary what little care is taken, even by otherwise sensible writers, to assimilate their productions to the description of articles usually found in the desired channel of publication. I dare say *Punch* receives plenty of theological disquisitions, and the *Mechanic's Magazine* a good many indifferent jokes.

With respect to this choice of subjects, it is, first of all, necessary that a writer should know his own mind; what style—grave or gay, cynical or didactic, graceful or learned—is most suited to his genius or acquirements. No editor can tell him *that*. If,

however, the writer is young, it is probable (unless he writes very dismal poems, chiefly on Memory and the Past) that his style will be lively. Let him beware, then, of taking for genuine humour what is only flippancy, and for wit what is mere 'comic writing'—a very different thing. A continued effort to be 'smart' is only too perceptible in the early productions of this class of persons. If they have really anything in them, however, this fault soon disappears; and he who can drop all vulgarity, and yet reflect his own high spirits in his contributions, will not be long among the 'rejected.' As to literary advice, it cannot be expected that editors should accord it to all who make application; and to give reasons for rejection is, as a general rule, out of the question. The term 'unsuitable' must be translated according to the fancy of the writer who has earned it: it would not be good-manners to write 'rubbish' outside a rejected paper instead of 'with thanks.' On the other hand, in my own early days, I have had many a helping-hand in the way of advice and criticism stretched out to me by editors of whom, personally, I knew nothing. Literary men have their jealousies, but they are for the most part a very kindly race. If it were not a breach of confidence, I could name more than one still living editor who, in return for the very considerable trouble I cost them, gave the most patient attention, the most useful suggestions, and, above all, wrote words of encouragement such as were the very life-blood of a young writer. They touched my trembling ears with praise that seemed divine. To One, in particular, an author dear to all who speak the English tongue, am I grateful; and not for my own sake alone. I know from personal experience as his contributor how kind and painstaking he was; how prompt to give the precious pearl of praise; how loath to censure, and graceful and considerate even in *that*. But it was only when I became an editor myself, that I discovered how extensive was the practice of his benevolence. Again and again have young contributors called upon me—very poor folk some of them—and in course of talk they have produced from their breast-pocket, carefully hoarded there, a letter—worn by age, like a holy relic often kissed—the handwriting of which was familiar to me also. 'That was a letter—he wrote to me himself,' says the poor fellow, flushing with pride, as some private soldier might wear his scarlet in his cheek when he narrates a pleasant word or two spoken to him by his commander-in-chief on some occasion. How well I knew those sensible, kind, hopeful words; and yet the man who wrote them, as he had once done to me, and is now doing to scores of others, could ill 'spare the time,' as the world phrases it; and every sentence so written in the cause of human fellowship, and for the love of his own calling, but yet, as it is called, 'for nothing,' might have been exchanged for gold. Such an example should shame meaner men into some sense of duty; and I hope it was not altogether thrown away upon myself.

The responsibility of an editor is certainly very considerable; and he should at least remember the days when he was but a contributor himself, and not a faultless one. On the other hand, as I have said, he cannot give advice to every one; although there are cases of literary promise which it is his bounden (moral) duty to encourage. Sometimes, again, though rarely, he is called upon to discourage. 'I am very poor,' writes a humble

contributor, evidently without talents; 'tell me candidly, from the enclosed specimen of my composition, whether I shall ever make my living by literature, or had I better give it up, and take to some less intellectual but more suitable calling.' The truth must then be told. Sometimes, instead of this reply (although so urgently requested) being taken in good part, the recipient, who has only made a pretence of humility, gets exceedingly wroth. Mr Thackeray once related to me an editorial experience of this kind, which had occurred to him on his first taking the *Cornhill*. Some young gentleman had forwarded to him, with almost a bushel-basket full of manuscripts, a letter setting forth his social position; 'very small means,' 'others dependent upon him,' &c. The kindly editor spent half a morning in wading through the papers, but found no grain of wheat among the chaff. He accordingly sat down and indited quite a long epistle of the admonitory sort, honestly exhorting his correspondent to give up literature, for which he was manifestly unqualified, and to take up with some less ambitious calling. In return for this, he got the most insolent and vituperative letter it is possible to imagine, hinting very broadly that he, Thackeray, had attained his own position 'at the top of the ladder' (I remember that very graceful trope) by luck, or a worse method, and that his (the writer's) fondest hope was one day to see him found out, and at the bottom again. The author of *Vanity Fair* must have smiled very grimly over that composition, which had a great deal more 'go' in it than had the rejected papers. Thus, you will observe, the relative position of editor to contributor is not always that of the Wolf to the Lamb, but sometimes *vice versa*.

A short private letter (a long one is worse than nothing) may, however, with advantage be forwarded along with a first manuscript: at least, I know it never did my contributors any harm. And where the question is asked, Shall I go on writing or not? the answer should not be too decidedly 'No,' unless, as in the above case, the grounds for it are certain. A first manuscript is almost always full of faults. Perhaps I was somewhat tender-hearted for an editor; but there is too great a disposition, I fancy, on the part of established literary persons, to discourage young beginners, and to warn them off the paths of literature. Walter Scott's saying about the danger of trusting to that profession solely, instead of using it as a walking-stick—a mere assistance—has passed into a proverb, but it has not the significance now that it had in his day. Only a very few even of qualified persons could then hope to gain a subsistence by their pen, whereas it now affords a fair income to hundreds; and yet the remark is thrown at youthful aspirants as much as ever. It was Lockhart's custom to temporise with young people of this sort. 'You must go and fill your basket, sir,' used to be his stereotyped reply; a very wise one, but unsatisfactory enough to one who was desirous to fill his stomach on the instant.

I have said that a private letter can do no harm; but I do not say the same of a personal visit. The time of editors is much taken up, and whatever requires to be stated can be written far more briefly than it can be spoken. I am not philosopher enough to deny, indeed, that the visit of a lovely young lady may incline one to think twice before telling her that her *Lines to a Faded Lily* (or to

anything else) are sad nonsense, but I put in my protest against the system. If the magazine is an illustrated one, and she will sit for a wood-cut, that is another matter.

THE GOOD WATERS.

(LES EAUX BONNES.)

THE traveller arriving at Pau sees stretched out before him the long line of the Pyrenees, from November to April clothed in radiant snow; for in this happy climate there are few days on which they are not lighted up by the life-giving sun.

There, all is peace and solitude, a land of dreams—dreams which are destined to be realised; for when that veil of virgin purity falls before the all-conquering sun, who can tell of the wondrous beauty there revealed; of the leafy glades whither the quivering sunlight steals; of sparkling rivulets rippling amongst mossy stones and masses of rock, fallen ages ago from the mountains above; of rushing cataracts, dashing down pine-clad rocks, the water broken in its fall into showers of liquid diamonds; whilst curious rock-plants and mountain flowers, unknown in the plain—the tall saxifrage, the blue iris, and bluer gentian, the golden arnica, and scarlet mountain-rose, and an endless variety of ferns and delicate lace-like mosses—clothe with undying verdure these solitudes; seen only by the shepherd guiding his flock, or the adventurous tourist, who, gazing on these silvan scenes, feels his longing for the perfection of beauty satisfied.

As the Spring advances, and the ranges of lower hills interposed between Pau and the mountains become covered with the tender green of spring, the snowy peaks look still more enchanting, their aspect ever changing as the hours wear on; in the early morning, sharply cut out against the deep blue sky; and as evening approaches, partially screened from view by gossamer-like wreaths of mist, or the rosy clouds of sunset.

But now Summer is come, and on the first of June, Pau sends the guests she has sheltered in her warm embrace during the winter to the dreamland they have gazed on so long and so wistfully.

To the Good Waters (les Eaux Bonnes) is a four hours' drive through the plain, and then by a gentle ascent till the beautiful valley of Ossau is entered at Louvie, from which there is no issue until the village of Laruns is reached, where two roads branch off, one through the ravine that leads to the Eaux Chaudes, the other by a toilsome ascent to the Eaux Bonnes. Here the traveller finds himself in an elegant little town, fairly shut in by mountains on all sides. The hotels and houses, most of them constructed within the last twenty years, and, of course, entirely out of keeping with the surrounding scenery, are built round three sides of the 'English Garden,' a kind of tiny park, where the strangers pass most of their time. The ladies, in bright-coloured costumes, sit in groups at their embroidery, under the trees; the gentlemen hover round them, making themselves agreeable, or pair off to play chess, or read; while troops of merry children gambol about on the green turf, and the strains of a very tolerable band of musicians enliven the scene. The two principal occupations are, however, 'drinking' and making excursions. It is a strange fact, that whilst the mineral waters of

England seem every day falling more and more into disrepute and neglect, the reputation of those on the continent, and particularly that of the Pyrenean waters, increases year by year: is it a caprice of fashion, or have the foreign waters indeed more highly curative powers? The Eaux Bonnes, twenty years since,* was but a poor village; its waters frequented only by persons in the immediate neighbourhood, with from time to time a noble visitor from Paris: now its guests during the season amount to between four and five thousand, all of whom come to drink at the healing spring, which is considered by French doctors as a specific for consumption, if the disease be attacked in time, and a grand renovator of the system in general. Morning and afternoon, a continual procession of persons, a bottle of sirup of gum in one hand, and a graduated glass for measuring the quantity of water to be taken in the other, go up to drink, the *Etablissement*, or pump-rooms, being situated at the top of the village, immediately at the foot of the Butte du Trésor, the rock from which the water gushes. Pashas from Constantinople, Russian nobles, French statesmen and financiers, a sprinkling of English, Spanish of high rank; archbishops, bishops, priests, monks, and nuns; men of the world, drooping young wives, and delicate girls and children, all alike come to seek renewed strength and health from this life-giving spring.

The waters of Eaux Bonnes differ very considerably from all others in the Pyrenees. They have been of late years carefully analysed by eminent French chemists, and well may the uninitiated stand amazed at the wonderful combination, prepared in nature's laboratory in the depths of the mountains; nor is it less wonderful that neither the quality nor temperature (thirty-three degrees Centigrade) of the waters has ever been known to vary. They are certainly extremely efficacious if given appropriately, and equally the reverse if misapplied; so that their effects require to be carefully watched by the doctors, of whom there are generally six or seven, including the government inspector, resident during the season. The treatment extends over a period of twenty-one days, during which the dose of water, always qualified by some calming *tisane*, or sirup, is gradually increased from a table-spoonful to three or four glasses a day, according as the patient is able to support it.

The Empress Eugénie passed 'a season' here in the years 1860 and 1861, and with her usual perspicacity saw what was wanting, and caused many improvements to be made in the neighbourhood of the *Etablissement*, particularly a level walk, so desirable for a class of persons who breathe with difficulty. This Promenade de l'Impératrice is cut along the side of the mountain for a distance of two miles, and is the commencement of the new road lately made through the mountains to Caunteres. The Promenade Horizontale, at the lower end of the village, is also, as its name indicates, an easy road for the invalids: it winds for a mile and a half along the face of the mountains that rise above the ravine of the Eaux Chaudes, and commands a delightful view of the Vallée d'Ossau and the lofty peaks above. It is the fashionable resort after the dinner-hour, which, in the interests of their patients, the doctors have fixed at five o'clock. Though gentlemen who come

to this place are supposed to be invalids, the temptation of getting a shot at a bear or an izard, the chamois of the Pyrenees, often proves too great a temptation to be resisted; and shooting-parties are daily formed, under the direction of the guides of the Eaux Bonnes, who are by far the most picturesque and interesting of its inhabitants. They are hardy, well-formed men, and wear the becoming costume of the country, which consists of a round, flat, blue woollen cap, called *béret*, from under which the hair, cut short in front, escapes in long curls on the neck; a white, quaintly-cut woollen waistcoat, with bright scarlet jacket, hangs loosely over one shoulder; dark-coloured velvet tights, confined round the waist by a long red sash; and white hand-knitted woollen stockings, without feet, and terminating in a kind of frill, which falls over the shoe. This simple but elegant costume is admirably adapted to the climate, and is seen to advantage amongst the dark pines and gray rocks of this mountain region.

A few weeks since, a she-bear and her cub were seen a little above Gabas, the last village before reaching the Spanish frontier, and a hunting-party was formed. The old one received a wound, but rolled down a precipice, and could not be tracked; the cub was killed, brought to the Eaux Bonnes in a little cart, promenaded round the town, supported by sticks in a sitting posture, and wearing a crown of flowers on his shaggy head. The izard is extremely shy, and it is rare to get a shot at it without encamping for some days in the mountain. One was, however, killed some days since by the son of a celebrated French marshal. The pretty animal was brought into the town, his four legs tied together by the red sash of one of the mountaineers, and carried between two of them on a pole. The successful young hunter, in suit of velvet, accompanied by his mother and sisters, preceded his prize to the Hôtel de France, where, having been admired by the one hundred and fifty guests, it was delivered into the hands of the cook for the next day's dinner.

The fête of the Eaux Bonnes is St John's Day, when the peasants come in from the neighbouring villages, and the traveller has an opportunity of seeing the Ossaloise dances: anything more picturesque would be difficult to find in this nineteenth century. The evening before the fête, half-a-dozen stout peasants, in their brilliant costume, come, preceded by violin and pipe, up the town, stopping now and then on the way to dance the *saut basque*, and distribute little bouquets to all who offer a few sous or a silver piece to *faire la fête*. The morning's religious services having been duly performed, the blind fiddler—a fine jolly old fellow—and his companion, who plays a shepherd's pipe, and with a short stick in his left hand, beats the time on the strings of a kind of mandoline—take up their station on the Place du Gouvernement. A half-circle is formed round them; first a man, then a young girl, then another man, the rest girls, to the number of ten or a dozen, all wearing a bright scarlet capulet, a kind of hood cut square, falling over the shoulders to the waist. The hair is plaited into one tress, tied at the end by bright tassels, and hangs down the back, escaping from a little close cap without border, worn under the capulet. A gold heart and cross hang round the neck; the chemise is gathered in by a string, but left a little open in front: a bright bodice, edged with gold lace; short jacket; and blue petticoat,

* Although known as early as the reign of Francis I.

thickly plaited like a Scotch kilt; with stockings ending in a frill, complete the costume.

The dance is performed with the greatest gravity; no smile is seen on the lips, not a word is spoken, the dancer never looks his partner in the face, keeping his eyes fixed on the evolutions of his feet, except every now and then, when he turns towards her and springs into the air with a goat-like caper and wild cry; and so the ring, in measured cadence, moves round and round the musicians. This monotonous gyration continues for six or seven minutes, till the music comes to an end with a shake and a flourish. After a few minutes' repose, the next girl takes the place of honour at the top of the dance, and they go on again; always the same music and the same gyrations, till the evening begins to close in, when the men and women form separate groups, and affectionately leaning on each other, singing *le chant du départ*, regain their homes. These fêtes pass with the greatest decorum; a draught of wine circulates from time to time amongst the men and the musicians; but there is no excess, no eating, all having taken their frugal morning meal before the dancing begins, and their supper being prepared for them by the 'old folks' left at home.

But it is at the feast of Laruns, the last village in the valley of Ossau, at the foot of the ravine in which the Eaux Bonnes is situated, that the people are seen to the best advantage. The artist who is seeking new subjects for his canvas, cannot do better than come on August 15th, the feast of the Assumption, and, sitting in the old church porch, watch these simple villagers and mountaineers come in to their devotions—aged men in their curiously plaited and embroidered hooded cloaks, each leaning, like the patriarch, on his staff, worship in silence; ancient women, sun-burnt and weather-beaten, covered from head to foot in a white serge blanket, sewn up at one end so as to form a hood, kneel, rosary in hand, on the bare stones; young mothers leading children who look as if they had walked out of one of Holbein's pictures, stop to take the holy-water, and teach the little ones to make the sign of the cross; with now and then a youthful heiress,* distinguished by her costume, entirely of red cloth, relieved by a white muslin apron—a dress very similar to that worn by the 'Red Maids' (an ancient public school) in the city of Bristol. When all have entered, the church is full of white, red, and black capulets, worn by the widows; the men gather round the sanctuary, and chant the Latin vesper psalms alternately with the women. It is a scene that takes one back beyond the middle ages; and to persons fresh from London or Paris, must seem like a dream.

A visit is generally paid by the temporary resident at Eaux Bonnes to a singular and interesting personage living at the little village of Bages, about two miles distant on the mountain-side—Gaston Sacaze, a peasant of a very ancient family, having in his possession a marriage-contract of one of his ancestors, a small landholder like himself, of the ninth century. He is a self-taught botanist and geologist, and has a fine collection of fossil sea-shells, found on these mountains, some of species now extinct, others identical with those still seen on the shore of the ocean at Biarritz; and also a great number of antediluvian specimens, most

interesting to the geologist, who would be richly repaid for his trouble by a visit to this singular region, where the miner, in opening new passages between the rocks, has laid bare the secrets of an earlier world. This grand old man, who has never left his native mountains, stands before you in his simple costume of undyed wool, and with the manners of a perfect gentleman, discourses with you on these learned subjects, whilst he turns over the leaves of the numerous albums in which he has not only made a collection of the flora of the Pyrenees, but painted each flower opposite the specimen. He is a member of several learned societies, and receives a pension of twenty-four pounds from the government, to whom, at his death, his museum will be given up.

For those who are able to enjoy the pure air and mountain-rides, the Eaux Bonnes is a pleasant place wherein to spend a summer month. It retains a great deal of its ancient simplicity, but strangers are made to pay rather dearly for the entertainment they receive. The best rooms let at twenty-five francs (one pound) a day in the height of the season—that is, from the 15th of July to the 15th of August; before and after those dates, rooms are much more reasonable—from three to six francs a day. The *table-d'hôte* is always the same—eight to ten francs for breakfast *à la fourchette* and dinner. Many persons return year after year for the period of their natural lives. The French minister of finance, M. Achille Fould, always spends a month here; and the late Duke de la Rochefoucauld came for the last thirty years of his life, and died last winter at a very advanced age.

Many take away with them pleasant memories and thankful hearts for the benefit they have received from these 'Good Waters;' others, alas! come too late for aught but to rest for ever on the green mountain-side.

A SCOTTISH BEEF-AND-MUTTON TOUR.

SOME years ago, a book was published, entitled *Notes on the Construction of Sheep-folds*, which is said to have been eagerly purchased by some of our northern sheep-farmers, and to have been thrown aside by them in disgust, when they discovered that it referred entirely to matters ecclesiastical. As possibly, since that hoax was perpetrated, our rural friends have been shy of professional book-buying, we wish to tell them that we have lately been reading a book* called *Field and Fern, or Scottish Flocks and Herds*, about which there is no deception. The author appears to have visited nearly every flock and herd of celebrity between Maidenkirck and Unst—the most northerly of the Shetlands—and he has embodied the results of his travels in two volumes, which are brimming over with information, not merely about short-horns and doddies, and Galloways, and Cheviots, and Leicesters, but on all sorts of collateral topics, such as timber-planting, draining, poultry-breeding, salmon-fishing, otter-hunting, racing, and coursing; so that the reader gets a clear insight into the present state of North Britain in these important respects.

Until he reads such a book as this, the dweller in towns is scarcely able to realise the amount of

* If she is to 'inherit' only a cottage, she bears this designation.

* *Field and Fern, or Scottish Flocks and Herds*. By H. H. Dixon. London: Rogerson and Tuxford, Mark Lane Express Office.

bullock-worship which prevails in the United Kingdom. The ox is regarded among our farmers and graziers with as much awe and reverence as he is among the Hindus. But there is this essential difference between the eastern and western modes of adoration: the Hindus are not too careful of the well-being of their bullocks; those which draw their hackeries are often half-starved, and covered with sores; but nothing would induce their owners to kill them; and as for eating them after death, we know that the bare suggestion of such an enormity excited a mutiny which hurled John Company from his throne. Now, the English ox-worshippers treat their idol with the utmost tenderness and solicitude; they feed him on the choicest of food, but they do not hesitate to slaughter him, and, what seems still more dreadful, they do not scruple to sit down and eat him afterwards, all the while speaking of him in terms of the most affectionate regard. We must leave this interesting topic for the discussion of ethnologists.

No pilgrim ever visited the shrine of his patron saint under a more solemn sense of responsibility than the author of *Field and Fern* exhibits when visiting the shrines of his sacred sheep and oxen. He had already spent four years among the flocks and herds of England, and he desired to find new scope for pastorals across the border. He wished to visit 'past and present Highland Society's winners in their own stall or fold, to gather evidence regarding the present progress of stock, and to collect trustworthy data concerning the thoughts and labours of those who have formerly done Scotland service in this respect.' He seems to have kept steadily to his purpose, and though evidently possessed of an appreciative eye for scenery, was obliged to disregard the most glorious combinations of water, wood, and mountain, and the most interesting historical associations, in his pursuit of 'crack' sheep and cattle. He could not, he tells us, spare a day for the Trosachs, for he was busy after blackfaces, and would have missed Killiecrankie had it not led to the West Highland herd at Blair-Atol. It is pleasant to read of such enthusiasm, especially as it was accompanied by much hard labour. The author spent three summers and a winter in his investigations, and travelled eight thousand miles, either on foot or on an Orkney 'garron,' an animal which used to bolt with her rider on very small provocation, and generally in the wrong direction. Sometimes, in spite of the skittishness of his steed, he took a nap on horseback; and he describes the genuine refreshment of one of these slumbers at midnight on the Ord of Caithness, while the rain streamed down, and the mare grazed. In another place, he says: 'There are many dreary passages in a man's life; but wiping down a mare very short of condition in your shirt-sleeves in a cow-house in a wild muir, by a dim, spluttering dip at midnight, with the wind sighing through the broken panes, the heavy rain-drops pattering on the door-sill, and a forty miles' ride before you, has very few to match it. Still, it had to be done; and "if I mun day, I mun day." Elsewhere, he gleefully describes a rattle over the Lammermoors with the thermometer at sixteen degrees below freezing, so that we may conclude him to be anything but a Sybarite.

The book begins with the Shetlands, and awakens a Londoner's envy by telling him that in that northern outpost of Her Majesty's dominions, he may buy a good fat hen for sixpence, and a

goose for eighteenpence. Eggs are fourpence a dozen, 'except when the fleet comes;' for the Channel Fleet, we may observe, besides guarding or professing to guard our coasts, possesses the magical property of raising prices considerably in remote seaports. The Shetland cows are a pocket-edition of the old-fashioned Yorkshire milch-cows, but with more of a short-horn head. When near calving, they are worth from L.4, 10s. to L.5, 10s., and after exportation, will, with good keep, double their value in twelve months. As for the ponies, such a demand sprung up a few years ago for the Durham collieries, that the islands were nearly cleared of aged ponies, but the inquiry having slackened, prices have since receded. The underground work does not appear to impair the health of these little creatures; some of them have not seen the light for fifteen years, and they scarcely ever suffer from the usual horse diseases, though accidents, owing to the darkness and the steepness of the roads they have to travel, are very numerous. The Shetland sheep are as shy as rabbits, and a dog is of no use among them, because they don't run together when frightened, or, as our author tersely puts it, they never 'pack in a panic.'

Let us next turn to the Orkneys, which, in spite of their high latitude, are so wonderfully mild in winter. Vegetation is seldom at rest, and the yellow jessamines for the Christmas decorations of 1859 were plucked in the open air. A fifth crop of grass was once cut in December, and by Twelfth-day the pasture has made good head. Real winter comes with the nip of March, and then is the trying time for the cattle. Let us select the island of Shapinsay as a specimen of Orcadian progress, under a single energetic proprietor, Mr Balfour. In 1848, there were only seven hundred acres under the plough; in 1863, there were six thousand: in fact, except a few primitive patches of grass and heather, the island is all reclaimed. Great improvements have been effected in the domestic animals; the aboriginal breed of sheep has been extirpated, as being utterly worthless, and their place supplied by Leicester-Cheviots, or 'half-breds'; the cattle are crossed with short-horn bulls, the pigs with the Buccleuch breed, and the garrons with Clydesdales, whose fifteen two and three descendants are gradually supplanting the pony teams. The Orkneys are well supplied with cattle; a brisk export trade is carried on with Aberdeen and Edinburgh; and yet, when the Channel Fleet called at Kirkwall, six thousand pounds of butcher-meat were supplied to it daily.

Crossing over the Pentland Firth, we land in Caithness, which the open winter, combined with good grass and turnips, has made a rich storehouse of short-horn crosses, and big fine-woolled half-breds for the feeders and breeders of the south. At Thurso dwelt Sir John Sinclair, a name famous in the earlier annals of the Highland Society, and still cherished in the Lowlands, for the author heard a toper denied another tumbler of toddy, unless he could articulate, 'Sir John Sinclair's *Statistical Account of Scotland*.' It is given to few men in Caithness to sit under the shadow of the trees they have planted, but this happiness has been attained by the present Mr John Sinclair, who is nearly as zealous an improver as his great namesake. The land is first trenched and drained; then plantations are formed in masses, and planted out after eight or nine years' growth. Thus have arisen snug beltings of thorn, ash, and elm; the red berries

of the rowan-tree vie with the graceful clusters of the laburnum, and the purple beech with the black Austrian pine. Sheep and cattle thrive bravely with such shelter, provided their diet be generous. Grass, in Caithness, is ready at the end of May, and lasts up to the middle of September. Then comes a wide gap of grasslessness, and high feeders sometimes have to help out their Swedes with corn and cake.

Let us leave four-footed creatures for a moment, to glance at the condition of a Sutherlandshire shepherd. He begins at eighteen, and serves a four or five years' apprenticeship, with L16 to L25 a year wages and his keep. When he becomes a master, he has a cottage and grass for two cows and a horse, a pack of eighty sheep in lieu of wages, and an allowance of six and a half bolls of meal (about eight hundredweights English). His two-acre farm is generally cropped with potatoes or barley; and a braxy victim, when it has been skinned, well pressed with stones in a burn, to extract the inflammation, and then salted, makes no contemptible hung-mutton.

Here is the inventory of the property in a five-acre holding in East Ross-shire: a pig, which the owner sells to a southern jobber, when a twelve-month old, for neither Highlander nor Lowlander loves pork; two or three blackfaced sheep, which seem to wander over their master's little unfenced crops just as they please, and feed out of the pot as well, and whose wool supplies the guidwife's wheel all the winter; a pair of Highland ponies; a stirk or two (*Anglicæ*, yearling cow or bullock); and a dozen Dorking hens.

The author gives a capital sketch of Inverness during the Character Fair, or Wool Parliament of the Highlands, when salesmen gather together from all quarters of the compass, and sometimes buy fifteen thousand ewes at a stroke. We should especially like to see the boots of the *Caledonian Hotel* on a Sabbath morning gravely advising visitors in the different styles of preachers in the town. 'When he had run his eye once over them, he seemed to fathom their taste: "You would like a very rousing gentleman; I've just one to suit you; go to —;" or: "I think I'll send you to the Establishment;" and off they went on their various ways, meekly, and nothing doubting.' Hugh Snowie's shop, too, just before the 12th of August, is worth a visit. The veteran sits at his desk with a file of letters before him about moors and deer-forests to let, and the crack deer-heads of the previous season ornament the walls around him. They stay there for a year and a day; and Hugh's henchman, Colin Read, has turned out twenty-three annual sets of about six dozen each.

Passing through the province of Moray, with its fine sandy loam and fattening grasses, we come to Banffshire, where we may pause to remark why horse-breeding has declined in that district. When railways became general in the south, the high prices tempted farmers to sell their best mares and fillies, and the size and stamp have never been recovered. The Clydesdale horses cannot be too large to please the Lowland buyers; even an eighteen-hand giant would be eagerly sought after. In Edinburgh, a horse may sometimes be seen with three tons on a 'lorry'; and an old black horse of seventeen hands, once drew a printing-press, which weighed with the 'lorry' five tons, three miles on the rise, all the way from Granton to Catherine Street.

Banff, Moray, and Aberdeen are the three leading Scottish beef-counties, and the city of Aberdeen is the head-quarters of the butchering-trade. More beasts are slaughtered weekly in Aberdeen than in Glasgow. In 1863, nine thousand tons of dead-meat, and about fourteen thousand cattle, were sent southward by railway. At the farm of Mr M'Combie, of Easter Skene, the author saw the great prize-ox of 1863, occupying the box of honour. 'His owner remarked that a little man would not be able to see him without assistance, and adjured us then and there to mount the manger, and survey the vast plateau of roast-beef. "Have you ever looked over more pounds?" was his triumphant query as we descended. In that low-roofed tabernacle,' continues our enthusiastic pilgrim, 'there seemed but one reply; but he was dwarfed by the Islington building, and we should not have remarked on him as a veritable Great Eastern among the bullocks there.' In this collection, there are some interesting reminiscences of the cattle-trade seventy or eighty years ago. In those days, the risks were great, for there were no bridges over the rivers, and many, especially in the spring, died in the transit; but the expenses of travelling were very trifling. There were no toll-bars, and the roadsides and commons afforded the cattle their supply of food. Prices were high during the French war; but a great drop took place at the peace in 1814. A well-known dealer, nicknamed 'Old Staley,' was passing through Perth with a very large drove of cattle while the bells were ringing out the joyful news. He often remarked that this merry peal was a sorrowful one to him, for it cost him three thousand pounds.

Among Aberdeenshire proprietors, we have pleasant sketches of the late Mr Boswell of Kingcausie and of Captain Barclay of pedestrian celebrity. Mr Boswell was one of those genuine benefactors to society who make many blades of grass grow where none grew before. Mr Tennyson's 'Northern Farmer' was justly proud of having 'stubbed Thornaby waste'; and Mr Boswell could point to upwards of fifteen hundred acres of barren moorland brought into cultivation by his own energy and perseverance. Of Captain Barclay, there are many interesting reminiscences: how, when he was past sixty, he would walk six-and-twenty miles to dinner, and return by the same conveyance next morning; how he would have everything on the largest possible scale, from his wheat-wagons down to his glass tumblers; how he met Mr Hugh Watson for the first time at a courting meeting, and seeing that he was a man after his own heart, asked him, as if it was a highly intellectual treat: 'Would you like to see me strip to-night, and feel my muscle?' Lastly, how he managed the old *Defiance* coach, which bowed its proud head to steam in 1849.

Space will not permit us to cross the Firth of Forth, to which division of North Britain Mr Dixon's second volume is devoted; so, in conclusion, we must take a passing glance at Inchmartine, the home of the celebrated Henwife of the Carse of Gowrie. We learn that Mrs Fergusson Blair's love of hens is scarcely twelve years old, and had its origin on board an Edinburgh steamer. In order to beguile the weariness of the voyage, she looked at some coops of Cochins, bought two of the hens, and thus laid the foundation of a poultry establishment which sometimes numbers fifteen hundred head of fowl. We need not

follow the author through his exhaustive and accurate catalogue of the different breeds which find habitation there; we prefer to accompany Mrs Blair on her never-failing two-o'clock round through the poultry-yard, with two baskets of 'rissoles.' These rissoles are dainty provision, containing not merely oatmeal, but buckwheat, linseed, and spice; besides which, old ale, bread, potatoes, chicken, and other good things, get into that wonderful bowl which is devoted to the clearings of the dining-room. Wheat, barley, and Indian corn are the staple of the outdoor relief, which the girl and man who act as sub-overseers under Annie, the head-woman, deal out twice a day. These three retainers have plenty to do. The sitting-hens have to be lifted off their eggs, and put out for half-an-hour to exercise; and every instant demands watchfulness, for a chicken may be catching cold, or an egg may be roasted in the 'eccaleobion.' Annie is on terms of the most affectionate intimacy with her feathered family. With deep interest, she tells of a sick cock, which has been washed with hot vinegar and water for an attack of cold, and 'quite enjoyed its castor-oil and a pill.' Then there is 'Mussie,' an aged bantam, quite 'doited' in its head with infirmity; but Annie perceives it not. With her, it is still 'a little wee monkey, as happy as you like;' and it gets a bit of egg as a solace from her breakfast, and beef from her dinner.

Field and Fern is full of such pleasant sketches of Scottish rural life; while, as for the more solid contents of the book—namely, the descriptions of the various flocks and herds which the author visited—they are given with the most painstaking accuracy, the proof-sheets having, in every instance, been submitted to the respective owners before publication.

THE FISHERMAN'S WIFE.

It was summer-time, and the dawning day
Shone bright on the cliffs of our lonely bay,
And my man went out in his boat to sea,
To win the bread for his house and me.

The day went on—I remember it well—
The rooms were filled with the salt sea-smell;
And the sunlight came, like an angel good,
Through the doors and the windows that open stood.

I sang and worked with joy in my heart,
For I hold that a wife should do her part
To clean and brighten the house within,
Praying the Lord to keep her from sin.

I had finished, and just sat down to rest,
When I saw a cloud rise up in the west,
And the moan of the sea grew loud on the rocks,
And the gulls flew landward in shrieking flocks.

Soon the wind blew loud from the hollow skies,
And I watched the waves with frightened eyes,
As they struggled and sprang at the cloud's black frown,
And clutching their broad wings, swept them down.

Then I hurried out to the old pier-head,
Through the yard of the church, where slept the dead;
And I wished that my man and I had died,
And were quietly sleeping there, side by side.

'Twas an evil wish—I rebuked it too;
But one heart is weak where there should be two,
And one voice alone grows weak in prayer,
When it misses another so often there.

Well, I watched for hours in the heat and blow,
Till all the light from the sky did go,
Then I turned heart-sick from the fling of the foam,
And wrestled my way to my vacant home.

There the breath of the storm blew under the door,
And I felt it whisper along the floor;
And the clothes of my man, as they hung on the stand,
Swung as if touched by a spirit-hand.

The lights I put in the window small,
Were blown into darkness one and all;
And I heard, as the whirling storm went by,
Shrieks as of souls about to die.

I dropt to the ground with my hands on my face,
For I feared to see some sight in the place;
And I prayed the Lord my soul to keep,
And He heard my prayer, and gave me sleep.

I leapt up at last; 'twas early dawn:
I ran to the door—the storm was gone;
The morning-star shone bright o'er the sea;
And my man came home to his house and me.

The Novel, BROUGHT TO LIGHT, now finished, will be followed, in January 1867, by another ORIGINAL SERIAL TALE, by the Author of LADY FLAVIA, entitled
LORD ULSWATER.

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MRS M'GRAB.

THE above was really a very wonderful old woman, at once the plague of my life, and the comfort of it. I met with her on this wise. I was to go to India; that was finally settled; also that, for my health's sake, I should go round the Cape, instead of taking the shorter and hotter route overland; accordingly, I went on board the *Blenheim*, Captain Smith, about two hours before she was expected to weigh anchor, and had hardly time to take a heart-rending farewell of those of my family and friends who accompanied me, before we were off, and gliding quickly down the river. Now, I must confidentially inform my readers that my family and myself are not people of business; in fact, if there is a good and a bad way of making an arrangement, we generally choose the latter way. At the same time, I am bound to add, that we face the inconveniences arising from this peculiarity like Britons, and are at such times full of ingenious resource. We had known the day on which the *Blenheim* was to sail about a month. My outfit had been bought and packed (only just in time); my cabin, which I was to share with another lady, taken, and also paid for, for we are not dishonest, although unbusiness-like. The ship's agents sent in a list of the things I should want to furnish my cabin. I remember so well my dear mother puzzling over a dust-pan and broom, set down therein. 'What can you possibly want with such things! Of course the stewardess will keep your cabin clean.' In my ignorance, I agreed with her, and found out my mistake before I had sailed an hour. I did not go to see my cabin before starting. The most unpractical member of the family went to the Docks one day, in a burst of fraternal affection, to 'see if all was comfortably arranged.' But finding the cabin-door locked, and that neither the captain nor the chief-officer was awaiting his arrival with the key, he came quietly away again, with the object of his expedition unaccomplished. So it was left to the agents; and when I first entered, all was in confusion.

The bed was placed immediately under the

window, which opened upon the pillow or upon my head, as the case might be. It used to hurt rather, when it fell down with a bang, as it sometimes did in rough weather. My wash-hand stand was so placed that I could divide the contents of my sponge equally between my person and my pillow. Everything else was arranged with the same eye to comfort and convenience. My cabin-companion I found to be a little washed-out-looking woman of about six-and-thirty, with her hair, which was white-brown, in curls all round, like a little girl. One of the first things she told me was, that her husband was very proud of her curls. I replied politely, that I was sure he had every reason to be so. When first I saw her she was watering with her tears a small apple-tree in a large pot, which she told me she had 'raised from a pip in her papa's orchard' (what could she have meant?), and that she was taking it out to her husband. I need hardly say that it died in about a fortnight—I suppose the salt water disagreed with it—but she kept it all the same, and presented it with much pride to her husband, when he came to meet her in Calcutta, wishing to shew him, no doubt, that though the power was wanting, the will was there. He didn't look as delighted as he ought to have done, when he left the ship, bearing in his arms the large red flower-pot, with its small dusty twig, which she eyed with the greatest complacency, telling every one that it 'had come all round the Cape.'

But here I am in Calcutta before I have left the Thames. These digressions will never do. Well, I proposed to Mrs Sweeting that we should postpone our tears to a more convenient opportunity, and should call in the stewardess to make our beds and clean out the cabin. She agreed, and I accordingly went out into the cuddy, and asked for the stewardess. To my horror, I was told there was none on board. 'Then who is to make my bed and sweep my cabin?' I very naturally inquired. 'You must do it yourself, unless you have a servant.' I returned to Mrs Sweeting with dismay painted on every feature, and told her the sad news. She instantly recommenced her tears, while I set to work to

make my bed. Of course, my blankets, sheets, &c. had all been carefully placed at the very bottom of the large trunk which contained all the clothes I could possibly want during a four months' voyage. I set bravely to work to unpack this; and having at last got what I wanted, I had to pack it all over again. Then I made the bed, and had the comfort of finding that it was full of cockroaches, of a size I have never seen equalled, and which all ran away into impossible corners before I had time to kill them. Mrs Sweeting was quite useless in this as in all emergencies: she perched herself, screaming, on her bed, whence she proceeded to pour into my ear the most horrible fictions of people who had had all their nails and eyebrows eaten off by these creatures, so that their friends had failed to recognise them when they reached the end of their voyage. I tried not to listen to or believe her, but I am ashamed to say I did both in some degree, and shook in my shoes as I made my preparations for the night.

And now I first felt the necessity for a dust-pan and brush. The cabin was in a dreadful litter, and there was nothing to sweep it with. But, as I said before, our family, if unpractical, is at least full of resource, so I at once looked round for something to serve my purpose. My eye fell upon a large packet of sandwiches, which some one had cut, and forced into my hand at the last moment, probably with a vague idea that I was going for a short distance by the train, and was to return to-morrow morning. These were wrapped in a large sheet of newspaper. My resolution was at once taken. I hastily sent the sandwiches to feed the fishes, and twisted the newspaper up into something as closely resembling a broom as was possible under the circumstances. Then down I went on my hands and knees, and with a most resolute determination—of blood to the head—began to sweep. To sweep, did I say? But it wouldn't sweep. The floor was wet and dirty, and little sticky bits of the newspaper began to come off, and make it more dirty, and my broom began to smell very disagreeably. I gave it up in despair, and sat down on my box till bedtime, with the darkness and the cockroaches creeping over me—a most miserable creature. I dare say I moralised—which of us doesn't, under misfortune?—and thought how often I had abused and grumbled over the incapacities of servants at home, and how glad I should now be of the very worst among them. Servantism were quite a roseate hue in my dreams of that first wretched night.

The next morning, in consequence of not knowing we were to put our cans outside our door at some unearthly hour, we had no water to wash in. This was too much. I determined to go on shore in the pilot's boat, and never to enter a ship again on any pretence whatever. The breakfast-bell rang at nine, and I took my place at table, feeling unwashed, and consequently uncharitable, and disposed to quarrel with everybody and everything, including my bread and butter. I felt great disgust towards a lively young lady next me, who ate and enjoyed three large mutton-chops, and then turned to me to wonder at my bad appetite. I gloomily told her, perhaps she would have a bad appetite if she had undergone all that I had since I came on board. 'What had I undergone?' she asked. I told her. 'But why don't you engage Mrs M'Grab?' returned she in great surprise. 'The captain recommended her to me; but I had already engaged a servant. If

you go to him after breakfast, I daresay you will be in time to secure her.' She then explained to me that there were female servants on board, whose services might be engaged during the voyage. I embraced the lively young lady in a fervour of gratitude, and rushed away with the joyful tidings to Mrs Sweeting. Mrs Sweeting was in bed, and had taken her breakfast there. Judging from the remains, it must have been a plentiful one; both my sight and smell plainly detected mutton-chops, sausages, fried potatoes, curry, and marmalade. The steward who carried in her repast to her, must have been, I should think, overcome with respectful astonishment at her appearance. Her funny little curls were tightly twisted up in things that resembled leather black-puddings, while her person was arrayed in a bright orange-coloured cotton dressing-gown, which greatly enhanced the beauties of her complexion. It was indeed the only bit of decided colour about her. It was a most useful garment nearly all through the voyage, serving alternately as night-dress, dressing-gown, and dress. At last, however, one of the crew, to whom I can't feel sufficiently grateful, spilt a bucket of tar over it, after which lucky accident I saw it no more.

I asked Mrs Sweeting, as the older and married lady, if she would arrange with the captain about Mrs M'Grab. She informed me, rather irrelevantly, I thought, that her father was a clergyman in Somersetshire, that she had been brought up in great retirement, and, in short, would I mind settling the matter. So I sallied forth again, to look for the captain. I was told he was in his cabin, and that I had better go to him there. I knocked at the door with rather a beating heart, but was somewhat reassured by the cheery voice which bade me enter, and by the appearance of the man belonging thereto, which was jolly in the extreme. He received me with great politeness, and at once removed all my perplexities. He had known Mrs M'Grab for twenty-three years, during the whole of which time she had been going backwards and forwards between London and Calcutta, in the capacity of servant to ladies making the voyage. She was perfectly honest, sober, and trustworthy, and a capital sailor. He wound up by saying he should like to put every young lady in the ship under her charge. As there were eighteen of them, I think poor Mrs M'Grab would have had her hands full. As it was, I only wonder she was alive at the end of the voyage. For the invaluable services of this paragon, the captain told me I was to pay L2, 10s., and Mrs Sweeting was to give the same. I begged that she might be sent to my cabin at once, whither I adjourned, and we awaited her with no small anxiety. Presently entered to us a tall, thin, toothless woman, of about sixty years of age, dressed in rusty black, and looking sour and respectable in the extreme. She wore no cap, but had her own grizzled hair, dressed in a tight knob on the top of her head. She had certainly the remains of some beauty. I remember I told her so one day, and was much amused by her forthwith expatiating quite enthusiastically on her own youthful charms, and telling me various histories of young men who had been driven to the verge of despair thereby. If they could have seen her, as I did, at that moment, seated on the floor of my cabin, in a very short blue serge bedgown, and a brown thing which I believe is called a night-

jacket by persons of her rank, her long skinny legs stretched straight out in front of her, her enormous feet, and a plate of Irish stew on her lap, which she devoured by means of a knife and a crust of bread, supping up the gravy and onion with infinite relish, they would have failed to recognise the pretty girl for whom they had sighed in vain. Mrs M'Grab had been a widow for some years; and her family being grown up and dispersed, she was free to follow her own peculiar calling, for which certainly she was admirably fitted. From the moment she set foot in my cabin, she, as it were, took complete possession of me, and I entered into a state of bondage from which I never emancipated myself till I landed in Calcutta. She regulated my sea-sickness, my hours of rising and going to bed (here I was sometimes rebellious), my bathing, my eating, drinking, and medicine, my clothes, and the time at which I should put them on, and the companions I associated with. About the last she was very particular, and I am bound to say that in this, as in minor matters, she was generally right.

'Now, missie,' she would say, as she sat on my floor after dinner, sipping the glass of port I usually contrived to smuggle in for her from dessert—'now, missie, you take my advice; keep yourself to yourself on board ship: no good ever comes of mixing up with all the people you meet here. Have as little as possible to say to the ladies (fine ladies some of *them* are indeed!), and less than nothing to the gentlemen. They will like you all the better for it. You wouldn't like them to speak to you as they do to those little hussies, the Miss Smiths, who run about flirting all over the ship.'

'But surely, Mrs M'Grab,' I would meekly reply, 'I may speak to people without running about flirting!'

'Of course you may, missie, only be careful. I'll promise to look after you, if you'll only trust to me.'

And she did look after me. She somehow knew everything I did, all day long, almost everything I said; and would very freely express her approbation or disapprobation, as the case might be. I think, on the whole, she rather approved of me, I was so very submissive. There was only one point about which we had many a battle: she insisted on my going to bed at half-past nine, and I refused to go till a quarter past ten—and on fine moonlight nights, not even then. This was a sore point all through the voyage, and one which she never got over.

She exercised such constant supervision over me, and was so invariably to be found whenever I wanted her, that I was for some time under the impression that myself and Mrs Sweeting were the only ladies she waited on. However, I found afterwards that she took equal care of nine other ladies, some of whom must have given far more trouble than I did. For instance, there was the gushing Miss Clare, who occupied a cabin close to mine, and who alternately adored and quarrelled with me all through the voyage. This young lady was very pretty, very fat, and very fast. She was a girl 'of great sensibility,' and subject to hysterics. These hysterics were invariably brought on by any real or fancied slight from the man with whom she happened to be in love at the time. As she changed this favoured individual four times during the voyage, I think we may conclude that her

feelings, though undeniably loud, were not very deep. Upon this sensitive flower, Mrs M'Grab bestowed every attention in her power, and coaxed and spoiled her in a way that I own provoked me. I did not so much wonder, however, when I heard that Miss Clare enjoyed the reputation of a good fortune, arising from an estate in Scotland. This, however, could scarcely have been the fact, since she left the ship forgetting to pay Mrs M'Grab her wages, and forgetting to leave her address. But then, you see, the poor thing was so overcome with grief at parting with the last new favourite!

Mrs M'Grab also had under her charge a nervous young lady, whose eyes used to start out of her head with terror every time the ship creaked. During the whole of the four months, she laboured under the pleasing conviction that we were all going to the bottom in half an hour's time. She used to lie awake all night, in order to be quite prepared to meet the situation, for which she was always dressed in an appropriate and becoming manner. When she was very bad indeed, Mrs M'Grab used to sit up all night with her, trying to reassure her; and the captain came several times with the same object; but in vain. She persisted to the last day in being as frightened as she was on the first; and that her terrors were genuine, poor creature, her haggard appearance at the end of the voyage sufficiently testified. Besides these two, there was the young lady who was always having festers, and requiring poultices at all hours of the day and night; and the young lady with a squint, who was, as Mrs M'Grab elegantly expressed it, 'wild for a lover,' in which state I should think she would remain during the period of her natural life. There was also a most interesting young person who was going out to be married. Her appearance was such, that every one was much surprised at this, till it was discovered that the intended husband had never seen his bride. Then, pity for the unfortunate man, and a righteous horror at the swindle practised upon him, were the predominant feelings on board. I often wonder how he bears it. I never heard this young lady open her lips.

Upon all of these, and upon several others, Mrs M'Grab waited with equal care and attention. She never seemed tired, she never seemed ill, she was not very often cross. My private opinion is, that she was made of cast iron, and in no mortal mould. Mere flesh and blood could not have gone through the work that she did.

Her chief trouble with me was, that I was always on the point of being late for dinner. The moment the dressing-bell rang at half-past three—we dined at four o'clock—Mrs M'Grab, having previously laid out on my bed the dress, &c. which she intended me to wear, would ferret me out wherever I might happen to be, and refuse to leave me till I gave up my occupation, and went meekly off to dress. I shall never forget one day when an amateur-photographer, whom we had on board, had just composed a most interesting group, in which I figured. The critical moment had arrived. Every one was perfectly still, having assumed that expression of countenance which she fancied the most becoming to her. The cap had just been taken off, and a breathless silence prevailed, when suddenly Mrs M'Grab's gaunt figure appeared above the companion, and her cracked old voice called out, while

she shook a warning finger at me: 'Now, missie, missie, you come down directly, or you'll be late again.' Of course, we all burst out laughing, and of course the picture was spoiled—no small disaster, under the circumstances, for it was seldom we could get a day calm enough for photographic purposes.

Mrs M'Grab had by this time constituted herself factotum to the whole ship. If any one was ill, she nursed them; if any of the children wanted looking after, she was to the fore. She sewed on buttons for the gentlemen, waited at table, and scolded the cuddy servants indefatigably: all this in addition to her attendance upon her own particular ladies. One failing she had, poor old thing, for which you can blame her, seeing that it never incapacitated her for her duties. Mrs M'Grab, it must be owned, had a decided weakness for strong waters. Nothing of the kind ever came amiss to her: wine, beer, brandy, *sal volatile*—all were welcome. I used, as I have said, to smuggle many a glass of wine into my cabin for her benefit, before I discovered this weakness, and found with dismay that I myself had the credit of privately consuming the liquid myself. Then, of course, I had to give up the practice, greatly to the poor old thing's disgust. But it really was her only failing, and it never interfered with her work; indeed, I doubt if she could have done all she did without it.

When I was in Calcutta, I met with many ladies who knew her, who had been domineered over and made comfortable by her; and one and all agreed, that if they were sending children to England, or if they were going themselves, there was no one whose services they would so gladly secure as kind old Mrs M'Grab's.

TO PERSONS ABOUT TO FIND THEMSELVES FAMOUS.

IN THREE CHAPTERS.—CHAPTER III.

THE writing of verse, as a means of subsistence, or even as an auxiliary to it, is absolutely useless. The pay can never be proportional, even in the most prosperous periodical, to the time and thought expended; and moreover (although the reverse does not hold good), all persons who write good verse can write good prose.

Another almost as unrepaying a branch of literary labour is translation. Scarcely any good periodical publishes translations at all; and those which do, of course pay much less for them than for original matter. It is not, I am sorry to say, unnecessary for me to remark in this place, that for a contributor to send a translation to any magazine without stating that it is a translation, is an act, to say the least of it, very disgraceful. It is this practice, more than direct fraud itself (to be spoken of presently), which causes magazines to be accused of plagiarism. Two translators happen to select the same foreign story, and though each chooses a different title, the coincidence of the march of events is of course very striking. When both have appeared in print, in of course different channels, the subscribers to the magazines in question begin to write letters to their respective editors. 'We always understood, sir, that the articles in your periodical were original, but now, &c.,' or, 'We beg to call your attention to the fact that, in the *Megatherium* of this month, a paper has been published, manifestly compiled from one in your

February number, with only a turn of expression here and there a little varied.'* As for direct fraud, I only allude to it as an example of the completeness of the institution of periodical literature. Crime itself has begun to adapt itself to the system. There are certain scoundrels—absolute Thieves, no less—who make a trade of extracting from the back numbers of periodicals—so far back as to have been forgotten, they hope—such articles as they think likely to be accepted; word for word they copy them, except that they give them a new name, and then send them to some other magazine. If accepted, as is likely enough, they write to say that they are 'pressed for money,' or are going abroad immediately, and therefore that propayment, or, at all events, a sum on account, would be very welcome. Months sometimes elapse, in consequence of press of matter, before an article can be published, so their crime remains undiscovered all that time, during which they are probably reaping their harvest elsewhere. So systematised is this practice, that some magazines will publish nothing sent by a stranger without some respectable reference.

Next to translations, articles upon foreign travel are least likely to find acceptance. Unless they treat of some very out-of-the-way region, or are of really exceptional excellence, they are refused, because the editorial desk has already too many such papers. Everybody goes abroad now a days, and almost everybody entertains the delusion that his 'Journal,' so much admired by private friends, must be very gratifying to the public. Now, even a stiff and guide-book-like account of Timbuctoo might be readable, when an article by the same hand upon Paris or Madrid would only excite a yawn. To write well and strikingly upon what is well known, is given to very few folks indeed. Not only was I myself overwhelmed by these accounts of foreign travel, when I was a *We*, but I noticed this class of article, more than any other, had gone through a good deal of home travel. The manuscript often bore marks—such as an editor can never mistake—of having sought for admission at one or two other places previously, and failed. These marks, I would recommend volunteer contributors carefully to erase before retransmission. Of course, what may not, suit one periodical may very well suit another; and editors are not always infallible in their judgments. Still, it does not prejudice one in your favour to perceive so clearly that other critical persons have declined your obliging offer. The neglect of such an obvious precaution is also by no means an indication of intelligence. These marks often consist in the mere crumpling and soiling of the manuscript; but there are certain figures, and even initials, well known to the Initiated, by which they know the very office which has rejected it. [Very amusing it used to be—though rather humiliating to one who entertains lofty views of humanity—to get a contribution thus disfigured; accompanied by a letter, hinting in no vague terms that the paper was compiled with a particular eye to its suitability for 'your magazine,' and no other.] To cut the corner off that contains these objectionable symbols,

* We can fully corroborate our correspondent's remarks on this point; on more than one occasion, editors of other magazines, imposed upon in this way, having reprinted articles apparently from *Chambers's Journal*, almost *verbatim*; whereby we first discovered that we ourselves had been previously victimised.—Ed. of *C. J.*

is quite useless; for we know why it has suffered the amputation very well. It is worth while to rewrite the first page. Of course, a really good editor is one who will judge you solely by your merits; but there are editors and editors.

While speaking of such minutiae, I may add that Legible Writing is a very important element of success. It is too much to expect that an editor should trouble himself to decipher hieroglyphics; and let your pages be accurately numbered and united together, so that they may be easily turned over. The flogging of manuscript in a small hard roll is most objectionable, since the paper always remains circular, and difficult to read. With regard to spelling, I have known one man of real genius, though in humble circumstances, who could not spell; and very fortunate, I afterwards thought myself, that I got over my prejudice against his first contribution, which was full of blemishes of this disagreeable sort; but in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred, those who cannot spell, cannot write.

It is generally useless for a young hand to attempt reviews. These require, more than almost any other sort of writing, ripe judgment and well-seasoned brains; and, moreover, they are usually intrusted to the staff. There is not much demand—if I may use a commercial term with respect to a matter that was once supposed to be something very different from any Trade, but which is becoming marvellously like it—for Essays. Their day is gone by. People prefer to think for themselves on this, that, and the other, and do not desire other men's 'views' upon them.

The only line of business, indeed, in connection with literary periodicals (once more let it be understood that I do not refer to newspapers at all) that can be said to be very remunerative is the writing of Fiction. Heaven forbid that I should encourage unqualified persons to swell the number of those who already inundate our magazines with stories, often themselves of doubtful merit. But the fact of indifferent narratives being accepted, shews how difficult it is to procure really good ones to meet the increasing demand for this class of composition. Whether for good or ill, whether it is 'healthy' or otherwise, the British public are determined to recreate themselves with fiction. Philosophy and religion themselves, when in monthly numbers, cannot pick up a subsistence without it; even the *Fortnightly Review* and *Good Words* must have their novels. A few respectable old-fashioned persons may regret the tendency to substitute the meretricious attractions of fiction for, &c., &c.; but unless they are prepared to make up the pecuniary loss which consulting them would certainly entail upon their favourite magazine, by decrease of circulation, their tastes can no longer be catered for. I must also take leave to say—this being a matter which I claim to know more about than most men—that notwithstanding much depreciatory talk about modern light literature, there is nothing (except, perhaps, poetry) in which our present magazines have shewn such marked improvement over the old ones, as in this much-abused novel-writing. Take any—even the best—of the old staid vamped-up stories of the once famous periodicals, now deceased, and contrast them with the somewhat too 'realistic,' perhaps, but still lifelike sketches in the magazines, let us say, of the current month; and the vast superiority of the latter will at once be made apparent. Some of them, of course, on the

other hand, are thin things enough; sans wit, sans taste, sans everything. That is the reason why I recommend folks to write better ones to supply their place. There is always an opening in every literary periodical for a really good story. All editors are eager and willing to accept it. It is the most foolish prejudice on the part of would-be contributors to imagine that such an article requires anything but its own merits to insure publication. I do not refer to novels of considerable length. It is very unlikely that a man should write a good novel without having already written good short stories. The *Scenes from Clerical Life* preceded *Adam Bede*. And if the good novel has been written, the author requires no advice from me: he is a would-be contributor no longer. On the contrary, the would-be editors write to him. He has gained a very considerable height upon the ladder both of fame and fortune. Perhaps this is too gorgeous a figure by which to express the thing accomplished. If so, I withdraw it. I endeavour to be as practical as possible. I purposely put out of sight the higher aims. I am not looking at the Principles of success in Literature from Mr Lewes's stand-point. I am writing a guide-book for would-be contributors.

Yes: of course Fiction is by far the most remunerative branch of our calling. Even now, its gains are respectable; in some cases, what certain journals denounce as 'enormous;' although in no case—not in that of persons of genius, to whom all of us are indebted for laughter or for tears, for aspirations, for instruction, for all sorts of benefit—in no case, I say, is this grudging remuneration equal to what scores of parliamentary lawyers—none of whom would leave a gap which could not be filled up just as well by some other 'learned brother' to-morrow—are accustomed to receive. It will not be so a generation or two hence. When the law of copyright is established in America, the English novelist will be a merchant-prince. Even now, what an improvement has taken place in his prospects, through periodical literature. I have said that there are about twenty respectable periodicals in London alone; the adjective is a vague one; I will write twenty periodicals that pay their novelists. The prices are very various; one pays, or did pay (for the praiseworthy experiment has not been repeated), £7000 for a work of fiction: £5000, £4000, £2500 ('in two places,' as the auctioneers say), £2000, £1500, £1000, £800, £500, £350, £300, £200, £150, £100, down perhaps to £50. Most of these sums I know, from my own personal knowledge, to have been paid for novels within the last ten years by various magazines. All of these periodicals have had novels continuously passing through their pages during that period. Imagine, therefore, the sums paid for that branch of literature.

Forgive me, good would-be contributors, if I have made your mouths water. It is not given to everybody (I am glad to say) to compete with these gentry, who are skilled to

Make the thing that is not as the thing that is.

Be not too covetous of such a position. There are lees in the successful novelists' wine-cup, believe me. There is a sect called *Saturday Reviewers* who have (vainly) sworn to extirpate them, and who do actually ill-use them in a most inhuman manner. I am the last person (as I have shewn, I hope) to

wish to see you robbed of your just dues; but don't be offensively greedy after money. To write to an editor, as *many* do, coolly requesting to know what are his usual rates of remuneration, is a piece of gross impertinence. If he has accepted any paper of yours, that is another matter: you may intend to put your own price upon it, and not to let it go for less; although, if I was in your place (and I am quite familiar with the position) I think I should not make such an inquiry at all: but having received the fruit of my labour at his hands, and found it insufficient, simply work for him no more. Sometimes—not to speak of the Dignity of Labour—folks get better paid than they expect.

It does not occur to me to give you any further advice. I have told you what to do, and (particularly) what not to do. The rest of the matter lies in your hands. I do not say '*Never despair*;' because, after experiencing many rejections from more than one periodical, and acceptance *nowhere*, the truth should begin to dawn upon you that Literature is not the vocation for which either art or nature has intended you. But, on the other hand, do not be easily discouraged. The object of imitation I recommend to all would-be contributors with anything really in them is Bruce's spider. Their motto should be, '*Better luck next Time*.'

A LUMBERING EXPEDITION.

THIS title may perhaps conjure up in the reader's mind visions of stalwart, horny-fisted, weather-stained, red-shirted, leather-leggined backwoods-men, conveying *lumber* (timber) a distance of four or five hundred miles, on a floating village, from 'the forests primeval' to the mouth of the Trent or the Ottawa; but, in truth, the following sketch has no reference to a mode of life half so romantic, or a twentieth part so useful, as that of the American lumberer.

Our expedition was one of those theatrical, village-hunting incursions, organised by actors out of engagements, and called lumbering, on the *lucus a non lucendo* principle, since, on such occasions, one carries as little lumber as possible. We were at Rethburton, in Northumberland, a large and populous village, famed for its fine scenery and capital trout-streams. The natives were to be gratified on our first night with a representation of the maudlin sentimentalities of the *Stranger* (a version of my own, specially adapted to the *weakness* of our corps, which consisted of two married couples, a single young man, and a boy of ten years old). Comic singing, and the 'screaming, side-splitting farce' (*vide* playbills) of the *Frightened Footman*, were to send our visitors home in good-humour. But we had reckoned without our audience. Not a creature came near us, even to ask the price of admission, although the fiddler whom we had hired sat close to the open door, and played as loud and as fast as he could lay bow to strings for full three-quarters of an hour, in the vain hope of catching a few stray passers-by. Perceiving at last that this was but labour in vain, we paid and dismissed him. As our bills had failed to draw attention to us, we next day sent the bellman round, our landlady telling us that it was the 'genteel thing to do,' for that sales, concerts, invitations to funerals, and other amusements were commonly announced by that functionary. We rather plumed ourselves on the prospect of a good

house, for in the afternoon, Mr Ned Selwell, son of the noted house-agent, had purchased from us sixteen shilling-worth of tickets, which we concluded he would present to the friends with whom he was on a visit; and we naturally hoped that his party would form the nucleus of a large and respectable concourse of spectators. He was to 'pay after performance, having then nothing less than a twenty-pound note in his pocket, which in the interim he would change.' It was time for the curtain to rise, when our money-taker observed Mr Ned standing on the steps leading to our temporary theatre (the club-room of the *Wheat-sheaf Hotel*), giving his tickets to persons who were actually coming up with intent to pay at the door; thus foolishly depriving us of their ready money, without reaping any advantage from the transaction himself.

The attendance was bad, and the acting worse; endeavour as conscientiously as one may, there's no such thing as performing well to empty benches. This is the case even when a moneyed manager is responsible for the salaries; and the acting is sure to be tamer still when there is no certainty of anything, but that the night's expenses must be paid, however slim its receipts may be.

Sitting at our breakfast-table by the window the following morning, we had the pleasure of seeing our liberal ticket-purchaser on the top of the Newcastle coach, proceeding homewards, portmanteau by side. At night, there was a very poor muster of spectators again; and heartily sick of Rethburton, we agreed to 'give it up,' like a bad conundrum, and to try a few nights at Fulbottle (four miles away), pending the arrival of letters from managers.

Conveyance thither there was none, save that most ancient one of all, denominated '*Shanks's mare*;' therefore, to carry our indispensable luggage, we bought what the Rethburtonians called '*a dick-ass*;' for this, the mugger (dealer in crockery) who sold it to us charged thirty shillings; and we had the satisfaction of being told afterwards, that he meant to have taken *twelve*, if we had '*bated him*, as he naterally looked for.' Our new acquisition was laden with the male attire, packed in two carpet-bags, arranged pannier-wise; two bundles of feminine gear; a reversible calico scene, having a street painted on one side, a garden on the other; and a black gauze medium for an act-drop; our scarlet baize curtain being too heavy to take with us. The wall of the room itself was to serve, as Old Granger has it, '*for parlour, and kitchen, and hall*.'

The weather had been unusually dry for several weeks past, and the river Coquet had dwindled down to quite an inconceivable-looking stream, which we had to cross about a quarter of a mile before reaching Fulbottle. The dick-ass walked quietly through the water with his load; the boy sitting on the scenery, to guide the animal, and keep the luggage steady; the rest of the party tottered tremblingly over a high rickety bridge, composed of a creaking old plank, guarded on one side only by a rotten, crumbling hand-rail.

The room in which we were to exhibit was long, narrow, and low. Our gentlemen hung what scenery we had brought, then begged some old newspapers from the landlord, which, with the aid of paste, lampblack, whiting, and a pound-brush, borrowed from the hostler, they speedily converted into a representation of a forest and four side-wings. The wardrobe was then unpacked, and

laid ready in two little dressing-rooms at the back of the stage; the properties wanted for the pieces were collected together, and two pounds of patent unsuffable candles were set up; then we had tea—a welcome refreshment after the day's fatigue. Next, we made inquiries about music: the master of the house lent us a fiddle, which he had taken from a traveller long ago, for a bad debt; but he gave us to understand that musicians were not to be had.

Just as we were despairing of meeting with a fiddler, a young gentleman popped in, and released us from our dilemma by offering to play whenever he should perceive that the action of the drama required incidental music; and very skillfully he did it too. The room was crowded to suffocation. We performed *Robert Macaire*, curiously cut and carved to suit our (in-)capabilities, and re-christened *The Murder at the Roadside Inn, or the Two French Jack Sheppards*. In adapting the piece to the peculiarities of our company, I had remorselessly slashed out its graver portion, carefully retaining all the free-and-easy, devil-may-care vagabondage of Robert, the amusing cowardice of his comrade, Jacques Strop, and as many of the striking melodramatic situations as our limited numbers would permit. In consequence of its being judiciously curtailed, the drama went off excellently, the laughter and applause that greeted our efforts being boisterous enough to have satisfied the greediest actor in the world. The violinist gave us plenty of characteristic music, just as if he had been the leader of an orchestra all his life: *hurries*, when one rushed on or off, or had the ill-luck to commit a robbery or a murder; *chords* for starts, and attitudes, and wonderful situations; *lively* for wedding preparations, and for eating and drinking; a *waltz* and *gavotte* for Clementine and Robert; any quantity of *pizzicato* to set off Jacques's tremblings and cowardice; and a charmingly doleful *adagio* movement at the end, when the murderer-in-chief was shot (in the back) through the heart, and fell dead in the centre of the stage, and the horror-stricken surviving characters formed into a pathetic *tableau*; his disconsolate widow kneeling beside him, with hands clasped, and eyes raised in supplication to the white-washed ceiling; their amiable son, Charles, in tears and sobs behind a red-and-yellow pocket-handkerchief; and the police-sergeant, Loupy, holding Jacques in custody with one hand, and with the other pointing sternly off to the inevitable scaffold, looming in the distance, for his especial behoof. Loupy was personated by the lady who had previously played the wealthy hostess of the roadside inn, who had been murdered in the first act, for the sake of a green pocket-book, stuffed to repletion with b(l)ank-notes. Pierre, the waiter, had been represented by the boy, who, according to directions given him, sneaked quietly away as the *dénouement* was approaching, to ring the bell and drop the curtain. On the table were two lighted candles; half-a-dozen more hung up behind the wings. These completely illuminated the scene, and we recognised the awkwardness of our position the instant that the medium was let down; a *medium* being a gauze or leno curtain used for spectres, as in *Richard III.*, *Maria Marten*, &c. &c. where the ghosts remain invisible to the audience until the blue-fire is lighted up at the back-wing, and shews their spectreships off to advantage.

There we were!—at a dead-lock, like the characters in the *Critic*. The defunct ruffian did not like to make the first move; neither did any of the minor *dram. pers.*; so we remained *in statu quo* for a minute or longer, the people in front enjoying the joke, and calling out, pretty nearly in the words of Polonius: 'Get up, good actor-man, and run away.' While we were in this perplexing predicament, Pierre, the waiter, walked on, and, like a sensible fellow, extinguished the obtrusive lights, thus rendering us invisible to those on the opposite side of the tell-tale gauze curtain. This boy was to have danced a hornpipe; but having by chance left his pumps at Rethburton, our leading tragedian apologised for the enforced omission of the dance, and obligingly intimated his intention of himself substituting a song, that there might be no disappointment experienced.

The farce of *The Miser and his Man* was to conclude the entertainments: a lively air was struck up, and the comic man had walked on to begin, when, in the middle of a bar, the young musician's ear detected the sound of a short dry cough in the lobby. Whisk! with one bound he jumped over the foot-lights, thrust fiddle and bow into the actor's hands, and darted across the stage like a shot into the men's dressing-room, just as an elderly gentleman with shovel-hat and white neck-cloth poked his head in at the audience-end of the apartment. The spectators rose, and respectfully saluted him; he removed his hat, and civilly wished them good-evening; then remarked to the comedian in a low, gentle tone: 'I beg your pardon, sir; you are the instrumentalist, I perceive. I heard the music as I was going by, and thought my son Nathaniel must be here, for he is the only person resident in our village who can play on the violin.' With a benevolent good-night, and a profound bow, the venerable clergyman departed, and his son Nathaniel* shortly followed him. After performance, we walked back to Rethburton, and returned next evening, when another full house rewarded our exertions in a drama adapted from *The Floating Beacon*, and entitled by us, *The Wild Woman of the Wreck*, which cost us another newspaper scene, with the sky painted on the upper half, and a ship's bulwarks on the lower. Clad in a gray serge train and ragged black drapery, I was raving away as the wild woman, my hair dishevelled, and my arms tossing about like the sails of a distracted wind-mill (for we had discovered that our audience approved of a redundancy of action), to give proper effect to the high-flown speech—'Pity! pity for Mar-r-riette! Hear that, ye raging winds, and be still! Hear it, ye loud thunders!' (which were totally inaudible, as we had not encountered Dick with the thunder-sheet). 'Hear it, ye darkly-gathering clouds, and bid it dissolve your elemental horrors to the blue calm of one expansive ether'—when, just as I had got to the 'expansive ether,' a burly farmer, not meeting with a money-taker at the door, entered, and handed me a coin across the footlights, with: 'Give me change for half-a-crown, if you please, num; and there he stood, the action of the drama being suspended until I produced the required eightpence, which I had to fetch from the adjoining room—Mariette not condescending to such commonplace things as

* That young gentleman is now a curate, and preaches no worse a sermon for having helped the strolling players at a pinch.

pockets. The clergyman's son was with a party of young ladies in the reserved seats (front row of chairs), and we had gone through the first piece without music, when the hostler introduced a wandering street organ-man to enliven the proceedings; and that he certainly effected, by grinding forth the sacred air of 'O come, loud anthems let us sing!' just as our low comedian was going to favour his hearers with *Villikins and his Dinah*; and very uncomfortable he looked, as he stood on the stage, twirling a ragged hat about in his hands, until the hymn was over, and the grinderpest ignominiously expelled.

Again we slept at Rethburton, and again returned to Fulbottle, to give a final performance; three being as many as were likely to pay where the population was so limited that our theatre would (and *did*) contain all the inhabitants that were not either too young or too old to attend; however, we consoled ourselves with the reflection, that Miss Kelly's first season at the *Soho* had lasted only five nights.

The day had been beautiful, but after sunset the rain poured in torrents, and the wind blew a hurricane. We would not have set forth in such weather to walk to head-quarters, but for the sake of my baby, who was much too young to be left all night with strangers. On coming to the water, we found that though one boy might bring a dick-ass there, two men and the boy could not make him wade through it: persuasion and coaxing were thrown away on Dick's stubborn nature; nor would the 'dull ass mend his pace for beating;' and after three-quarters of an hour had been spent in fruitless attempts to make him cross with boy and 'lumber,' the low comedian laying on lustily with his walking-stick most of the time, it occurred to us that the pitchy darkness so bewildered and frightened the poor animal, that he durst not try the passage of the Coquet. We were in an uncomfortable fix. We could not walk home and carry the *scenery* and wardrobe; neither could we afford to abandon them and obstinate Dick on the queen's highway; and, even though we should waive all consideration of baby—impatiently expecting us—it would be exceedingly annoying to be obliged to retrace our steps to the *Jolly Anglers*, in our wet and muddy condition, and with the probability staring us in the face of the house being closed, and its inmates in bed and asleep. In short, it seemed as if we could neither stay nor go. True, we had heard of a substantial stone bridge two miles further up the river, but we felt extremely unwilling to try such a roundabout route. Suddenly, a bright thought struck one of the actors—Dick might be *carried across*! My female companion and I literally screamed on hearing this frightful suggestion; what! across that miserable rickety plank, that creaked and groaned under the weight of the very lightest of our party. Trust our husbands, our stage-dresses, and the dick-ass on that wretched apology for a bridge! In spite of our remonstrances, the gentlemen carried the day—and the donkey; the old plank behaving like a true heart of oak, bearing all three with little more than the usual amount of creaking; and we had soon left our *pons asinorum* far behind. By and by, we found that we were lost. In crossing over a moor, we had missed the path, and might, indeed, most likely have wandered about on that 'blasted heath' till daylight, but for the approach of a number of men

with lanterns and ropes, who proved to be some of our Rethburton neighbours, kindly come out in search of us, and glad to find us all alive: being so late, they feared we had met with some accident. After all, the donkey was not such an ass as we thought: these people told us that had he tried to ford the stream, he would assuredly have gone down, and the poor lad with him, without hope of rescue, the flood had risen so suddenly.

Next day, it was pitiable to behold the damage that had been done in a few hours; the swollen, turbid river had flooded the meadows for many miles along its banks, and cattle, sheep, poultry, corn, hay, and timber floated wildly along upon its surface. Great excitement and sorrow of course prevailed in the district; and as everybody in the place seemed to be connected with everybody else, either by blood or marriage, it was no use attempting to act, for the present, in the neighbourhood of this disaster.

Idle, perforce, for nearly a fortnight, our finances began to fail, and seeing no reason why Mr Ned Selwell should fleece us of sixteen shillings, and not being certain of his whereabouts, we wrote a polite request to his father for payment of the debt; and not getting an answer, my companion and I resolved to apply personally to Mr Selwell, senior, and (a cold, drizzling rain pouring on us every inch of the way) we walked the five miles between Rethburton and Selwell; nay, we had so many *détours* to make, owing to the still flooded state of the roads, that I may, without exaggeration, say six miles, which we completed by noon, when we arrived at our journey's end, and entered a small paved yard adjoining the back kitchen of Selwell House, where two long, narrow deal tables, with forms on each side, were set out for an *ad frasco* dinner-party; a delightful prospect, and well calculated to cheer the spirits of the hard-working agriculturists for whom the festive board was provided. The rain now poured in torrents; and a farm-labourer, partly shielded from it by a dilapidated sack, that hung over his shoulders, was scuttling about, with a dishcloth in each hand, vainly endeavouring, by continual swabbing, to keep tables and forms moderately dry. From twenty to thirty of his mates were grouped about in knots of threes and fours, outside the gates, evidently waiting with impatience for their toilworn meal; while a young lady, with a profusion of wiry red ringlets, and dressed in a smart lilac and white muslin morning-wrapper, stood just within the kitchen door, lading a thin, weak, sloppy broth out of a large copper into tin pint-cans, which a wooden-clogged, check-aproned, red-elbowed servant-girl placed, as fast as they were filled, on the well-soaked tables. At a case-ment above the kitchen, we caught a glimpse of Mr Ned's face; and he, recognising us in a moment, beat a hasty retreat. The ringleted young lady received us superciliously enough, but condescended to take our message to her 'pa,' and came back armed with a falsehood, to the effect, that we 'had not paid the postage, and that that was why "pa" had not chosen to answer it.'

The gist of Mr Selwell's verbal communication was, that he 'did not know where his son was, and that he did not mean to pay the money for him.' A refusal, lawful, I daresay, but scarcely kind or gentlemanlike. His daughter had not sufficient Christian courtesy to invite us into the house, to rest our weary limbs, and dry our

saturated garments; so we (observing that the dinner, such as it was, was delayed until our departure) hurried away from this inhospitable abode.

When the weather had cleared up, we were advised to try an entertainment at Pudding-bag (that is, *cul de sac*, or no thoroughfare) Wittingray, a hamlet two miles in the opposite direction to Fulbottle. According to lumbering custom, the gentlemen adjusted the indispensable preliminaries of room-taking, bill-delivering, and lodging-hunting; the schoolmaster kindly gave them the use of his school-room, gratis, a large apartment on the ground-floor of an ancient castle, whose owner never resided there, but generously allowed it, rent free, for the welfare of the rising generation; and though it was a quarter of a mile beyond Wittingray, we deemed ourselves fortunate in having permission to act in it; there being no public building of any kind, and for a wonder, not even a public-house to be seen; nothing for the use of the Fulbottle public, except a pound for strayed cattle, and an ancient pair of stocks, both edifices standing side by side on the green. We had been told that this was an 'early-to-bed early-to-rise' sort of place, and that we must not commence later than seven o'clock, nor keep our visitors beyond half-past nine; yet one procrastinating member of our company would not get ready in time, and it was past eight before we got to Pudding-bag. The houses were all in darkness; almost everybody was gone to rest, save a few young men, whom we found lurking about at the Park gates, in the desperate hope that we might come, even at that untimely hour. These 'hailed us with three cheers,' followed us into the castle, insisted on paying their sixpences, and seeing a performance. Their language was so extra *barry* as to be nearly unintelligible to us; but we could not misinterpret their scowling brows and clenched fists. We had kept them up beyond their usual hour, and act we must for their amusement; or abide the consequences. Therefore, though unable to fit up, we lighted the apartment, gave several recitations, a few songs, and the third act of *Othello*, all in our everyday costume, having neither time nor opportunity to change. The 'valiant Moor' was careful to omit the words 'haply, for I am black' (which he was not on this particular occasion), but he need not have troubled himself, for I am certain that none of his audience (schoolmaster excepted) knew what he was talking about, for they laughed yet more cheerily at his jealous rage and Iago's hypocritical suggestions, than they had done at the previous portion of the programme. We netted half-a-crown ahead; and after announcing a play for the following evening, and thanking the schoolmaster for his kindness, we repaired to the lodging, which we fondly fancied had been secured to us. When we had knocked often and loud enough to awaken the Seven Sleepers, a stout woman, in a large night-cap, that spread out round her face like a white glory, opened the bedroom window, and coolly informed us, that it 'being so late' [ten o'clock it certainly was], they had given us up long ago, and wouldn't open the door again for man nor mortal. Our three partners in tribulation took this much amiss, and looked home in dudgeon; the poor boy was too tired to accompany them; and we felt no inclination to carry our fat, heavy baby that distance (for this time we had brought him with us);

and not knowing what else to do, we went back to the castle, and explained our houseless position to the benevolent schoolmaster, who thereupon straightway invited us to sup with him and his wife in their private apartments up-stairs, and afterwards offered the boy a share of his young son's bed. More he could not do for us, than accommodate us with a night's lodging in the school-room, where, like Dickens's cobbler in the Fleet prison, we might have slept under the immense table, and imagined it a four-post bedstead; had not the chilly appearance of the stone floor forbidden us to cherish such lofty ideas; so a mattress was placed on the table, and our good-natured host having supplied us with heaps of bedding, and lighted a roaring fire, we enjoyed a good night's rest. At six in the morning, he aroused us, and directed us a very roundabout way to the lodging that had been taken for us, so as to appear as if we had only just arrived at Wittingray; for it would have jeopardised his situation had the report gone abroad that poor strolling players had been afforded the shelter of his roof.

Six P.M., and our runaway partners had not rejoined us; nevertheless, we determined on performing; so my husband hung the scenery and seats; the boy put on a spangled jacket, and went round the *town* (as the people there were pleased to call Wittingray) on the dick-ass, giving out the prices of admission, and also a few playbills. Douglas, slightly altered from the original, was to be the first piece; my husband (though the low comedian) could double Glenalvon and old Norval; still we were minus a young Norval and a Lord Randolph; and were considering what we could substitute for the tragedy, when two Scotch book-canvassers (travelling for a Glasgow firm), into whose hands a playbill had fallen, called, and proffered us seven shillings if we would let them 'assist' in the performance; this was a timely relief, for they knew every line of the piece.

A brass band aided us greatly by playing through the town, to attract customers towards us before we began, and afterwards gave us their valuable services, closing their ears to offers of payment, saying that they 'should have come to practise as they always did three times a week, and now they should see the play for nothing.' The room was choke-full; and the kindly schoolmaster officiated for us as money-taker, and likewise kept order amongst his former and present pupils, giving the most unruly of them, every now and then, a roughish tap on the head with his official cane, raising many a bump that would have puzzled a phrenologist, the recipients of the taps taking no notice of them more than a grumbling 'Now then!' and a rub of the part affected. Our amateurs did not act amiss; but they spoke with a strong Glasgow accent; and young Norval, after his soliloquy in the fifth act, introduced the song of *Castles in the Air*—an anachronism, certainly; though people brought up in theatrical circles sometimes do more ridiculous things. We had no one but the boy to sustain the small character of Anna; and as the tragic heroine could not possibly dispense with a confidante in whom to repose her griefs, I addressed him as Donald, throwing myself on his shoulder at every fresh burst of woe, that I might seize those opportunities of prompting him in the few sympathising lines that could not be omitted; for Lady Randolph must have time to take breath between

the fearfully long yarns she is condemned to spin. After every act, when the band had brayed forth a specimen of their powers, a young fellow stood up in his place, on a form, in the midst of the assembly, and made a lengthy speech; he was always loudly cheered at the close of his harangues, of which we could make no sense whatever, they being delivered with wonderful rapidity, and in the choicest and broadest Northumbrian. Our friend the schoolmaster afterwards informed us that Jock Selkirk's (John Selkirk's) admission had been paid for, in order that he might perform the part of interpreter between us and our audience, there being many lads and lasses in who no more understood us than if we had been discoursing High Cherokee or Low Dutch; and a very intelligent and efficient chorus Mr Selkirk proved himself, frequently drawing tears from soft-hearted maids and matrons by his manner of telling Home's simple story as it progressed. His occupation ceased with Douglas's untimely death; the comic song and the sailor's hornpipe needed no interpretation, and were rapturously received; and the fun of the farce of *Cherry Bounce*, such as smashing crockery, taking bitter physic, putting a lighted candle under a letter when a person was reading it, was 'obvious,' 'to the meanest capacity.' Next morning, we divided the cash (two pounds three shillings and ninepence, including the Scotchmen's seven shillings) into three equal portions; the boy was only entitled to half a share, but he had worked so hard, had been so useful and obliging, that we could do no less than pay him according to his merits. Nightly expenses there had been none, except a small item for candles.

Our recreant friends were astonished to hear of our success of the previous night, and claimed their shares of its proceeds; but we could not see the propriety of acceding to their demand, and preferred devoting our money to pay our travelling charges to Whitehaven, the manager of the theatre there having sent us a stamped letter of engagement. We generously made our late partners a present of our two-sixths of the dick-ass; and they, not requiring his services, sold him to a dealer in birch-brooms, at an alarming sacrifice, getting but two shillings and ninepence for the whole animal. With this, the only turfy transaction of our lives, terminated our Lumbering Expedition.

VERY OLD IRELAND.

ONE of the most curious books that it is possible to imagine is the first volume of *The Ancient Laws of Ireland*, lately published under the direction of commissioners such as Lord Rosse, Dr Todd, Dr Graves, and—so long as he was alive to superintend it—of that prince of antiquaries, Dr Petrie of the Round Towers. It contains the *Senchus Mor*, 'The Great Wisdom,' otherwise called 'Cain Patraic,' or Patrick's Canon; and it certainly proves one thing—that, Phœnicians or no Phœnicians, Milesians or no Milesians, there was in Ireland a seemingly home-grown civilisation, and a system of laws which kept the different tribes in far better order than the people over there have ever been kept since. It is called Cain Patraic, this old digest of the Brehon law—not because the vermin-ejecting saint had much to do with its composition, for he

found the laws in full force, maintained with all the sanctions of Druidism. All he did was to wipe out all reference to the old worship, and to put in certain provisions respecting priests and bishops. St Patrick is the almost only missionary of those, or, indeed, of any times, who respected what was true in the literature of the people among whom he laboured. In the eyes of most of the old saints, the books which they met with in heathen lands, were inspired by Satan, and must be burned—the customs which they found were devilish, and must be got rid of. St Patrick was large-minded enough to speak of the old precedents in the Irish law-books as 'judgments of true nature, which the Holy Ghost had spoken through the mouths of the Brehons and first poets of the men of Erin, ever since there were men in the island.' Nay, he adds: 'The law of nature had been quite right, except the faith and its obligations, and the harmony of the church and people.'

This is something very marvellous, when we come to think how slow even the most advanced nations have been in learning what true toleration means. Compare it for a moment with the way in which, more than a thousand years after, the Spanish spoke of the laws and usages of the Mexicans. Here was a man, probably a noble of Gaulish race, who had lived for years a bond-slave in Ireland, and had so loved the people, that he made up his mind to come and preach the Gospel to them; and earnest as he was for his religion, he had the marvellous enlightenment to see that even these outlying heathen had some truth among them, and the tact to recognise what was good in their system, simply weeding instead of destroying what must have been to him a thoroughly strange crop; for there is no trace of Roman law about this old Brehon code, which, modified by St Patrick, lasted as the law of the Irish—and of not a few of the English—quite down to Queen Elizabeth's time. It is like the old German codes in that it makes everything a matter of fine. When a judge on circuit, after the English fashion, is to be appointed by one of Henry VIII's viceroys to a new district, the chiefs beg to know what is his *eric*, in order that they may pay for him, in case their people 'put him out of the way.' And so it was in the fifth century. St Patrick found a law of compensation existing, and he did not succeed in altering it. He attempted to do so, for he got sentence of death passed on the man who, soon after his landing, threw a lance, and slew his charioteer. 'The man was put to death for his crime; but Patrick obtained heaven for him.' 'Therefore,' quaintly adds the old commentator on the *Senchus*, 'as no one now has the power of bestowing heaven, as Patrick had that day, no one is put to death now-a-days, but has to pay his *eric*.'

Just when St Patrick came over, the Irish were overhauling their law-books, with a view to codifying. It was an age of Pandects and Codes; and we are not to suppose that, cut off though they were from the Roman world, they

had heard nothing of what was going on in the rest of Europe. But what led immediately to the composition of the *Senchus* was a dispute, probably of long standing, between Druids and Brehons. The Druids wanted to meddle in the administration of justice; and the bards, judges, and other literary persons stoutly resisted all priestly interference. Hence the need of an authorised code, to which each might, on occasion, appeal. St Patrick could not have come at a better time. Of course, as he is the enemy of the Druids, the other party make common cause with him. Indeed, Dubhthach Mac na Lugair (which may be modernised into Duffy Mac Lear), 'the royal poet of Erin,' was a great ally of the saint. He, and Fergus, another poet, and Rossa, 'a doctor of the Feini' (after whom, doubtless, O'Donovan, the Fenian, named himself), 'put a thread of poetry around the *Senchus* for Patrick, and explained to him the judgments of previous authors.' The basis, then, of Irish law was compensation. If any wrong is done, and not atoned for, the sufferer, or his tribe, has a 'right of distress' against the criminal or his tribe. This is exactly like the New Zealand *utu*, the only difference being that, whereas the Maoris merely carried out a sort of lynch-law descending to particulars, the Irish plan was according to set rule. The seizure, whatever it was, was lodged in the public pound; and both parties went off to the *brehon* (judge) to get the case settled by him. Thus, from being mere tit for tat, 'the law of distress' had become a means of reminding chief and clansman alike that wrong could not be done with impunity. 'You knocked my son down last week, and otherwise maltreated him: I lift these cows of yours, not to make up for his broken arm and bruised head, but to teach you that the man who breaks arms and heads must come to justice, and give satisfaction.' If the defendant did not appear within a fixed time, the 'distress' (usually cows) was 'sold to pay expenses.' Of course, the judge got some, and the rest was handed over to the plaintiff. If he came, the *brehon* heard the case, examined the witnesses, and pronounced a sentence, from which there does not seem to have been any systematic appeal, but to the general justice of which, even in his troubled times, the poet Spenser—no friend to things Irish—bears unwilling testimony. The thing that surprised him most was, that the decisions of these unarmoured judges, sitting without pomp on a green *rath*, should have been respected as they were by the disputants. Naturally, there were features of its own in this Irish law-system. If the defendant was a commoner, it was enough to give proper notice before proceeding to detain; but a chieftain must not only have the notice, but also be 'fasted upon'—that is, the plaintiff must sit at his doors for a certain time without food—then, if redress had not been granted, he took a law-agent and witnesses, and seized his 'distress.' They had the same custom in Hindustan. A man used to sit fasting at his debtor's door, frightening him into paying, for fear the creditor should die, and pollute the house. Troops have in this way constantly gathered round the rajah's door, 'sitting' for arrears of pay; and the plan has sometimes been tried on English governors, with a view to getting rid of unpopular taxes. Well, after the 'distress' had been seized, it was in many cases liable to a 'stay,' longer or shorter, according to fixed rules, during which time it remained in the debtor's hand, the creditor

having a lien upon it. In other cases, the distress was 'immediate,' and the property seized was at once taken off to the pound. It is in the nice discrimination between things which ought and things which ought not to be seized at once, that evidence comes out of such a high state of civilisation in this thoroughly un-Romanised country, as must delight Mr Walker Wilkins's heart. He asks (in the *Fortnightly Review*), 'Were the ancient Britons savages?' and shews that, if our grandfathers erred by assigning too much importance to Druidic culture, we have got into the opposite error of unfairly undervaluing our forefathers. Had he looked across St George's Channel, he would have seen a people who had chess-boards, and lap-dogs, and water-mills (of which he rightly says the old Celts taught the Romans the use), and looking-glasses, and all kinds of weaver's implements, and roads of three kinds, repaired three times a year. They have public physicians; public 'hosts,' appointed to entertain strangers arriving by sea; public resting-places for travellers. One class of chiefs has the care of 'the ever-full caldron, which is bound always to contain the haunch for the king, bishop, or literary doctor; the leg for the young chief, a steak for a queen, a brisket for a king opposed in his government;' and so on. Then, of course, cows may be distrained at once. You probably don't take all the man has. But his chess-board, his harp, his raiment for festivals have a 'stay'; they are necessities of which he is not to be hastily deprived. So is his wife's lap-dogs; and so, again, are his children's toys. This considerateness is a very remarkable feature in those old Irish laws; it is so utterly unlike the hardness of the Roman system, or the rudeness of the Salic and other German codes.

If children neglect the charge of their old parents, the inheritance passes to those who do what they ought to have done. For the sick there is to be provided a proper house, 'not a common cabin, dirty and snail-besmeared; but a house with four doors, and with water running across the middle of it.' The old Irish seem to have judged rightly, that in that damp climate it is peculiarly needful to have one's dwelling properly wind-swept. Tara, the old Teamhair, where the *Senchus* was put into its present shape, was chosen as the summer palace of the Over-king, because of the pleasant lightness of its air. 'The patient, so housed, has (besides the public doctor) proper bedding, plaids, suitable food, and, above all, a watcher, to tend him, and to take heed that dogs, and fools, and Scotos are not let in near him.' So that the plan of village hospitals, just now so popular, was pretty well realised in Ireland ever so long before the coming of St Patrick. In the same spirit of kindness are the provisions for the care of mad people. 'Ten cows is the fine for neglecting to maintain a mad woman; five cows for leaving uncared for the fool who has the power of amusing.' Much the same feeling must have prompted the enactments with regard to slander and to satirising. Both are 'detrainable' offences, put in the same catalogue as 'scaring the timid, stripping the slain in battle, disturbing the meeting-hill, quarrelling in the rath (hill-fort),' 'To give a nick-name; to repeat satire, whether for a visible or for a concealed blemish, there is honour-price, with three days' stay for it.' Satirising the dead, and false boasting of a dead woman, are equally punishable. Of course, the satire in these cases is

unlawful; for to make 'lawful satire' was one of the chief employments of the poets; and drollery of all kinds seems to have been as much appreciated among these early Celts as it is among their descendants. By the way, the whole origin of the law of distress is referred to a case of what these old laws call 'satire.' You must not imagine the Senchus Mor is such dry reading as Coke upon Lyttleton or Stephen's Statutes at large. It is, like the time when it was written, full of wild fancy. Now we read about the early, pre-Christian judges—how on Sen Mac Aige's cheek appeared a blotch whenever he gave false judgment; how Fithel never judged wrongly because he had 'the truth of nature'; and how Moran's collar tightened round his neck, to warn him when he was about to decide unjustly.

On turning over a page or two, we find a classification of 'poets,' according to their capabilities: 'He is a chief poet who can compose a quatrain off-hand, and knows the artistic rules of poetry, and the genealogies of the men of Erin.' The Ollamh has seven times fifty stories; the Anrath, thrice fifty and half fifty; and so on—and then follow catalogues of stories of cattle-liftings, courtships, battles, elopements, and tragic adventures. But we said that there is a story connected with this law of 'distress,' of which the only volume that the 'Brehon Law Commissioners' have as yet given us, chiefly treats. The story is worth telling; it gives such a picture of the times. Fergus Ferglethach (the Grazier—so called, because of his many war-horses) went one day down to the sea, and lay on the shore, and slept; and while the king slept, the fairies carried him down to the water. He awoke, however, the moment his feet touched the waves; whereupon, he caught three of the fairies, one in each hand, and one between his arms and breast; and he made them tell him how to pass under loughs and pools of water. So they told him; warning him at the same time not to go under Lough Rudhraidhe, which was in his own country. Then one of the fairies gave him his hood; and they put herbs in his ears, so that he could pass even under seas. But one day as Fergus was driving with Muena, his charioteer, by the forbidden lough, he was moved to pass under it; and therein he beheld the Hmidris, a frightful sea-monster, at sight of which his mouth became stretched from ear to ear, and would by no means go into shape again; and he fled out in fear, and cried to Muena: 'Of what aspect am I?' And the charioteer replied: 'Thy aspect is not good; howbeit, a little sleep will make thee well again.' So Fergus went to sleep in his chariot. Now, it was a law among the men of Erin that no man with a blemish could be king over any tribe. Therefore, while Fergus slept, Muena went to the wise men of Ulster, and said: 'Look to it: whom will you choose as king in his room?' But because all loved Fergus, therefore the wise men did on this wise: they cleared the king's house, so that there might be in it no fools, nor idiots, nor persons who would reproach him with his blemish; and they ordered that his bath should always be set with muddy water. So for three years, Fergus knew not what had happened. But one day it came to pass that his bondmaid made a bath for him, and she seemed to him to make it so slowly, that he struck her; whereupon she turned and reproached him with his blemish. So he slew her with a blow of his sword, being maddened at her

words; and straightway rushing out in wild bitterness of soul, he plunged into Lough Rudhraidhe, where he stayed a day and a night; and the lough bubbled and seethed as he fought with the monster, and the noise of the battle spread far inland. And as his men were watching, lo! the king appeared on the surface, holding the head of the monster in his hand, and he cried: 'I am the survivor; O men of Ulster!'; and then, fainting with his wounds, he sunk back, and was never seen more; but the lough was red with their blood for a month after. From this marvellous adventure, follows (in the strange way in which law and romance are intermingled in the old Senchus) a most complicated lawsuit respecting compensation for the slain servant. This is the way in which are mixed up together law and legend, curious hints as to old manners, and illustrations of the 'tribal right' and 'tribal responsibility,' so contrary to English feelings, yet, as Mr Mill said, so ingrained in the minds of half the rest of the world; our ignoring of which has caused all our New Zealand wars, and many of our troubles in India. M. de Lasteyrie, who has given a long notice of this Brehon law in the *Revue des Deux Mondes*—a little strange that a French review should be the first to notice a work so full of interest for us in England—tells us roundly that our not making allowance for the Brehonish notions about law and land still prevalent in Ireland, is the great cause of Irish discontent. He calls on our statesmen in general, and on our Irish secretaries and lords-lieutenant in particular, to study this volume and its successors, with a view of learning how Irish people felt on certain much-debated questions.

Whatever may be the value of this advice, it is certainly very interesting for people in general to know something about the state of one branch of our Celtic forefathers in times long antecedent to Christianity and the influence of 'Roman civilisation.' From what we read of Ireland, we can form a pretty good guess as to what was the 'prehistoric' state of England—barbarism and 'civility' strangely mingled—a state of society singularly like that of the so-called 'heroic age' of Greece, only with much more of courtesy, and a respect for letters and literary men which has never been paralleled out of China. It would be easy to multiply contrasts: such polish that care is taken that the debtor is not stripped of his 'toilet requisites'—such regard for age, that a son's contract without his father is set aside if the father is alive—such tribal 'solidarity,' that a kinsman's crime may be visited on his father's, mother's, or foster-father's tribe. It must have been a strange civilisation, doubtless much more perfectly elaborated in Ireland than here in England, because of the freedom from foreign war and foreign admixture. 'Rome' began to tell upon Britain before we had well 'codified' our laws, and we are beginning to find out that Rome's influence on these early peoples was certainly not for good. Well, there it grew up, like the Mexican or Peruvian, a home-grown civilisation, very good for its own purposes, but unable to stand the fierce assaults of Norseman and Norman. So it grew up; and here is the record of what it was—the manuscripts dating from the fourteenth century, and clearly *bond-fide* copies of the originals; for the text is in the oldest Erse, which had become a dead language by the eighth century, when the first gloss was written; and that gloss itself required, four hundred

years after, a second commentary to make it intelligible. Not many will care to wade through the volume put forth by the commissioners. With the Irish on one side, and the stiff translation opposite to it, it certainly looks forbidding; but for all that, everybody should know what the Brehon law is, and how it got its present form, and how it proves two things: first, by the very fact of its existence, that St Patrick was a far better and more sensible missionary than almost any such—a man whose example we might find it good to follow in China, for instance, or in India; next, that, whatever the natives may have become after, during their long and desperate struggle for life and land, they certainly were very far from being 'savages' when first, in 430 or thereabouts, St Patrick began his course of peaceful and conciliatory evangelising.

DR MUSPRATT'S PATIENTS.

IN SEVEN CHAPTERS.—CHAPTER III.

HE was a very small, lean man, dressed in clothes too large for him—a cast suit of the doctor's apparently. He was dark-skinned, with ugly, compressed features, and a villainous low forehead. He wore no wig, and his hair being closely cropped all over his head, looked like a tight-fitting dust-coloured skull-cap. But for a lively glitter now and then in his little black eyes, restless under his thick, straggling, scowling brows, his face would have been wholly without intelligence: dull, and doltish, and animal, as though he pertained to a lower class of creation.

'How dare you intrude here?' demanded the doctor fiercely.

'Sure it was very lonely sittin' there by myself; and I heard his honour talkin', and sure I knew his honour well.' The man spoke with a strong Irish accent: his voice was very harsh and hoarse, and he accompanied his speech with unsteady gestures.

'You know me?' said Mr Selwyn with surprise.

'Sure your honour's never forgotten Thady Cassidy;' the man touched his forelock as he spoke. 'And haven't I seen your honour, Mr Selwyn, sir, many's the time, at my Lord March's stables, at Newmarket. And they said I'd played foul with the drink of the roan mare, sir, and lost his lordship the race. Don't believe them blackguards and their dirty lie, sir. Didn't they get me turned away from my place; and haven't they tried hard to ruin a poor lad that never did harm to livin' creature? I niver touched the mare's drink, your honour—Heaven's my witness. Sure your honour isn't one to believe their lies, and help take away a poor boy's character. There was niver a boy in them stables that worked harder than Thady Cassidy. Sure your honour's the man that knows it well.'

'You're drunk, sirrah,' cried Mr Muspratt, starting up.

'Don't say the word, doctor, darlin', the man urged, putting his hands together beseechingly. 'It was the poorest drop as ever man took. One

of them vials broke in the other room. Sure and how did I know how it broke? 'Twas the devil inside it, like enough. A big ugly snake, he was, that wanted to turn round, may be, and niver gave a thought to the glass at his side.' To think of wastin' good usquebaugh upon such a creature as that! The ugly thief that had got drunk with it too; and couldn't move for the drink! I but just put my lips to it—as good usquebaugh as ever I tasted. The more's the pity to waste it upon such a thief of the world as that. And you're not sayin' I'm drunk, doctor, darlin': don't say the word now, don't. It's myself that knows it's not the true thing, anyhow.'

'You drunken scoundrel; it was only yesterday you did the same thing: you're for ever breaking the vials—you'll ruin my collection.'

'How was I to know it wasn't oil or water, if I didn't put my lips to it? Sure it's waste of good liquors to give it them varmin in the bottles; and it's temptin' a poor boy to leave him alone in such company: what's he to do, but to get lookin' here, and feelin' there, and tastin' t'other. Is it right them creatures should have all the drinkin', and a tidy boy, like myself, all the lookin' on? No—divil a bit—it isn't fair, at all, at all.'

'The fellow likes body in his drink, apparently,' said Mr Selwyn.

'Ah, then, and it's his honour, Mr Selwyn, will give me the character.'

'Not I, fellow. I'm not clear, but I think I heard something of you at Newmarket, though I did not, I own, recognise you for the same man when I saw you on Monday last. "The biggest scoundrel in the stables"—was that what they said of you at Newmarket, Mr Cassidy?'

'Sure, your honour, no; that was Tim Mahony, or may be Pat Delane. Sure your honour won't believe that of a poor Connaught boy—a sober, honest, hard-workin' boy like myself.'

'I'll be no more troubled with you; I've done with you,' cried the doctor. 'You shall quit my house; you shall go into the streets—where you will.'

The man shook his head with a cunning leer. 'No, doctor, darlin', I'll never leave ye. Could you think it of me? Why, what an ungrateful thief I'd be! Didn't you help me in my trouble? Sure and I thought there was an end of Thady Cassidy for ever, when that blackguard tied the rope round my neck; but your honour was one too many for him. And will I leave your honour? Niver's the word. Your honour would not wish it. It's your faithful servant I'll be, for ever.'

'I don't want your service, scoundrel.'

'Ah! but your honour hasn't the choice;' and the man's face was lit up with a sly grin. 'Why did you bring me back to life, without a word as to whether I'd like it or no, if it wasn't to care for and preserve me afterwards? Sure I'll never leave your honour: how could I be so ungrateful? Hasn't your honour been a mother to me, and given me life a second time? Faith, 'twas more than my mother could do, was that same: she niver was sober enough—rest her soul—poor woman. And would your honour now be for desertin' me? Sure your honour couldn't think of it, and Thady Cassidy isn't the boy that would be lettin' your

honour do it, if you wanted it niver so. You'll have a faithful servant for ever by your side, doctor, darlin', henceforth, anyhow. Thady Cassidy will niver leave ye.'

Mr Muspratt moved about in his chair uneasily.

'Upon what charge were you condemned, Mr Cassidy?' 'Twas for no trespass against my Lord March, I trust?' said Mr Selwyn.

'Would I hurt his lordship? Does your honour think it of me? Sure it's months since I left his lordship's, and came to London. And thin—the lying spalpeens—they said I stole a sheep.'

'And you didn't?'

'Save your honour, 'twas but a lamb! Why would I be stealin' a sheep, I'd like to know?' 'Twas crossin' Tothill Fields, I was, and I heard the poor thing bleatin'. How could I bear to hear it? So I took the creature in my arms, to help find its dam for it; but I couldn't. And thin I brought it home wid me; and them Bow Street scoundrels came after me, and they said I stole it, the dirty vagabonds; and they tried me for it, and found me guilty, bad-luck to them. Faith, it's like a dream to think of now! 'Twas hard upon a poor boy they were, that had done no harm at all, at all. And thin—to think of it!—I stepped into the cart—there was others there beside me; mighty easy they took it too, as though hangin' were no such great matter after all, and smart they were, with ribbon to tie their hair, and powder on it, and plated buckles to their shoes, and a ruffle to their wrists; and the chaplain came too, a soft-spoken, comfortin' man he was, only I couldn't hear him well for the rumblin' of the cart, and the roarin' of the crowd, and 'twas bad I felt; and oh, Thady Cassidy, I said, poor boy, it's over wid ye now anyhow! And my hand trembled so, I niver saw the like; do what I would, I couldn't hinder it. And thin a purty girl—bless her sweet face—gave me a posey to hold in one hand, and some one pushed a Prayer-book into the other, and thin they bade me God-speed! We stopped on the way, to drink a sip from St Giles's bowl; but I hadn't much heart for the drink—it niver went so much 'gainst my stomach. But the chaplain—he was a civil gentleman—he took my share. Sure 'twas very welcome he was. Such a wet mornin' too, and the long journey it was, and thin I thought my turn would niver come; and cold I was wid my hands tied together in the small of my back, waitin' for the cart to go from under me.—What thin? Sure I can't tell your honour now. There was lighted candles and sparks, and bright red clouds dancin' before my eyes; and thin there was pins and needles all over me, and the doctor pourin' hot water on me, and blisterin' the nape of my neck, and rubbin' me with hot flannels, and lettin' blood from my arm; and O the trouble I gave him, and the pain it was to me! And will I ever forget it? and will I ever quit him? Sure it's Thady Cassidy is his faithful servant for ever.'

The doctor groaned. Mr Selwyn smiled.

'Are you satisfied?' asked Mr Muspratt.

'Really, a very charming story. Our friend has quite a genius for narrative.'

'Will you take him for your body-servant, Mr Selwyn?' asked the doctor grimly.

'Thank you—no. I couldn't think of depriving your collection of so singular a specimen.'

'Of what use is he to me now?' demanded the surgeon with a moan.

'Indeed, I hardly know. In spite of the act of parliament, you can hardly dissect a living man, I presume.'

'It would afford much curious study, however,' observed Mr Muspratt meditatively.

'You've been indiscreet, I fear, my dear sir; you have been really quite thoughtless. If it was indeed necessary to preserve our criminal friend, would it not have done to have had him stuffed, or to have enclosed him in a spirit-vial? In either of those forms, I think he would have proved almost as engaging as at present. Charmed as I am with his society now, I have no doubt my friends would give me credit for preferring him as I saw him on Monday last, after Mr Ketch had operated upon him. I did not then know how very clumsily and incompletely that worthy had performed his functions. About the defunct, there is ever a charm and an interest—not to mention an exquisite repose of manner. Would we could say as much for the living!'

Mr Cassidy glanced from the doctor to his visitor; it was only in part he comprehended the bearing of Mr Selwyn's observations. In a puzzled way, he rubbed his hand over his closely clipped head.

'Would he have me stuffed, thin? Faith, 'twould be hard upon the poor boy. Am I a bird or a beast, thin, that I'm to be stuffed?' he asked.

'A beast, Mr Cassidy, decidedly, if you will insist upon my opinion,' said Mr Selwyn.

'Put me in a bottle thin, like them snakes and monsters on the shelf yonder, and fill me up with usquebaugh, and leave the cork out, that I may take a drink whin I'm thirsty—I'll not complain so much about that; but for stuffin' me, sure it's dry dull work at the best.'

Mr Muspratt rose. 'Enough of this. Leave the room, sirrah. I forbade your entering this apartment.'

'Sure I'll go, doctor, darlin', said Mr Cassidy; 'it's your faithful servant you're speakin' to. It was no offence I meant. I'll be quiet as a lamb'—

'As the lamb you stole,' suggested Mr Selwyn.

'Ah! your honour knows that same was a bleatin' beast, and the trouble it brought me to, bad-luck to it.—I'm gone, doctor, darlin'—I'm gone.' And Mr Cassidy withdrew.

'Are you satisfied, Mr Selwyn?' asked the doctor.

'Perfectly,' and Mr Selwyn resumed his hat, and cane, and gloves, and prepared to depart. 'How can I ever repay you for the entertainment you have afforded me?' he asked as he stood at the door.

'By never coming near me again,' the doctor answered quickly.

'My dear sir, the price is far beyond my means. You overrate my powers of forbearance; you ask me to do that which is clearly impossible.'

'I need have patience!' exclaimed Mr Muspratt.

'Of course, patience—a virtue especially necessary to medical men.' He pronounced the word *patients*. Mr George Selwyn was the maker of many jokes, good and bad.

He tripped lightly down Mr Muspratt's doorstep, and took his seat in his sedan-chair. 'To Mr Walpole's, Arlington Street,' he said, and he was carried off.

CHAPTER IV.

It was hard upon Mr Muspratt. Why should his reclusive, studious life be thus disturbed and invaded? First, by this terrible Irishman, whom he had restored to life, and who, therefore, with droll logic, insisted upon his right thenceforward—for ever—to sustenance at the hands of his benefactor; and secondly, by Mr George Selwyn, whose gay presence seemed so strangely out of place in the doctor's dusty, dreary rooms in Great Newport Street; whose quips and levities found fitting echoes at the clubs and chocolate-houses, the drums of women of quality, and the haunts of fashion; but in Mr Muspratt's museum, amid the curiosities of comparative anatomy, had an effect sufficiently incongruous. And Mr Selwyn returned to Great Newport Street again and again. His sedan-chair was often at the doctor's door. He was charmed; he had found a man upon whom his jokes fell utterly dead, who never even affected to understand them—but ignored them, stepped over without seeing, and passed them by. It was a new sensation to Mr Selwyn. He began to weary of the applauded jest, especially as he knew by experience the loudest applause came generally from the man who the least comprehended what he applauded. To the conventional jester, applause is as the air he breathes: withhold your laughter, and bitter chagrin possesses him wholly. But Mr Selwyn flattered himself he was not a conventional jester. His sallies would be as happy, he fancied, in the solitude of a dungeon as in the most crowded *salon*. His pleasantries were for his own pleasure. Bystanders might laugh if they listed; it was nothing to him. He could dispense with their laughter as with their presence. So, for the moment, he amused himself in the society of Mr Muspratt; and chatted and bantered after his usual serious facetious fashion.

Strange that Mr Muspratt should tolerate such a visitor. Was the doctor not often tempted to deny himself, or to lead Mr Selwyn, instantly on his arrival, back to his sedan-chair, bidding him come no more to Great Newport Street? The doctor was not a meek man in general. He was dreamy, abstracted, absorbed, yet he evinced at times a studious man's irascibility. He bore with Mr Selwyn, however: not much comprehending him, regarding him with a sort of half-scornful amazement, as a specimen of a kind of creature he had not met with before: not valuable, you understand, but new, and therefore worth pinning on to a cork, as it were, and contemplating now and then at leisure moments, with a view to classification and determination of nature and habits. It is possible, too, that there lingered about the doctor a sort of unconscious reverence for Mr Selwyn's social position. Medical science had not long taken rank as a great thing; the world had only recently agreed to regard the faculty with favour. The doctor of the period had only of late date shaken himself free of degrading connection with the barber, the quack, the astrologer. It might be that Mr Muspratt, though sturdy and steadfast enough as to other matters, and not especially nice as to what he said, or to whom he said it, hesitated about openly affronting so grand a gentleman as Mr Selwyn—the associate of the aristocracy, the intimate friend of the great, the member of parliament for the doctor's native city of Gloucester, and a place-holder under government. To deal with him

simply and curtly was one thing, but to shew him to the door, and bid him begone about his business, was another and a different—rather more than the doctor was prepared to undertake, in short. For these mixed reasons, though he withheld his vote, and stoutly outpoked his objection to place-holding, and would rather have been without such visits, Mr Muspratt endured the incursions of Mr George Selwyn.

A greater source of discomfort and uneasiness to Mr Muspratt arose from the conduct of his patient, Mr Cassidy. This man had firmly planted himself in the doctor's household; all efforts to outroot him were in vain. He proclaimed himself Mr Muspratt's servant for life, and maintained that no month's warning, or notice to quit, was applicable to his case. The doctor having given him life, was bound to give him wherewithal to sustain that life. In return, he was willing to render such service as he could. But by this feudal sort of arrangement, the doctor was a positive loser. Not only were Mr Cassidy's services altogether superfluous and valueless, but his conduct was ruinously detrimental to Mr Muspratt's interests. Mr Cassidy's partiality for ardent spirits amounted to an absolute passion; he was seldom sober; whatever he laid hands upon, he as certainly broke; his dealings with the doctor's museum and collections were of the most desperate character; his inability to discriminate between spirits of wine and usquebaugh betrayed him on the one hand into a continuous state of intoxication, and on the other, into committing the most ruthless ravages upon his patron's vials. Then a cunning suspicion had taken hold of him; he fancied that the doctor in some way contemplated getting the better of and betraying him. He conceived there was an intention to evade his claim for support, and to turn him adrift at the first convenient opportunity. He bestirred himself, therefore, to counteract and defeat these supposititious designs. He kept unceasing watch upon Mr Muspratt and his movements. When the doctor left the house, he was followed by a sort of uncomely shadow in the form of his faithful servant, Thady Cassidy, armed with a bludgeon, and looking uncommonly like a footpad, or at the best, a bailiff. While attending to his patients at St Bartholomew's, or lecturing the students, the doctor's servant was waiting for him at the door of the hospital, looking eagerly for his egress again. In his own house, Mr Muspratt's tormentor was ever at his elbow, leering at and nodding to him, by way of assuring him that any attempt to escape surveillance would be utterly vain. Of course a word spoken to the officers of justice would have consigned Mr Cassidy to Newgate and the sharp mercies of Tyburn Tree, again; but Mr Muspratt could not bring himself to adopt such a course, even if he was quite aware, which was doubtful, that so speedy and effectual a remedial measure was within his reach. Meanwhile, it must be said of him, that, contemplating his servant, and writhing as he was apt to do under the affliction of his presence, Mr Muspratt was apt to fidget about with his lancets a good deal, as though beset sometimes with sore vivisectional temptations in regard to Mr Cassidy.

But the doctor had his occupations and distractions. He had mounted a hobbyhorse, and was taking a good gallop upon it. His hobbyhorse was of a therapeutical character, so to speak; was in keeping with its rider's professional position.

Mr Muspratt was studying strangulation as a disease; its diagnosis, treatment, and cure. His success in the case of Mr Cassidy (its results had been so inconvenient) had been almost enough to deter him from the further prosecution of his inquiries. But Mr Muspratt was possessed by an insatiable hunger and thirst after knowledge. He was prepared, if need was, to offer up his domestic peace and comfort upon the altar of science. He sought other patients who had suffered as Mr Cassidy had suffered—there was no lack of them in those days. Justice then sat with a bundle of halters in her lap, and dispensed them liberally to the culprits brought before her. Hardly a morning passed but a cart was driven away from Newgate, and a wretched group of victims rode backwards up Holborn Hill, 'to dance the Paddington frisk,' as the phrase was, or 'to die like a trooper's horse,' that is, with their shoes on their feet, at Tyburn Tree. They rode backwards, as some held, to increase the ignominy of their punishment; but perhaps it was for a more merciful reason: to conceal from them up to the last moment the view of the clumsy structure—the three posts driven into the ground, with three transverse beams laid over them—the 'Three-legged Mare,' upon which they were to suffer. Let the curious in such matters turn to Hogarth's plate of 'Tom Idle going to Execution' for an idea of London's way of dealing with its criminal classes a century ago.

Mr Muspratt was now constantly at Tyburn in the early mornings. The law, its own particular demands satisfied, affected an interest in medicine. The strangled malefactor was handed over to Surgeons' Hall, in the Old Bailey, by virtue of a special act of parliament. Surgeons' Hall was thus furnished with more 'subjects' than it well knew what to do with. At Surgeons' Hall, our friend Vicesimus Muspratt was an influential personage. The expression of a wish, and a little adroit management on his part, and there was no difficulty about now and then conveying a subject from Tyburn to Great Newport Street, instead of straight to Surgeons' Hall. Of course, the subject eventually found its way to Surgeons' Hall; at anyrate, a subject did. The surgeons were not particular as to identity; for their purposes, one malefactor, or one subject, was as good as another. Subjects were becoming a drug. The resurrection-men were complaining loudly of the falling-off in their trade, and of the legislative interference with the simple dealings of honest men. They looked eagerly out for business. A wink from a medical gentleman was very intelligible to them, and quickly brought about important results. So it happened that while one Thady Cassidy was deemed to have been duly operated upon by the knives and lancets of the profession at Surgeons' Hall, and exposed afterwards, according to custom, to the gaze of a marvelling and slightly horrified multitude, another Thady Cassidy was walking about alive and well, and abominably mischievous, on the premises of Mr Muspratt.

For some time, the doctor did not have such another success. Various attempts at resuscitation upon various subjects proved altogether abortive. The doctor began to despair. Was it all mere accident? he asked himself. He measured Mr Cassidy, and weighed him, and tested his respiratory powers, and the action of his heart. He looked out for subjects corresponding as nearly as possible to the

case of Mr Cassidy. He wanted to arrive at a system—to establish laws, and fix principles. He meditated a treatise upon the Economy of Strangulation; but as yet he found himself deficient in material for such a work.

WINTER'S HARVEST.

Pure and blue is the broad, broad sky—
Cold and hard as a sapphire stone;
The flowers are all of them frozen and black,
And we seem left alone.

Now Summer's toil
Is Winter's spoil,
And the leaves are gathering in.

The poplar's turned to a pillar of gold;
The alder's crimson and dead;
The beech is brazen and glowing;
The sycamore's rusty red.

The glory's gone;
The year fades on;
And the leaves are gathering in.

In the cold and peaceful sunshine,
The dead leaves fill the skies,
Floating, floating, drifting,
Like golden butterflies.

For Summer's toil
Is Winter's spoil;
Time's harvest is gathering in.

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MY CABIN MATES AND BEDFELLOWS:

A SKETCH OF LIFE ON THE COAST OF AFRICA.

I WAS idly sauntering along the only street in Simon's Town one fine day in June, when I met my little, fat, good-humoured friend, Paymaster Pumpkin. He was walking at an enormous pace for the length of his legs, and his round face was redder than ever. He would hardly stop to tell me that H.M.S. *Vesuvius* was ordered off in two hours—provisions for a thousand men—the Kaffirs (scoundrels) had crossed some river (name unpronounceable) with an army of one hundred thousand men, and were on their way to Cape Town, with the murderous intention of breaking every human bone in that fair town, and probably picking them leisurely afterwards. The upshot of all this, as far as I was concerned, was my being appointed to as pretty a model, and as dirty a little craft, as there is in the service, namely, H.M.S. *Pen-gun*. Our armament consisted of four pea-shooters and one Mons Meg; and our orders were to repair to the east coast of Africa, and there pillage, burn, and destroy every floating thing that dared to carry a slave, without permission from Britannia's queen. Of our adventures there, and how we ruled the waves, I am at present going to say nothing. I took up my commission as surgeon of this interesting craft, and we soon after did what Vanderdecken can't do—rounded the Cape.

On first stepping on board the *Pen-gun*, a task which was by no means difficult to a person with legs of even moderate length, my nose—yes, reader, my nose—that interesting portion of my physiognomy, which for months before had inhaled nothing more nauseous than the perfume of a thousand heaths, the odour of a thousand roses, or the delicious steam of Mr Groust's inimitable punch—my nose was assailed by a smell which burst upon my astonished senses like a compound of asafetida, turpentine, Stilton cheese, and dissecting-rooms. As I gasped for breath, the lieutenant in command endeavoured to console me by saying: 'Oh, it's only the cockroaches; you'll get used to it by and by.'

'Only the cockroaches!' repeated I to myself, as I went below to look after my cabin. This last I found to be of the following dimensions—namely, five feet high (I am five feet ten), six feet long, and six feet broad at the top; but, owing to the curve of the vessel's side, only two feet broad at the deck. A cot hung fore and aft along the ship's side; and the remaining furniture consisted of a doll's chest of drawers, beautifully fitted up on top with a contrivance to hold utensils of lavation, and a Lilliputian writing-table on the other; thus diminishing my available space to two square feet, and this too in a break-neck position. My cot, too, was very conveniently placed for receiving the water which trickled freely from my scuttle when the wind blew, and more slowly when the wind didn't; so that every night, very much against my will, I was put under the operations of practical hydropathy. And this was my *sanctum sanctorum*; but had it been clean, or capable of cleaning, I am a philosopher, and would have rejoiced in it; but it was neither; and ugh! it was inhabited.

Being, what is termed in medical parlance, of the nervo-sanguineous temperament, my horror of the loathsome things about me for the first week almost drove me into a fever. I could not sleep at night, or if I fell into an uneasy slumber, I was awakened from fearful dreams, to find some horrid thing creeping or running over my hands or face. When a little boy, I used to be fond of turning up stones in green meadows, to feast my eyes upon the many creeping horrors beneath. I felt now as if I myself were living under a stone. However, after a year's slaver-hunting, I got so used to all these creatures, that I did not mind them a bit. I could crack scorpions, bruise the heads of centipedes, laugh at earwigs, be delighted with ants, eat weevils, admire tarantulas, encourage spiders; and, if a three-inch-long cockroach entered my mouth, with the kind intention of doing duty as a toothpick, bite the brute in two, and while one end ran off, expectorate the other after it. As for mosquitoes, flies, and all the smaller genera, I had long since been thoroughly

inoculated; and they could now bleed me as much as they thought proper, without my being aware of it. It is of the habits of some of these familiar friends I purpose giving a short sketch.

Of the 'gentlemen of England who live at home at ease,' very few, I suspect, would know a cockroach, although they found the animal in their soup—as I have done more than once. Cockroaches are of two principal kinds—the small, nearly an inch long; and the large, nearly two and a half inches. Let the reader fancy to himself a common horse-fly of our own country, half an inch in breadth, and of the length just stated, the body, ending in two forks, which project beyond the wings, the head, furnished with powerful mandibles, and two feelers, nearly four inches long, and the whole body of a dark-brown or gun-barrel colour, and he will have as good an idea as possible of the gigantic cockroach. The legs are of enormous size and strength, taking from fifteen to twenty ants to carry one away, and furnished with bristles, which pierce the skin in their passage over one's face; and this sensation, together with the horrid smell they emit, is generally sufficient to awaken a sleeper of moderate depth. On these legs the animal squats, walking with his elbows spread out, like a practical agriculturist writing an amatory epistle to his lady-love, except when he raises the forepart of his body, which he does at times, in order the more conveniently to stare you in the face. He prefers walking at a slow and respectable pace; but if you threaten him by shaking your fist at him, or using opprobrious terms to him, it is very funny to see how quickly he takes the hint, and hurries off with all his might. What makes him seem more ridiculous is, that he does not appear to take into consideration the comparative length of your legs; he seems impressed with the idea that he can easily run away from you; indeed, I have no doubt he would do so from a greyhound. The creature is possessed of large eyes; and there is a funny expression of conscious guilt and impudence about his angular face which is very amusing; he knows very well that he lives under a ban—that, in fact, existence is a thing he has no business or lawful right with, and consequently he can never look you straight in the face, like an honest fly or moth. The eggs, which are nearly half an inch long, and about one-eighth in breadth, are rounded at the upper edge, and the two sides approach, wedge-like, to form the lower edge, which is sharp and serrated, for attachment to the substance on which they may chance to be deposited. These eggs are attached by one end to the body of the cockroach; and when fully formed, they are placed upon any material which the wisdom of the mother deems fit food for the youthful inmates. This may be either a dress-coat, a cocked-hat, a cork, a biscuit, or a book, in fact, anything softer than stone; and the egg is no sooner laid, than it begins to sink through the substance below it, by an eating or dissolving process, which is probably due to the agency of some free acid; thus, sailors very often

(I may say invariably) have their finest uniform-coats and dress-pants ornamented by numerous little holes, better adapted for purposes of ventilation than embellishment. The interior of the egg is transversely divided into numerous cells, each containing the larvæ of I know not how many infant cockroaches. The egg gives birth in a few weeks to a whole brood of triangular little beetles, which gradually increase till they attain the size of huge oval beetles, striped transversely black and brown, but as yet minus wings. These are usually considered a different species, and called the beetle-cockroach; but having a suspicion of the truth, I one day imprisoned one of these in a crystal tumbler, and by and by had the satisfaction of seeing, first the beetle break his own back, and secondly, a large winged cockroach scramble, with a little difficulty, through the wound, looking rather out of breath from the exertion. On first escaping, he was perfectly white, but in a few hours got photographed down to his own humble brown colour. So much for the appearance of these gentry; now for their character, which may easily be summed up: they are cunning as the fox; greedy as the glutton; impudent as sin; cruel, treacherous, cowardly scoundrels; addicted to drinking; arrant thieves; and not only eat each other, but even devour with avidity their own legs, when they undergo accidental amputation. They are very fond of eating the toe-nails; so fond, indeed, as to render the nail-scissors of no value, and they also profess a penchant for the epidermis—if I may be allowed a professional expression—of the feet and legs; not that they object to the skin of any other part of the body, by no means; they attack the legs merely on a principle of easy come-at-ability.

In no way is their cunning better exhibited than in the cautious and wary manner in which they conduct their attack upon a sleeper. We will suppose you have turned in to your swinging cot, tucked in your toes, and left one arm uncovered, to guard your face. By and by, first a few spies creep slowly up the bulkhead, and have a look at you: if your eyes are open, they slowly retire, trying to look as much at their ease as possible; but if you look round, they run off with such ridiculous haste, and awkward length of steps, as to warrant the assurance that they were up to no good. Pretend, however, to close your eyes, and soon after, one bolder than the rest, walks down the pillow, and stations himself at your cheek, in an attitude of silent and listening meditation. Here he stands for a few seconds, then cautiously lowering one feeler, he tickles your face: if you remain quiescent, the experiment is soon repeated; if you are still quiet, then you are supposed to be asleep, and the work of the night begins. The spy walks off in great haste, and soon returns with the working-party. The hair is now searched for drops of oil; the ear is examined for wax; in sound sleepers, even the mouth undergoes scrutiny; and every exposed part is put under the operation of gentle skinning. Now is the time to start up, and batter the bulkheads with your slipper; you are sure of half an hour's good sport; but what then; the noise made by the brutes running off brings out the rest; and before you are aware, every crevice or corner

vomits forth its thousands, and the bulkheads all around are covered with racing, chasing, fighting, squabbling cockroaches. So numerous, indeed, they are at times, that it would be no exaggeration to say that every square foot contains its dozen. If you are wise, you will let them alone, and go quietly and philosophically to bed, for you may kill hundreds, and hundreds more will come to the funeral-feast. So the sailors say: 'Let them sweat,' and sweat they do, and the least said about that the better. Cockroaches are cannibals, practically and by profession. This can be proved in many ways. They eat the dead bodies of their slain comrades; and if any one of them gets sick or wounded, his companions, with a kindness and consideration which cannot be too highly appreciated, speedily put him out of pain, and, by way of reward for their own trouble, devour him. They have a decided relish for port wine. Seeing a large cockroach one day standing on the top of a bottle of wine, part of which had been recently used, engaged in sipping what still adhered about the mouth, I pinned him to the cork by means of a fine needle. At first, he spun madly round and round on his pivot, but very soon tiring of this exercise, and no doubt giving himself up for lost, he seemed to think he could not do better than drown his misery in the wine-cup, and in fact die drunk. Accordingly, he recommenced the imbibition of the vinous fluid, as coolly as though nothing had occurred to interrupt his enjoyment. I was just thinking of extracting the needle, when another cockroach, who had no doubt observed his helpless condition, and determined to profit by it, crawled up, and attacked him in the rear. The other wheeled about, and stood on the defensive, and a very interesting and exciting fight took place; the attacking party endeavouring to get up behind, and the attacked wheeling round on the needle, in order to keep his front to the foe, and dealing the assailant such powerful blows as to keep him for the time effectually at bay. Round and round the bottle's mouth whirled the couple, fighting with such determination and spirit, that there seemed little likelihood of the fight coming to a speedy termination; and there is no knowing how the battle *would* have been decided, had not other two brave and warlike 'roaches, scenting the battle from afar, suddenly appeared on the field, and taken part against the unhappy wine-bibber. He was now simultaneously attacked in front and rear, and very soon his struggles were over. His wings were rent in ribbons; then one leg, then another, was torn off; and he was in a fair way to be eaten alive, had I not at that instant placed the bottle gently in a basin of water, and pouring a tumbler of the same fluid over them, drowned the whole three, and thus ended the unequal and unnatural contest.

These creatures seem to suffer from a state of chronic thirst; they are continually going and returning from the wash-hand basin, and very careful they are, too, not to tumble in. They watch, sailor-like, the motion of the vessel; when the water flows towards them, they take a few sips, and then wait cautiously while it recedes and returns. Yet, for all this caution, accidents do happen, and every morning you are certain to find from thirty to forty drowned in the basin during the night. This forms one of the many methods of catching them. I will only mention two other methods in common use. A pickle-bottle, containing a little

sugar and water, is placed in the cabin; the animals crawl in, but are unable to get out until the bottle is nearly full, when a few manage to escape, after the manner of the fox in the fable of the 'Fox and Goat in the Well'; and if those who thus escape have previously promised to pull their friends out by the long feelers, they very unfeelingly decline, and walk away as quickly as possible, sadder and wiser 'roaches. When the bottle is at length filled, it finds its way overboard. Another method is adopted in some ships—the boys have to muster every morning with a certain number of cockroaches; if they have more, they are rewarded; if less, punished. I have heard of vessels being fumigated, or sunk in harbour; but in these cases the number of dead cockroaches, fast decaying in tropical weather, generally causes fever to break out in the ship; so that, if a vessel once gets over-run with them, nothing short of dry-docking and taking to pieces does any good.

They are decided drunkards. I think they prefer brandy; but they are not difficult to please, and generally prefer whatever *you* prefer. When a cockroach gets drunk, he becomes very lively indeed, runs about, flaps his wings, and tries to fly—a mode of progression which, except in very hot weather, they are unable to perform. Again and again he returns to the liquor, till at last he falls asleep, and by and by awakes, and, no doubt filled with remorse at having fallen a victim to so human a weakness, rushes frantically away, and drowns himself.

But although the cockroach is, in general, the blood-thirsty and vindictive being that I have described, still he is by no means unsociable, and *has* his times and seasons of merriment and recreation. On these occasions, the 'roaches emerge from their hiding-places in thousands at some preconceived signal, perform a reel, or rather an acute-angled, spherically-trigonometrical quadrille, to the music of their own buzz, and evidently to their own intense satisfaction. This queer dance occupies two or three minutes, after which the patter of their little feet is heard no more, the buzz and the bum-m-m are hushed; they have gone to their respective places of abode, and are seen no more for that time. This usually takes place on the evening of a very hot day—a day when pitch has boiled on deck, and the thermometer below has stood persistently above ninety degrees. When the lamps are lit in the ward-room, and the officers have gathered round the table for a rubber at whist or a social glass, then is heard all about and around you a noise like the rushing of many waters, or the wind among the forest-trees; and on looking up, you find the bulkheads black, or rather brown, with the rustling wretches, while dozens go whirling past you, alight on your head, or fly right in your face, and at the same time the aroma which fills the room is too horrible to be described. This is a cockroaches' ball, which, if not so brilliant as the butterfly ball of my early recollections, I have no doubt is considered by themselves as very amusing and highly respectable.

The reader will readily admit that the character of 'greedy as gluttons' has not been misapplied when I state that it would be an easier task to tell what they did *not* eat, than what they *did*. While they partake largely of the common articles of diet in the ship's stores, they also rather like books, clothes, boots, soap, and corks. They are also partial to lucifer-matches, and consider the edges

of razors and amputating-knives delicate eating.* As to drink, these animals exhibit the same impartiality. Probably they *do* prefer wines and spirits, but they can nevertheless drink beer with relish, and even suit themselves to circumstances, and imbibe water, either pure or mixed with soap; and if they cannot obtain wine, they find in ink a very good substitute. Cockroaches, I should think, were by no means exempt from the numerous ills that flesh is heir to, and must at times, like human epicures and gourmands, suffer dreadfully from rheums and dyspepsia; for to what else can I attribute their extreme partiality for medicine. 'Every man his own doctor,' seems to be *their* motto; and they appear to attach no other meaning to the word 'surgeon' than simply something to eat: I speak by experience. As to physic, nothing seems to come wrong to them. If patients on shore were only half as fond of pills and draughts, I, for one, should never go to sea. As to powders, they invariably roll themselves bodily in them; and tinctures they sip all day long. Blistering-plaster seems a patent nostrum, which they take internally, for they managed to use up two ounces of mine in as many weeks, and I have no doubt it warned their insides. I one night left a dozen blue pills carelessly exposed on my little table; soon after I had turned in, I observed the box surrounded by them, and being too lazy to get up, I had to submit to see my pills walked off with in a very few minutes by a dozen 'roaches, each one carrying a pill. I politely informed them that there was more than a dose for an adult cockroach in each of these pills; but I rather think they did not heed the caution, for next morning, the deck of my little cabin was strewn with the dead and dying, some exhibiting all the symptoms of an advanced stage of mercurial salivation, and some still swallowing little morsels of pill, no doubt on the principle of *similia similibus curantur*, from which I argue that cockroaches are homeocephathists, although, had they adopted the *other* homeocephathic theory first, and taken infinitesimal doses, they would then have experienced the full benefit of that noble doctrine; and the medicine, while doing them no good, would have done them just as little harm. That cockroaches are cowards, no one, I suppose, will think of disputing. I have seen a gigantic cockroach run away from an ant, under the impression, I suppose, that the little creature meant to swallow him alive.

The smaller-sized cockroach differs merely in size and some unimportant particulars from that just described, and possesses in a less degree all the vices of his big brother. They, too, are cannibals; but they prefer to prey upon the large one, which they kill and eat when they find wounded. For example, one very hot day, I was enjoying the luxury of a bath at noon, when a large cockroach alighted in great hurry on the edge of my bath, and began to drink, without saying: 'By your leave,' or 'Good-morning to you.' Now, being by nature of a kind disposition, I certainly should never have refused to allow the creature to quench his thirst in my bath—although I would undoubtedly have killed him afterwards—had he not, in his hurried flight over me, touched my shoulder

with his filthy wings, and left thereon his peculiar perfume. This very naturally incensed me, so, seizing a book, with an interjectional remark on his confounded impudence, I struck him to the deck, when he lay to all appearance dead; so, at least, thought a wily little 'roach of the small genus, that had been watching the whole affair at the mouth of his hole, and determined to seize his gigantic relative, and have a feast at his expense; so, with this praiseworthy intention, the imp marched boldly up to him, pausing just one second, as if to make sure that life was extinct; then, seeing no movement or sign of life evinced by the giant, he very pompously seized him by the fore-leg, and, turning round, commenced dragging his burden towards a hole, no doubt inwardly chuckling at the anticipation of so glorious a supper. Unfortunately for the dwarf's hopes, however, the giant now began to revive from the effects of concussion of the brain, into which state my rough treatment had sent him; and his ideas of his whereabouts being rather confused, at the same time feeling himself moving, he very naturally and instinctively began to help himself to follow, by means of his disengaged extremities. Being as yet unaware of what had happened behind, the heart of the little gentleman in front swelled big with conscious pride and dignity at the thought of what a strong little 'roach he was, and how easily he could drag away his big relative.

But this new and sudden access of strength began presently to astonish the little creature itself, for, aided by the giant's movements, it could now almost run with its burden, and guessing, I suppose, that everything was not as it ought to be, it peeped over its shoulder to see. Fancy, if you can, the terror and affright of the little gentleman on seeing the monster creeping stealthily after it. 'What had it been doing? How madly it had been acting!' Dropping its relative's leg, it turned, and fairly ran, helping itself along with its wings, like a barn-door fowl whose wits have been scared away by fright, and never looked once back till fairly free from its terrible adventure; and I have no doubt it was very glad at having discovered its mistake in time, since otherwise the tables might have been turned, and the supper business reversed.

The spider, however, is the great enemy of the small genus of cockroaches. These spiders are queer little fellows. They do not build a web for a fly-trap, but merely for a house. For the capture of their prey, they have a much more ingenious method than any I have ever seen, a process which displays a marvellous degree of ingenuity and cleverness on the part of the spider, and proves that they are not unacquainted with some of the laws of mechanics. Having determined to treat himself to fresh meat, the wary little thing I forgot to say that the creature, although very small in proportion to the generality of tropical spiders, is rather bigger than our domestic spider, and much stronger) emerges from his house, in a corner of the cabin roof, and, having attached one end of a thread to a beam in the roof, about six inches from the bulkhead, he crawls more than half-way down the bulkhead, and attaching the thread here again goes a little further down, and waits. By and by, some unwary 'roach crawls along, between the second attachment of the thread and the spider; instantly the latter rushes from his station, describes half a circle round his victim, lets go the second attachment of the thread—which has now become

* It is probable that the edges of razors, &c. are destroyed by a sort of acid deposited there by the cockroaches, similar to that which exudes from the egg; however, there is no gainsaying the fact.

entangled about the legs of the 'roach—and, by some peculiar movement, which I do not profess to understand, the cockroach is swung off the bulkhead, and hangs suspended by the feet in mid-air; and very foolish he looks; so at least must think the spider, as he coolly stands on the bulkhead quietly watching the unavailing struggles of the animal which he has so nimbly done for; for Calcraft himself could not have done the thing half so neatly. The spider now regains the beam to which the thread is attached, and, sailor-like, slides down the little rope, and approaches his victim; and first, as its kicking might interfere with the further domestic arrangements of its body, the 'roach is killed, by having a hole eaten out of its head between the eyes. This being accomplished, the next thing is to bring home the butcher-meat; and the manner in which this difficult task is performed is nothing less than wonderful. A thread is attached to the lower part of the body of the 'roach; the spider then 'shins' up its rope with this thread, and attaches it so high that the body is turned upside down; it then hauls on the other thread, turns the body once more, and again attaches the thread; and this process is repeated till the dead cockroach is by degrees hoisted up to the beam, and deposited in a corner near the door of its domicile. But the wisdom of the spider is still further shewn in what is done next. It knows very well—so, at least, it would appear—that its supply of food will soon decay; and being unacquainted with the properties of salt, it proceeds to enclose the body of the 'roach in a glutinous substance of the form of a chrysalis or air-tight case. It is, in fact, hermetically sealed, and in this way serves the spider as food for more than a week. There is at one end a little hole, which is, no doubt, closed up after every meal.

In my cabin, besides the common earwigs, which were not numerous, and were seldom seen, I found there were a goodly number of scorpions, none of which, however, were longer than two inches. I am not aware that they did me any particular damage, further than inspiring me with horror and disgust. It was very unpleasant to put down your hand for a book, and to find a scorpion beneath your fingers—a hard scaly scorpion—and then to hear him crack below your boot, and to be sensible of the horrid odour emitted from his body: these things were not pleasant. Those scorpions which live in ships are of a brown colour, and not dangerous; it is the large green scorpion, so common in the islands of East Africa, which you must be cautious in handling, for children, it is said, frequently die from the effects of this scorpion's sting. But a much more loathsome, and a really dangerous creature is the large green centipede of the tropics. Of these things, the natives themselves have more horror than of any serpent whatever, not excepting the common cobra, and many a tale they have to tell you of people who have been bitten, and have soon after gone raving mad, and so died. They are from six to twelve inches in length, and just below the neck, are armed with a powerful pair of sharp claws, like the nails of a cat, with which they hold on to their victim while they bite; and if once fairly fastened into the flesh, they require to be cut out. While lying at the mouth of the Revooma River, we had taken on board some green wood, and with it many centipedes of a similar colour. One night, about a week afterwards, I had turned in, and had nearly fallen asleep, when I observed a

thing on my curtain—luckily on the outside—which very quickly made me wide awake. It was a horrid centipede, about nine inches long. It appeared to be asleep, and had bent itself in the form of the letter S. I could see its golden-green skin by the light of my lamp, and its wee shiny eyes, that, I suppose, never close, and for the moment I was almost terror-struck. I knew if I moved he would be off, and I might get bitten again—indeed, I never could have slept again in my cabin, had he not been taken. The steward came at my call; and that functionary, by dint of caution and the aid of a pair of forceps, deposited the creature in a bottle of spirits of wine, which stood at hand always ready to receive such specimens. I have it now beside me; and my Scotch landlady, who seems firmly impressed with the idea, that all my diabolical-looking specimens of lizards and various other creeping things are the productions of sundry unhappy patients, remarked concerning my centipede: 'He maun hae had a *sair weame* ye took that ane oot o', doctor.'

But a worse adventure befell an engineer of ours. He was doing duty in the stoke-hole, when one of these loathsome creatures actually crept up under his pantaloons. He was an old sailor, and a cool, and he knew well that if he attempted to kill or knock it off, the claws would be inserted on the instant. Cautiously he rolled down his dress, and spread a handkerchief on his leg a short distance before the centipede, which was moving slowly and hesitatingly upwards. It was a moment of intense excitement, both for those around him as well as for the man himself. Slowly it advanced, once it stopped, then moved on again, and crossed on to the handkerchief, and the engineer was saved; on which he immediately got sick, and I was sent for, heard the story, and received the animal, which I placed beside the other.

More pleasant and amusing companions and cabin mates were the little ants, a whole colony of which lived in almost every available corner of my sanctum. Wonderfully wise they are too, and very strong, and very proud and 'clannish.' Their prey is the large cockroach. If you kill one of these, and place it in the centre of the cabin, parties of ants troop in from every direction—I might say a regiment from each clan; and consequently there is a great deal of fighting and squabbling, and not much is done, except that the cockroach is usually devoured on the spot. If, however, the dead 'roach be placed near some corner where an army of ants are encamped, they soon emerge from the camp in hundreds, down they march in a stream, and proceed forthwith to carry it away. Slowly up the bulkhead moves the huge brute, impelled by the united force of half a thousand, and soon he is conveyed to the top. Here, generally, there is a beam to be crossed, where the whole weight of the giant 'roach has to be sustained by these Lilliputians, with their heads downward; and more difficult still is the rounding of the corner. Very often, the ants here make a most egregious mistake; while hundreds are hauling away at each leg, probably a large number get on top of the 'roach, and begin tugging away with all their might, and consequently their burden tumbles to the deck; but the second time he is taken up, this mistake is never made. These creatures send out regular spies, which return to report when they have found anything worth taking to head-quarters; then the foraging-party goes out, and it is quite

a sight to see the long serpentine line, three or four deep, streaming down the bulkhead and over the deck, and apparently having no end. They never march straight before them; their course is always wavy; and it is all the more strange that those coming up behind should take exactly the same course, so that the real shape of the line of march never changes. Perhaps this is effected by the officer-ants, which you may see, one here, one there, all along the line. By the officer-ants I mean a large-sized ant (nearly double), that walks along by the side of the marching army, like ants in authority. They are black (the common ant being brown), and very important, too, they look, and are no doubt deeply impressed by the responsibility of their situation and duties, running hither and thither—first back, then to the side, and sometimes stopping for an instant with another officer, as if to give or receive orders, and then hurrying away again. These are the ants, I have no doubt, that are in command, and also act as engineers and scouts, for you can always see one or two of them running about, just before the main body comes on—probably placing signal-staffs, and otherwise determining the line of march. They seem very energetic officers too, and allow no obstacle to come in their way, for I have often known the line of march to lie up one side of my white pants, over my knees, and down the other. I sat thus once till a whole army passed over me—a very large army it was too, and mightily tried my patience. When the rear-guard had passed over, I got up and walked away, which must have considerably damaged the calculations of the engineers on their march back.

Of the many species of flies found in my cabin, I shall merely mention two—namely, the silly fly—which is about the size of a pin-head, and furnished with two high wings like the sails of a Chinese junk: they come on board with the bananas, and merit the appellation of *silly* from the curious habit they have of running about with their noses down, as if earnestly looking for something which they cannot find: they run a little way, stop, change their direction, and run a little further, stop again, and so on, *ad infinitum*, in a manner quite amusing to any one who has time to look at and observe them—and the hammer-legged fly (the *Fœnus* of naturalists), which possesses two long hammer-like legs, that stick out behind, and have a very curious appearance. This fly has been accused of biting, but I have never found him guilty. He seems to be continually suffering from a chronic stage of shaking-palsy. Wherever he alights—which is as often on your nose as anywhere else—he stands for a few seconds shaking in a manner which is quite distressing to behold, then flies away, with his two hammers behind him, to alight and shake on some other place—most likely your neighbour's nose. It seems to me, indeed, that flies have a penchant for one's nose. Nothing, too, is more annoying than those same house-flies in warm countries. Suppose one alights on the extreme end of your nasal apparatus, you of course drive him off; he describes two circles in the air, and alights again on the same spot; and this you may do fifty times, and at the fifty-first time, back he comes with a saucy hum-m, and takes his seat again, just as if your nose was made for him to go to roost upon, and for no other purpose at all; so that you are either obliged to sit and smile complacently with a fly on the

end of your proboscis, or, if you are clever and supple-jointed, follow him all round the room till you have killed him; then, probably, back you come with a face beaming with gratification, and sit down to your book or your beer, when bam-m-m! there is your friend again, and you have killed the wrong fly.

In an hospital, nothing is more annoying than these flies; sleep by day is sometimes entirely out of the question, unless the patient covers his face, which is by no means agreeable on a hot day. Mosquitoes, too, are troublesome customers to a stranger, for they seem to prefer the blood of a stranger to that of any one else. The mosquito is a beautiful, feathery-horned midge, with long airy legs, and a body and wings that tremble with their very fineness and grace. The head and shoulders are bent downward at almost a right angle, as if the creature had fallen on its head and broken its back; but, for all its beauty, the mosquito is a hypocritical little scoundrel, who comes singing round you, apparently so much at his ease, and looking so innocent and gentle, that one would imagine butter would hardly melt in his cursed little mouth. He alights upon your skin with such a light and fairy tread, inserts his tube, and sucks your blood so cleverly, that the mischief is done long before you are aware, and he is off again singing as merrily as ever. Probably, if you look about the curtain, you may presently find him gorged with your blood, and hardly able to fly—an unhappy little midge now, very sick, and with all his pride fallen; so you catch and kill him; and serve him right, too.

I should deem this little sketch incomplete if I omitted to say a word about another little member of the company in my crowded cabin—a real friend, too, and a decided enemy to all the rest of the creeping genera about him. I refer to a chameleon I caught in the woods, and tamed. His principal food consisted in cockroaches, which he caught very cleverly, and which, before eating, he used to beat against the deck to soften. He lived in a little stone-jar, which made a very cool house for him, and to which he periodically retired to rest; and very indignant he was, too, if any impudent cockroach, in passing, raised itself on its fore-legs to look in. Instant pursuit was the consequence, and his colour came and went in a dozen different hues as he seized and beat to death the intruder on his privacy. He seemed to know me, and crawled about me. My buttons were his chief attraction; he appeared to think they were made for him to hang on to by the tail; and he would stand for five minutes at a time on my shoulder, darting his tongue in every direction at the unwary flies which came within his reach; and, upon the whole, I found him a very useful little animal, indeed. These lizards are very common as pets among the sailors on the coast of Africa, who keep them in queer places sometimes, as the following conversation, which I heard between two sailors at Cape Town, will shew.

'Look here, Jack, what I've got in my 'bacca-box.'

'What is it?' said Jack—'a devil?'

'No,' said the other as unconcernedly as if it might have been a devil, but wasn't—'no! a chameleon;' which he pronounced kammylion.

'Queer lion that 'ere, too,' replied Jack.

But, indeed, there are few creatures which a sailor will not attempt to tame. Among the

favourites are the monkey, the mongoose, the lizard, and Johanna-cat; I have heard of young crocodiles; and I myself once possessed a fine young hyæna, and a large species of monitor lizard. The first I found rather inconvenient aboard ship, and I was obliged to part with the latter from his vicious propensities.

THE PHENOMENA OF METEORS.

EVERY one who had faith sufficient to believe in the predictions put forth concerning the expected great shower of meteors to appear on the night between the 13th and 14th of November last, will have had no cause to regret placing trust in the philosophers, for the reward was a spectacle such as few of the present generation can have had an opportunity of witnessing. The night in question, in the neighbourhood of London, was, with little exception, brilliantly clear, and the meteoric display was exceedingly well seen.

Meteoric bodies are variously known as aërolites, fire-balls, meteorites, and shooting or falling stars. Their existence has been known from very ancient times, but beyond the fact of their existence, all was conjectural. On many occasions, their appearance served only to terrify. To take one instance. On a certain night in October, in the year 1366, a Portuguese historian says: 'There was in the heavens a movement of stars, such as men never before saw or heard of. At midnight, and for some time after, all the stars moved from the east to the west . . . and afterwards they fell from the sky in such numbers, and so thickly together, that as they descended low in the air, they seemed large and fiery, and the sky and the air seemed to be in flames, and even the earth appeared as if ready to take fire. Those who saw it were filled with great fear and dismay, imagining that the end of the world had come.' Whether these bodies were formed in the atmosphere, or whether they came from beyond, was unknown. In our times, however, they have been shewn to be distinct cosmical bodies, governed, in fact, by laws similar to those that keep in their places the more ponderous bodies of the solar system.

Now, there are certain periods at which very large numbers of those bodies are seen, and it began to be remarked in some of these displays, that, if the apparent paths of the meteors were continued backwards, the greater part of them would meet in one particular point of the sky, or rather in one particular region of small extent; also, that when a meteoric display lasted for any considerable time, this place of departure of the meteors, or 'radiant point' and 'radiant region,' as it has since been called, did not change its place amongst the fixed stars, that is, was not affected by the motion of the earth. These facts were remarked in the great display seen in America by Dr Olmsted on the night of November 12, 1833, and afterwards by Quetelet of Brussels, and Herrick in America, in the case of other meteoric showers; and they have since been amply confirmed. Again, although a few meteors may be seen on almost any clear night, a tendency to periodical return began to be noticed. Thus, there were unusual displays of meteors about November 13, in the years 1799, 1822, 1831, 1832, 1833, 1834, 1837, 1838, and in other years not quoted; the number of meteors seen in some of these years being very great; in others, less.

On August 10, as well as at some other dates, meteors were also observed to be more numerous than usual; and generally this fact came out: that there were certain periods of the year at which meteors are seen in every year in unusual numbers; whilst at certain other periods, they are seen only in particular years, or in years separated by long intervals. The meteoric shower of November 13 was of the latter character.

Professor Newton of America, who has investigated the phenomena of the November meteors, found, by comparing together thirteen historic star-showers, occurring between the years 902 and 1833, that a common shower existed on November 13, which returned with especial intensity about every thirty-three years. We have thus two types. In one case, meteors are seen every year; in the other case, in certain years only. How are these phenomena to be explained? By supposing that there are independent zones or rings of meteors circulating round the sun, but inclined to the earth's path, through which zones the earth in its annual course successively passes. This, it will be remarked, is in harmony with what has been advanced with respect to radiant regions and fixity of radiant regions. But although this explains the return of meteors every year, it does not explain the thirty-three years' period of the November shower. A simple modification, however, will suffice; for imagine that, instead of the meteors being uniformly distributed throughout the ring, they are gathered together more towards particular parts of the ring; and suppose that the time of revolution of the ring differs from that of the earth, then in some year the earth will pass through that part of the ring containing many meteors; in the next year, it will pass through a part in which there are fewer, and may continue to pass through a thin part of the ring, until the difference between the times of revolution of the earth and ring, amounting to a whole revolution, will bring the earth and thick part of the ring again together, and the display of some years previous will be again repeated. Now, this supposed case is the fact, as Professor Newton has found from investigation of the phenomena of the November meteors; and he having ascertained the precise period between the successive returns of maximum intensity of the November display, was enabled with confidence to predict for the morning of the 14th of November 1866, and accurately within a few hours, the return of a period of maximum intensity. The position of the 'radiant region' of the November shower being near the star Gamma of the constellation Leo, the direction in which these meteors meet the earth is inclined at an angle of seventeen degrees to the ecliptic; and their motion is, astronomically speaking, retrograde—that is, opposite to that of the planets.

The general laws concerning the great meteoric showers having been well established, philosophers began to inquire whether the 'sporadic' meteors could not be shewn to be governed by similar laws. By sporadic meteors is meant those solitary meteors which may be seen, sometimes one or two, sometimes perhaps only one, on any clear night, as well as those few seen sometimes at the time of some great display, which do not harmonise with the dominant shower. Two investigations of this kind have been made, one by Professor Heis of Münster, the other by Mr Greg of Manchester. Both these gentlemen, by making use of a large

number of observations of paths of sporadic meteors, have independently arrived at results strongly corroborative, shewing the existence of above fifty radiant regions. Meteors from some of the zones corresponding to these radiant regions meet the earth for many days in succession, and meteors from several different radiant regions may be seen on the same night; the different sets thus interlacing in space. The labours of Professor Heis and Mr Greg in thus reducing to law what was apparent confusion, have greatly advanced the subject.

So much as respects the mere motions of the meteors. But they are luminous. How is this? And what produces the brilliant train? Here we enter on some uncertainty. The experiments of Mr Joule make it probable that incandescence is the effect of caloric produced by friction with the air of the atmosphere. A small projectile entering the earth's atmosphere with a velocity comparable to that of planets, will be checked, and there will come a certain point at which the resistance will be greatest; and on the supposition above, there will here be the greatest light. Sublimation or abstraction of luminous particles may also produce the train. As the meteor moves on, these effects diminish, and the meteor may pass into obscurity. It is remarked that the central portion of the train is that which remains longest visible; very often the train of a meteor can be seen for some seconds, and occasionally for some minutes, and in such cases the train usually assumes more or less of a curved form before disappearance.

As concerns the heights and velocities of meteors, we will give the results of some measures. It will be understood that if the path of any meteor amongst the fixed stars be remarked as seen at two distinct places, the amount of difference of apparent position will depend on its proximity; and if the duration of the meteor be observed also, the heights of the meteor at appearance and disappearance may be calculated, and also its velocity. Professor Newton has collected and calculated 300 such cases, and finds for average height at appearance, 73½ miles; at disappearance, 50½ miles. A similar inquiry made for the British Association gave for averages 70 miles and 54 miles. Mr A. S. Herschel calculated the heights of a number of meteors observed on August 9 and 10, 1863, and the average height at appearance is 82 miles, and at disappearance 58 miles. He finds the average velocity to be 34 miles per second. And from some meteors observed on November 12, 1865, he finds the averages of appearance and disappearance to be 61 and 47 miles respectively, and the average velocity 64 miles per second.

A word or two as to colours of meteors. These appear to differ—at least the observations differ. Thus (Humboldt's *Cosmos*, chapter on Shooting-stars), of 4000 observations collected during nine years, two-thirds were white, one-seventh yellow, one-seventeenth yellowish red, and one thirty-seventh green. Now, of 271 meteors observed at the Royal Observatory, Greenwich, on the night of November 12, 1865, 197 were blue, 34 white, 30 bluish white, the remaining 10 being, some yellow, some red, and some green.

It now only remains to give some account of the late display of meteors on November 13, 1866. Professor Newton's prediction having aroused the attention of astronomers, great preparations were made for observing them. Of the results obtained,

we can say little here; time is necessary for a discussion of the observations; we can only give some general remarks. The display was perhaps not quite so fine as expected, but still sufficiently so to any one who saw such a sight for the first time. About nine in the evening, a few solitary meteors began to be observed; between eleven and midnight, they became more numerous, appearing in the east, and passing off by the north and south as expected, the radiant region (in the constellation Leo) being as yet scarcely above the horizon. The absence of the moon allowed the display to be seen in all its magnificence; and as the constellation Leo ascended above the horizon, it became evident that the radiant region of the November shower was still the same (near to the star Gamma Leonis). The meteors continued to come between midnight and 2 A.M. thicker and faster, and could be counted by hundreds. Many were seen at the same time. First one would start towards Ursa Major, followed instantly by another, emulous of the first; then one would rush off southwards across Orion; then one would sail majestically over the zenith; others would ascend vertically from Leo for a short distance, others would shoot directly downwards. The trains left by some of the meteors were beautiful to behold—some green, some yellow, some red, but more of a bluish cast. In some cases, the trains were visible for several minutes. Great numbers of the meteors near Leo were short, probably from foreshortening of their real path; this foreshortening caused the apparent paths to assume in some cases curious forms. Nothing like explosions were heard; indeed, the stillness accompanying the activity overhead forced itself on one's notice. After 2 A.M., the number of meteors rapidly declined, though they continued to be seen throughout the night. Above eight thousand are said to have been counted at the Royal Observatory, Greenwich—far exceeding any previous record at that place, and approaching, though by no means equalling, the American display of 1833.

That such evanescent and apparently erratic bodies as meteors should yield to any investigation, seems surprising. But persevering study of their complex appearances, a true spirit of induction applied to collected facts, has done the work; and now order is seen to reign in that which was comparative disorder; shewing that nature everywhere works on one uniform plan.

DR MUSPRATT'S PATIENTS.

IN SEVEN CHAPTERS.—CHAPTER V.

ONE morning, a hackney-coach stopped before Mr Muspratt's door in Great Newport Street; from this coach the doctor himself alighted, and then, aided by certain of his pupils and subordinates, carried into his house *something* that had been riding with him. The *something* was long and heavy, apparently. There was some staggering about under its weight; and it was muffled in a horseman's cloak. No looker-on could pronounce for certain as to the nature of the *something*; yet concerning it, all things considered, a shrewd guess might have been formed.

Presently, there was great activity in an inner room in the doctor's house—activity of a mysterious kind; yet medicinal and anæsthetic certainly. There was much curious whispering and muttering

among Mr Muspratt's assistants; the words 'Very fine subject' might have been heard, frequently repeated. Then came excited talk—low-voiced yet enthusiastic—the burden of which was the phrase constantly recurring, 'Most extraordinary case!' Finally, there was sung, *sotto voce*, a sort of hymn of praise and celebration, which had the marvellous ability and skill of Mr Muspratt for its chief theme.

The doctor himself was by no means unstirred; he even trembled now and then in the excess of his interest, in the fever of his expectation; yet he was full of thought, and resource, and watchfulness: there was no chance of his losing his presence of mind. He had taken off his coat, and rolled up his shirt-sleeves, to secure freedom enough of action. He had pushed far back his wig, for the better cooling of his globose forehead, from which the perspiration was trickling freely. To have seen the great Mr Muspratt to perfection, he should have been seen then. You would never more have deemed him shabby-looking or small-sized. As his eyes were dilated and lit up, so his form seemed to be enlarged by the grandeur of the intelligence within him, now to be beheld at its very best advantage. Between his ordinary and his present aspect, there was just the difference between a fountain unemployed and the same thing in full play. It needed the genius of a Reynolds to have fittingly rendered the doctor upon canvas, and to have conveyed to an interested posterity some notion of his appearance taken at its happiest moment. Unfortunately, no such recording portraiture exists. Indeed, at the time of which I am writing, Mr (afterwards Sir Joshua) Reynolds was too young and undistinguished a man to have been intrusted with so important a subject.

The doctor at last resumed his coat, and sat down before his writing-table for a few moments' rest and reflection. He had succeeded, and yet was somewhat disconcerted too, for in some way his success had disturbed his calculations. This had been purchased by the sacrifice of a Theory. His nervous fingers beat a tattoo upon the table; he nodded his head with an air of half-vexed meditation as he murmured: 'The man ought not to have recovered. If ever there was a likely subject for apoplexia, he was one. He must weigh some sixteen stone. He must be clearly twice the weight of Cassidy. Of a full habit too. Corpulent even—with a short neck. True, the muscular development is wonderful, wonderful, and the vital power amazing. But the chances were all against him. No, he ought not to have recovered; clearly he ought not.'

The smart rap of a cane was heard upon the oaken door. Mr Selwyn entered, bowing and smiling, with an eager look of curiosity in his face.

'Hush!' said Mr Muspratt with his finger upon his lip.

'Hush! by all means,' said Mr Selwyn, and he imitated the doctor's gesture.

'I can tell you nothing as yet for certain,' whispered the doctor. But the visitor could not mistake the tone of elation.

'My dear Mr Muspratt, you mean that you have succeeded again!'

'Hush! you shall judge for yourself presently, presently.'

'Which one is it? The big one?'

'The big one. I know no more of him.'

'It is Blackmore the highwayman,' said Mr Selwyn. 'The town has been premature in its rejoicings. Let Finchley and Bagshot still beware. Better for them if we had spared a better man.'

After some delay, Mr Selwyn was admitted by Mr Muspratt into an inner room, upon the express condition that he should remain there five minutes only, and be very quiet the while.

A tall, burly, swarthy, black-browed man lay stretched upon a couch, breathing heavily. He was only half-clothed, and his neck was carefully bandaged. One of Mr Muspratt's assistants was bathing the man's forehead with vinegar; another was applying hot fannels to the soles of his feet. As Mr Selwyn entered, the man stirred a little, then opened his eyes, and glanced round him in a dazed, wild way.

'I'm game, you know,' he said in a hoarse mutter, after a pause. 'It's the heat of the room made me faint, that's all. Tom Blackmore's no chicken-heart. But they let such crowds in to see me; I counted three thousand of them on Sunday last—all quality, too, from the west end of the town. They weren't in such a hurry to stand face to face with Tom Blackmore a fortnight ago. I'm ready when the cart is. They'll find me game to the end. I should like my hair dressed, Mr Sheriff, and my boots blacked. I've no other favour to ask. If you are the sheriff'—and he glanced doubtfully at Mr Muspratt.

The doctor took the man's wrist between his finger and thumb. 'An amazing strong beat—amazing!' he said.

'I've had a bad dream,' the man went on lazily. 'I think a sip of strong-waters would set me up. I thought it was all over with me. I thought I had the hempen fever, and there was an end of poor Tom Blackmore. They have tied something round my neck, haven't they? This is Newgate, isn't it? Of course it is: there's Mr Selwyn there.—My service to you, sir. Come to see the last of me, I suppose. I'm not quite myself this morning, sir; but they'll find me game yet. I'm ready when the cart is. My hair dressed, and my boots blacked, and a sip of strong-waters—make it a rummer of punch, if you like—I won't ask anything more, Mr Sheriff. But you're not the sheriff!'

'I am not the sheriff; and you are not in Newgate,' said Mr Muspratt.

'A reprieve!' said the man. 'No; not in my case. They couldn't do such a thing; they dared not; the town would not allow it. To do Tom Blackmore justice, they couldn't reprieve him; it would be a slur upon his character. He's too well known; he's been on the "high pad" too long and too royally. There's no reprieve for me.—Still, this isn't Newgate. Where are the bars, the chains, the bolts?'

'You've been spared by an accident,' Mr Muspratt explained.

'By the rare skill of a most distinguished surgeon,' Mr Selwyn added.

'It wasn't a dream, then?' inquired the man with a puzzled look. The story of his escape was repeated to him; but, apparently, he could make nothing of it. His mental digestion was not sufficiently restored; his shaken intelligence could not deal with such strong food as the fact of his recovery from death. He glanced round him, shook his head, then closed his eyes, and turned upon his side, as though going to sleep.

The doctor touched Mr Selwyn on the arm, motioning him to depart.

'I'm bound to say,' Mr Selwyn remarked, 'that next to the pleasure of seeing the man Blackmore as I saw him, and left him, this morning, I count the pleasure of seeing him alive and well again, as at the present moment.'

The sound of talking roused the man Blackmore; he opened his eyes. 'Mr Selwyn,' he said, 'buy that bay mare of mine. You'll never regret it. She'll be sold for the benefit of my captors, and will go for a mere song—for she's not good-looking—but she's the fastest nag that ever was crossed. Only, hark ye, let me give you a hint—she's one fault: you'll have to use the spur *when you want to get her up to a carriage-window*. Now, I'm ready when the sheriff is. How many cartfuls are there of us this morning?'

Mr Blackmore had reverted to his first idea, that his punishment had yet to be undergone.

'I'm vastly obliged,' said Mr Selwyn. 'I've no doubt the mare is a very admirable animal. And who knows? I may be driven to taking purses upon the king's highway. My luck has been frightful of late. My friends rob me; why should I not rob those who are not my friends?—gain at Blackheath what I lose on the green baize. I've not a doubt that "Stand and deliver" is the real "open sesame."'

'You've a pleasant wit, Mr Selwyn,' said the highwayman musingly. 'It saved your life once, or at least your purse.'

'Indeed; then my wit never stood me in better stead.'

'I rode after you from Strawberry Hill one night—I followed for two miles before I recognised you. Then I said: Shall I attack him? Gadsbud, says I, it's Mr Selwyn. No; I'll let him go. I've laughed at many a joke of his; for there's never a match of cocks fought, or a bull baited, or a race ridden at Huntingdon or Newmarket—hardly a cork drawn or a pack of cards cut, but Mr Selwyn's last is told and laughed at. So I put my barking-irons [pistols] in my belt again. I respect a man of parts. Indeed, I've been reckoned by my friends to have a pleasant wit myself.'

'Your friends only do you strict justice, I'm sure, Captain Blackmore,' said Mr Selwyn, with great gravity. 'Though I doubt many people—cavillers and critics—hold your jests to be somewhat of too practical a turn for general enjoyment. To be glancing up the muzzle of a horse-pistol, held at only two inches' space from one's countenance, strikes me, I own, as somewhat of a hollow jest.'

'Come, come,' interrupted Mr Muspratt, 'we must leave the man; he has talked enough—more than enough.' And he was drawing Mr Selwyn to the door.

'And sure, it's the captain,' said an astonished voice. Mr Cassidy had entered the room.

'Why, Thady, lad, is that you?' asked the captain, with an air of recognition.

'Who else would it be, captain, darlin'!'

'Why, I thought you were'—The captain did not finish the sentence.

'So I was, captain, darlin'; and no mistake at all.'

'You left Newgate days ago.'

'I did—for good.'

'For Tyburn, you mean. And you're alive? Gadsbud, it looks like it.'

'We're in the same boat, I'm thinkin'. Did it

hurt you much, captain, darlin'? Have you got the pins and needles about you, all over? I know the complaint. But you'll be rid of them in time.'

'Am I awake—alive?—Have you got a pinch of tobacco, Thady? I should be better after a pipe. If there was any punch about, I think I could get some down. My throat's uncommon dry. I'll try and get to sleep. Mind and have my boots well blacked, and bring me my hot water in the morning. If you could give the mare a feed of corn, it would be as well.—Do you know a song, Thady? Sing it, if you do. I shall sleep the sooner. The poor mare! she'll miss me—if no one else will. But others will; trust them for it. Tom Blackmore's well known upon the road.—Good-night, Thady, lad; and if we must ride up Holborn Hill'—

'Hush! come away; the man's asleep.' And the doctor withdrew, Mr Selwyn and Thady following him.

CHAPTER VI.

'The country is badly served,' quoth Mr Selwyn, very seriously. 'I did think that, at anyrate, Mr Ketch was beyond suspicion: a competent minister. As to his moral character, I own I have not been favourably impressed; but I thought his skill unquestionable. I have been deceived, it seems—we can trust no one, not even Mr Ketch; we can be sure of nothing—not even of Tyburn tree. What is there serious in life, when even an execution degenerates into a farce? Do you intend to proceed with your labours, most Promethean doctor? Is medicine still to undermine and mock at law? Is Barber-surgeon's Hall to go on reversing the decisions of the Old Bailey? What a puppet is man in the hands of the professions! The one ties him up and hangs him; the other cuts him down and revives him. And the church? Oh, the church stands by the while; but its eyes are fixed devoutly on its book; it sees nothing of what's going on. That is the church's way of looking at things—looking elsewhere.'

The doctor, to whom this banter was addressed, said nothing; he was lost in thought.

'However,' Mr Selwyn continued, 'there's one comfort—we have a check upon Mr Cassidy now. Travellers tell us such wonderful tales; and the traveller who has journeyed a stage into the other world, what marvels he may relate to us; and we should be bound to believe him—are we not always bound to believe what we can't contradict? But our captain has his story to tell also; and if the two men's stories don't agree, we shall be justified in believing neither of them. Perhaps, in any case, that would be the most advisable course. A sheep-stealer and a highwayman—they are not the most credible of witnesses. Hang me, if they are—I mean, of course, hang me, provided you are by, my dear Mr Muspratt, to revive me again.'

But Mr Muspratt was not attending. His visitor smiled, took snuff, shrugged his shoulders, tripped to his sedan-chair, and was carried to White's Chocolate-house.

In the course of a few days, Mr Selwyn called again in Great Newport Street. He found Mr Muspratt brooding over a curious, neatly made little model in cardboard. It represented a raised stage with a trap-door in the centre of it; close to the trap-door were two upright wooden posts—pieces of firewood, they looked like—joined at the

top by a horizontal bar. Mr Selwyn's curiosity was excited by the strange look of the model. He made inquiries concerning it.

'If I can arrive at no positive theory in regard to resuscitation considered as a science,' said Mr Muspratt slowly, with something of the formality of a lecturer in his manner, 'why—with apparently all advantages granted—it fails so signally in some cases, while it succeeds so strangely in others, in spite of what seem to be fatal drawbacks; it is clear, on the other hand, I can easily render the present system of carrying out the law far more secure—can so improve the existing method of punishment as to render it almost certain. The great desideratum I find to be suddenness. At present, there is a want of a sufficient shock. The cart glides away gradually from beneath the feet of the sufferer. That, as we know, may or may not have a fatal consequence. You will observe the system shewn by this model. A bolt is drawn; *instantly* this trap falls. There is no sliding motion. A sudden drop—then a more violent shock results, I think, than any human organisation could resist. And the operation' (Mr Muspratt hesitated a little about the word) 'would be performed as mercifully, as painlessly, as effectually as possible.'

While speaking, the doctor had made his meaning the clearer by reference to the model before him.

'A most ingenious contrivance!' said Mr Selwyn admiringly. 'Ah! the culprits will have small chance if law and medicine join forces against them. Each acting alone is powerful to do mischief; but, together, who can withstand them? They will be absolutely irresistible.—But, dear me, is there not a most pernicious smell of tobacco-smoke?'

It was hardly worth while asking the question; the room, indeed, was full of smoke. The doctor made no answer, but rocked himself to and fro in evident unquiet and displeasure. Then from the chamber adjoining came the sound of a boisterous tenor voice singing:

Let me not love in vain—

In vain my Chloe sue;

She ne'er will find

A lad so kind,

So bonnie, blithe, and true!

With a tra, la, la, &c.

Mr Selwyn knew the voice at once. The singer was Captain Blackmore, it was evident. Many old-fashioned falsetto trills and flourishes garnished the song. An Irish howl of applause followed its completion—much uproarious approval—in which the tones of Mr Cassidy might have been recognised.

'Our captain is quite a skilled musician,' said Mr Selwyn quietly. 'I do believe he could set "Stand and deliver" to music, rob in *recitative*, commit a burglary to a ballad-air, or cut purses to the tune of *Lillibulero*.'

Presently the highwayman was to be heard lustily trolling forth one of Macheath's songs from Gay's opera:

The charge is prepared, the lawyers are met,

The judges all ranged—a terrible show, &c.;

sung to the well-known tune of *Bonnie Dundee*; the Irishman joining in a wild chorus that was rather hearty in intention than harmonious in effect; and after this, the singers proceeded to a

most vehement and intemperate performance of various Jacobite songs.

'Rank treason, as I live,' observed Mr Selwyn. 'If the constables were to overhear, or your neighbours turn informers, my dear Mr Muspratt, we should both be taken to prison for plotting against the state. I may not have a character to lose, but I have a head. It is said of me that I am fond of witnessing executions; but that must not be used as an argument for conducting me to the scaffold, for you know it is a maxim of the law that a man cannot be a witness in his own case. I should not even have the pleasure of becoming your patient, for you would probably suffer with me. And then the headsman, I fancy, operates far more effectually than Mr Ketch could do, even aided by the ingenious invention on the table. After him, one is without hope as without head.'

The noise in the adjoining room now increased. The doctor groaned aloud. 'It is the same thing, day after day,' he said despairingly: 'they smoke, and drink, and sing, and then they fight.'

Cries of murder were anon to be heard, and the sound of blows, the crashing of glass, and the falling of furniture. A desperate struggle was going on, in the inner chamber apparently.

The doctor unlocked a door; Mr Selwyn grasped his cane: they entered the next room.

It was difficult to distinguish anything at first for the dense clouds of tobacco-smoke. But presently, upon the floor of the room, was to be discerned the writhing figure of Mr Cassidy, and kneeling upon him the stalwart form of Captain Blackmore. The highwayman held in his hand a jackboot, with which unusual weapon it was manifest he had been belabouring the head of the unhappy Irishman. It was with some difficulty the men were torn asunder. They were both intoxicated, breathless, bruised, and bleeding; their clothes dishevelled and rent.

'Another moment, and it would have been too late, or rather'—and Mr Selwyn corrected himself—'there would have been murder.'

'Sure, it's murdered I am entirely,' moaned the Irishman, with his hands to his face.

'I'll teach the scoundrel to insult a gentleman,' growled Captain Blackmore, and he set to work to rub his shins. 'Plague on him, he kicks like a horse! I do believe I'm lamed for life in my left leg.'

'And it's my right eye that's shut up for ever; and O my ribs—and O my back! Devil take the vagabone's hard fist!' cried Mr Cassidy. 'And it's beating my head with his boot he's been after! To think of serving so a poor Connaught boy, that niver did harm to living creature!'

'You ungrateful scoundrels!' began the doctor in a passion, but he couldn't find language strong enough to express his indignation at the behaviour of his patients.

Meanwhile, the two men, having recovered breath a little, were growling and scowling at each other, as though they contemplated a renewal of the contest at the earliest possible opportunity.

'What's to be done with them?' asked Mr Muspratt, turning with a look of despair to Mr Selwyn.

'It's hard to say,' quoth Mr Selwyn.

'It was bad enough with the Irishman on my hands, but now I've got the other one too.'

'It seems to me, Mr Muspratt, that in that case consists your chief hope of comfort,' said Mr Selwyn—'your only prospect of relief. You would

never be able to rid yourself of Mr Cassidy, or have a chance of effecting that desirable object, but by some such means as the introduction upon the scene of Captain Blackmore. It is clear the dogs can't exist together. Well, lock them up in the same room. You'll be quit of one of your troubles, at all events—possibly of both. They have already succeeded in injuring each other very tolerably; permit them to go on as they have begun. Lock them up again; wait and hope; and look in upon them, or upon what may remain of them, to-morrow morning, and see how kindly fate may have dealt with you.

The doctor pondered, stroking his chin. Ah, how near he was, aided by Mr Selwyn's sportive suggestion, to the discovery of a signal medical principle! Another moment, perhaps, and from the depths of his cogitations he might have brought to the surface and given to the world that remarkable curative doctrine which, some years later, was to render the name of Samuel Hahnemann famous. The ejection from his premises of the sheep-stealer, by means of the admission of the highwayman—what was that but the adoption of the homœopathic maxim of *Similia similibus curantur*? But like the man who had been talking prose all his life without being conscious of the fact, so Mr Muspratt was doomed to practise homœopathy without knowing it. Possibly, he was on the verge of the discovery when his musings were disturbed. Some of his pupils and assistants entered the room. He roused himself.

'Take these men,' he cried, 'and lock them up in different rooms. Tie them hand and foot, if need be.'

'You'll find I haven't done with ye yet, Pat, my boy,' said the captain with an oath, shaking his fist.

'And you'll find that Thady will give you as good as you bring, anyhow,' growled the Irishman.

And they suffered themselves to be led away, making no resistance indeed, nor giving trouble beyond evincing some desire to approach each other for kicking and cuffing purposes.

'I think I understand the model you were kind enough to shew me, even better now,' said Mr Selwyn to the doctor. 'Science is quite satisfied with her inquiries as to resuscitation, and wishes to shut the door against any further fruitless investigations in that direction. Is it not so?'

The doctor shook his head with a distressed look, as of one who despaired utterly of being properly understood.

'When you were a lad, did you ever rob an orchard, doctor?' asked Mr Selwyn presently.

'I don't know; I can't say; I don't remember.'

'Ah! then you never did, or you'd surely have remembered it. The apples one steals are invariably unripe, and they disagree with one abominably. Moral—Don't rob orchards. Now, Tyburn is the orchard of the government. It's a great mistake to steal the fruit from Tyburn tree. You've tried it, and it's set your teeth on edge, and disturbed your digestive organs terribly. I can see it has. My dear doctor, don't do it again; the fruit is bad and worthless, and, take my word for it, the very worst kind for *preserving*. Leave it on the tree henceforward. You remember what trouble Mother Eve brought upon us? Well, Tyburn tree is in its way a sort of tree of knowledge. Look on, as I do, but don't touch any more.—Good-day to you.'

CHAPTER VII.

Dr Muspratt's patients were confined in separate apartments. The large empty house in Great Newport Street afforded abundant accommodation for thus disposing of the delinquents.

Captain Blackmore bore his captivity with a sort of intoxicated resignation. He was to be heard singing lustily at intervals, his music being generally of a sentimental character, occasionally dashed with treason, and constantly impaired by hiccups and boozy difficulties in the way of his articulation. There were inequalities, too, about the method of his carolling; now he cooed like a dove, anon he was roaring like a lion. But the burden of his song was mostly of a tender and loving sort, as thus:

No pain or pleasure sure can prove
So bitter or so sweet as love.
Since the piercing pain I know,
Let me taste the pleasure too!

And so on, *de capo*, with many prolonged notes and tremulous trills.

By and by, an angry mood would seize him; and he would indulge in much heavy stamping on the floor, ferocious swearing, and in fell threats as to the punishment he would inflict at some future period upon the body of his late associate and fellow-sufferer, Thady Cassidy. In other respects, the captain did not trouble greatly the household of his benefactor.

For some time, the Irishman was to be heard crooning over his hurts and bruises, and lamenting over his sorrows, growling like some snared and baffled animal, muttering a variety of menaces and maledictions in relation to his oppressor and enemy—as he chose to consider him—Captain Blackmore. Then came silence for many hours. He was asleep; so, at least, his jailers, the doctor's pupils, opined. After some while, they deemed it prudent to have a look at him, and cautiously unlocked and opened the door of his room. To their amazement, they found it empty. The caged bird had flown. Mr Cassidy had escaped by means of the window. It was evident that, with the nimbleness of a cat, he had climbed down a rain-water pipe, then dropped into the area at the back of the house, and so apparently made good his escape over adjoining premises into a small street in the rear. What was to be done?

'Let him go,' said the doctor. 'He must take his chance now; I wash my hands of him. Perhaps it's best as it is.' And he breathed more freely. He thought the chances in favour of his museum were bettered by the absence of its recent devastator.

But shortly there came a loud, simple thump at the front-door. Mr Cassidy had returned.

'You, sirrah! How dare you!' cried the doctor in amazement.

'Sure it's Thady Cassidy, doctor, darlin', your honour's humble servant,' said the Irishman, bowing and grinning.

'Where have you been, sir?'

'And haven't I been doing your honour the real service, then? Sure it's rid you'll be now of that big blackguard, the captain; and it's quits we'll both be with him, anyhow.'

'Dolt! what have you done?'

'Am I his servant? Am I to wait on him, and run his errands? Am I to be for ever blacking

his nasty boots, and powdering his ugly head, and brushing his clothes, and polishing his buttons, and filling his glass? Not I. I did it in Newgate—true for you—but I'm not in Newgate now. And what did I get for it then, but cuffs and kicks, and a broken pate; and it's a hard fist the captain has, devil doubt him! I'm not his servant, and I won't be. Would I be serving a dirty vagabone like that? Not I. It's your honour's servant I am for evermore; your honour's humble servant, that will never leave ye—Thady Cassidy, an honest Connaught boy, that never did harm to living creature, whom your honour brought to life after he was dead; and is it likely your honour's goodness would be turning the cold shoulder on him now, and for the likes of such a thief of the world as the captain? Sure your honour never would. And your honour won't be troubled wid him any more; it's quits wid him now we'll be.

'What have you done, I say?'

'Sure I've blown the gab on him; that's what I've done, then; and the constables are coming up the street, and the red-coats wid them; and it's in Newgate the captain will be again before another half hour's gone by. And bad-luck to him!'

'You've informed against him?'

It was true. There came the noise as of many voices in the street, the assembling of a crowd, the tramp of a file of soldiers, the loud knocking of the constables. They were of course admitted. How could their demands be resisted? And in five minutes Captain Blackmore's singing was interrupted. He was a prisoner, pinioned, and in the custody of the officers of justice; the soldiers keeping guard without, and astounding the neighbourhood by their presence.

Then, greatly to his astonishment, Mr Cassidy found himself also recognised and arrested upon a charge similar to that he had been at pains to bring against Captain Blackmore for being a convict at large in evasion of the sentence of the law.

'To think of that now!—to think of that now!' Mr Cassidy, his face very white, could find no other words to express his amazement and alarm at his treachery having thus so fatally recoiled upon himself. He stared round him, bewildered and terrified, while the constables secured him.

Captain Blackmore treated the matter mighty coolly. 'It serves you right, Thady,' he said. 'I hate a cur. I never thought very good of you; but I didn't think so bad of you as this comes to. I wish I'd drubbed you harder when I had the chance. I'd sooner be turned off twice over, as I shall be, when all's said, than turn stag, as you've done. But, Paddy-like, you've scuttled your own boat, and you'll go down with me—Good-bye, doctor. Tom Blackmore's service to you. I'm sorry if I've been a trouble to you. I'd like to shake hands with you, if I could; but they've trussed me up so plaguy tight! My service to you, sir, and to Mr Selwyn.—Now, my noble gentlemen, I'm yours to command.'

And the prisoners were carried off, and lodged in Newgate, to be seen no more by Vicesimus Muspratt. He breathed freely again. 'At last, my house is my own, and my collection's safe,' he said with unfeigned thankfulness. He mused for some time, then sighed, and looked perplexed, and somewhat sad and anxious. At last, he sat down, wrote a hurried letter, and sent it by a

special messenger to Mr George Selwyn, at his house in Cleveland Row, St James's.

There was much joking at the clubs and chocolate-houses about this time. It was said that Mr Selwyn had been interceding for the lives of two condemned malefactors in Newgate; but no one could be found to credit the story; every one laughed at it. It was voted absolutely preposterous.

Yet, in due time, it was found that the king, on the advice of Mr Selwyn's friend, the Right Honourable Henry Fox (afterwards Lord Holland), Secretary of State, had been graciously pleased to remit the sentence of two condemned prisoners; in lieu of suffering at Tyburn, they were to undergo transportation to His Majesty's plantations in the West Indies. Were these Dr Muspratt's patients? At anyrate, nothing more was ever heard of them.

And the ingenious model, the advantages of which the doctor had explained to Mr Selwyn?

Well, I know not if it were the same precisely, but some few years later, a contrivance on a similar principle certainly came into use.

When my Lord Ferrers ended his days at Tyburn in 1760, I find it stated by an historian of the period, that there was, for the first time, employed an 'elegant invention,' called the *new drop*, 'by which,' records my informant, 'the use of that vulgar vehicle, a cart, or mechanical instrument, a ladder, is avoided; the sufferer being left suspended by the dropping down of that part of the floor on which he stands.'

Yet it was not until many years after the demise of Earl Ferrers that this new machine was employed at all generally. Probably, when the tree at Tyburn was finally abandoned (in 1784), and, in lieu, capital punishment was inflicted outside the walls of Newgate, the new drop became a settled institution of the state.

But Dr Muspratt was not then living; indeed, he had been, for long years, resting peacefully in Bunhill Fields' burial-ground.

THE WAITS.

WASHINGTON IRVING, describing his Christmas experiences at Bracebridge Hall, says: 'I had scarcely got into bed, when a strain of music seemed to break forth in the air just below the window. I listened, and found it proceeded from a band, which I concluded to be the waits from some neighbouring village. They went round the house, playing under the windows. I drew aside the window curtain to hear them more distinctly. The moonbeams fell through the upper part of the casement, partially lighting up the antiquated apartment. The sounds, as they receded, became more soft and aerial, and seemed to accord with the quiet and moonlight. I listened and listened; they became more and more tender and remote; and as they gradually died away, my head sank upon the pillow, and I fell asleep.' The midnight music that afforded Irving such pleasure, and still holds a place among our Christmas customs, dates from very olden days; but the custom was not originally peculiar to the great Christian festival, being common to all times and seasons.

The waits were once in constant attendance at court, indeed they formed part of the royal establishment. From the rules laid down for their guidance in the reign of Edward IV., we learn that

it was the duty of the waits to pipe the watch at every chamber-door within the precincts of the palace, four times during the winter nights, and three times during the shorter nights of the summer season, keeping a good look-out at the same time for 'pickers and stealers.' They took their meals in the hall with the minstrels, and received a nightly allowance varying according to the time of year. In summer, each wait was served with a loaf of bread, a gallon of ale, two pitch-candles, and a bushel of fuel; in winter, half a loaf, a gallon of ale, four candles, and a bushel of fuel. His wages were threepence or fourpence a day, according to his deservings, with clothing and bedding at the steward's discretion. If he fell sick, two loaves, two messes of meat, and a gallon of ale, were allotted to him. He shared with the rest of the royal household in any 'general gifts,' and acted as deputy for any yeoman of the household incapacitated for a time. He attended upon newly-made knights of the Bath during their vigil in the chapel, receiving for his fee all the watching-clothes donned for the occasion by the new member of the honourable order. The waits' services had risen considerably in money-value since the reign of Edward III., that king paying his three waits only twenty shillings a year, except in time of war, when their wages were raised to twelvence a day. Henry VI. seems to have found one wait sufficient for his needs; and although 'harpers, piphers, sagbuts, taberets, and lewters' figure among the three hundred servants of Henry VIII.'s establishment, only a single musician, one Andrew Newman, is specially designated as a 'wayte,' his services being remunerated at the rate of ten shillings and fourpence a month. There were no less than fifty-eight discourses of sweet sounds in the household of Charles I., but not one of them is described as a wait, though, in all probability, a fair proportion officiated in that capacity.

The city of London, from very early times, maintained a company of waits, who, clad in blue gowns with red sleeves, and wearing silver badges suspended from their silver collars, attended the lord-mayor when he went in public procession, and, as a matter of course, played their part at the civic banquets. They also attended the funerals of great citizens, and marched with the Midsomer Watch. Although servants of the chief-magistrate, they were not above receiving gratuities, for, in the Household Book of Lord Howard (1481-3) we find the following entries: 'Payd the waytes of London, 12d. s.' 'Be my Lady's handes to my Lord Mare's mynstrells, 3s. 4d. s.' my Lady being evidently more liberal of largesse than my Lord. My lord-mayor's minstrels seem to have had a tolerable reputation for musical skill, since Morley, in dedicating his *Consort Lessons* to the lord-mayor and aldermen in the year 1599, does not hesitate at complimenting them on that score. He says: 'As the ancient custom of this most honourable and renowned city hath ever been to retain and maintain excellent and expert musicians to adorn your Honours' favours, feasts, and solemn meetings; to those, your Lordship's waits, I recommend the same.' Morley's *Lessons* were written for the treble and bass viols, the flute, the cittern or English guitar, the treble lute, and the pandora; so we may reasonably infer the city waits at least were competent to perform upon a greater variety of instruments than the hautboys of four different

sizes which made up a set of waits. One of them, Thomas Farmer, at anyrate, was musician enough to compose several good songs, and popular enough to be honoured by Purcell setting to music an elegy on his death. When it was proposed, in the parliament of 1656, to include fiddlers, harpers, and pipers among the rogues, vagabonds, and sturdy beggars the wise men of that day determined to put down by the strong arm of the law, Alderman Hooke protested against the waits of the city being included in the proscription, on the ground that they were well known to be a great preservation of men's houses in the night—an argument affording sufficient evidence that the waits still acted in their original double capacity. Sixty-three years afterwards, they still existed, and Ned Ward, who calls them 'the topping tooters of the town, who have gowns, silver chains, and salaries for playing *Lilburlero* to my lord-mayor's horse through the city,' describes them as a parcel of strange hobgoblins covered with long frieze rugs and blankets, hooped round with leather girdles from their cruppers to their shoulders, having their noddles buttoned up in martial-looking caps.

Londoners wishing to celebrate a wedding with musical honours, to have a dance, or enjoy a little harmony of an evening, did not, however, depend upon the corporate musicians for the gratification of their desires; within the walls, every ward, without the walls, Westminster, Finsbury, Islington, Southwark, Stepney, the Tower Hamlets, and other districts, had their own particular band of waits, at the beck and call of any one able and willing to come to terms with them. We get some idea as to those terms from the dialogue between the Citizen and the Prologue in the Induction to Beaumont and Fletcher's *Knight of the Burning Pestle*—

Citizen. What stately music have you? You have shaums?

Prologue. Shaums? No!

Citizen. I'm a thief if my mind did not give me so. Ralph plays a stately part, and he must needs have shaums. I'll be at the charge myself rather than we'll be without them.

Prologue. So you are like to be.

Citizen. Why, and so I will be. There's two shillings; let's have the waits of Southwark. They are as rare fellows as any in England, and that will fetch them all o'er the water, with a vengeance as if they were mad!

In 1704, the good people of Hackney complained that their parish was infested with itinerant musicians, who prowled about the neighbourhood after dark, and made the night hideous. To remedy the evil, Mr Tyssen, the lord of the manor, 'did in that year nominate, authorise, and license Hance Mullings, Charles Herrel, Ebenezer Dunckerley, and John Ballock, to be his waits and music, to play upon loud instruments in the night-time, within his manor during his pleasure; in the same manner as was used within the city of London, and in the manor of Stepney. And he required the said parties to be diligent in the discovery of all robberies and fires which might happen; and of all suspicious and disorderly persons exercising music in the night-time, not authorised by him; and to give notice thereof to the constable or head-borough, to the intent that such mischief might be prevented, and such disorderly and other persons apprehended, and brought before one of her majesty's justices of

the peace, to be dealt with according to law.' The loud music, we suppose, was intended to frighten evil-intentioned individuals, whose awe of the constable was not sufficiently great to prevent them preying upon the honester part of the community; but the waits were hardly likely to discover many robberies when they took such pains to announce their presence.

At one time, there were few towns of any size or note (in England, that is to say—we cannot speak so confidently respecting the sister-kingdoms) but what supported a band of waits, sometimes in all the dignity of an incorporated company. Such the waits of Newcastle-on-Tyne claimed to have been time out of mind, although they had been unlucky enough to lose or mislay the charter of their society. In 1677, a new one was issued to them, appointing them 'a fellowship with perpetual succession.' By this document the company were enjoined to meet every year upon St James's Day, and elect two stewards, who might sue and be sued in the local courts of law. This charter conferred certain privileges upon the members of the society, or rather confirmed them in those they enjoyed under their ancient one; and forbade all strangers and non-members of the company (unless they obtained a special licence from the mayor), teaching music in the town, or playing at any wedding or merry-making within its precincts, under a penalty of six-and-eightpence. Nor could any fiddlers, pipers, dancers upon ropes, or 'others that pretended to skill in music, or went about with motions and shewes,' follow their irregular callings in Newcastle, without being mulcted in the sum of ten shillings—all such fines being paid over to the company whose rights had been infringed. 'Provided always, that the said waits and musicianers, and their successors for ever hereafter, be ready and attendant on all occasions to do and perform their duty in all matters and clauses belonging to their science and employment, and obedient to all orders of the mayor and aldermen.' One of the towers on the town-walls was appropriated to their use, and they received a small salary from the corporation—in Elizabeth's reign, the five waits received twenty pounds for a year's service. They seem, too, to have been supplied with instruments at the town's cost, at least they were so in 1655; and once in three years each wait was presented with a cloak costing three pounds. The Newcastle waits were not dissolved till the beginning of the present century, when their three-cocked hats and blue cloaks disappeared, as a local chronicler has it, 'amidst some modern narrow and gloomy schemes of economy.'

The Norwich waits—declared by Kemp the actor to be unsurpassed and unsurpassable, since every one of them was not only cunning in the management of wind and string instruments, but also capable of serving as chorister in a manner worthy of any cathedral—likewise had the advantage of being united into a company, governed by a headman, two wardens, and two searchers. These officers were to be changed annually; but, by a strange oversight, the selection of their successors devolved on them alone; the consequence being, that by interchanging offices with each other, instead of electing new holders, they managed to retain their places as long as it pleased them so to do. Musicians not belonging to the society were not permitted to play in the streets of Norwich, or any town in the county; the privileged ones per-

forming the usual duties in connection with corporate festivities, duties of which they were finally relieved in 1791. In ancient times, Norwich Castle had its own musical guard apparently, John le Marshal holding a certain manor from Edward I. by the service of paying one mark for guarding the castle 'from six weeks to six weeks,' and for 'wayte fee' at the said castle, 'fifteen shillings at four quarterly terms.'

The once famous fraternity of Minstrels of Beverley, said to have been first formed in the time of the Saxons, played at fairs, weddings, and feasts, under the direction of a leader, who was of necessity an alderman of the borough. They never waited to be invited to display their musical proficiency; free admission into the houses of the nobility and gentry was one of their traditional privileges, and they did not scruple to avail themselves of it. This ancient fraternity can scarcely be reckoned among the societies of waits, although they are designated as such in an order issued for the re-establishment of the guild in the reign of Philip and Mary; the Minstrels of Beverley ranked rather in the same category as the Chester Minstrels, who were licensed to carry on their vocation upon the simple condition of behaving themselves 'lively,' as minstrels ought to do.

In Elizabeth's reign, we find the corporation of Ipswich purchasing 'waits' for one Martin and his company of musicians, six all told, conditionally that the cash expended was to be repaid, if, at the end of the year, the towns-people expressed themselves dissatisfied with the performances of Martin and his men. The proviso proved unnecessary, for Martin held his post of leader of the waits until his death, when John Betts succeeded to the vacancy, and his company were bound to walk about the town with their waits from Michaelmas to Lady-day, starting at two o'clock in the morning, and continuing their march till they had thoroughly perambulated the town; for which service they were to receive four pounds per annum, and a convenient livery. In 1775, the Liverpool waits cost the corporation of that town twenty-four pounds. Richmond gave each member of its band a hat and cloak every year; other places provided their waits with blue cloaks; and in Leicester, a special tax seems to have been levied in their behalf, for in 1575, the authorities ordered that they should 'play orderly' every night and morning, in consideration of the rates exacted for their support from every householder of reasonable ability. Everywhere, however, they depended mainly upon what was called 'the benevolence' of their towns-men, eking out a living by performing at private houses. Among the items of expenditure in the household of Thomas Kyton, Esq., in 1574, was the payment of twenty shillings 'in reward to Richard Reede, one of the wayghtes of Cambridge, for his attendance in Christmas-time.' Another source of gain, of rarer occurrence, presented itself when any important personage happened to pay a visit to a town: the Canterbury waits got seven-and-sixpence from Henry VIII. when he passed through their town on his way to Dover, and when he returned a month afterwards, were rewarded, for displaying their loyalty and skill, by another gift of eighteen shillings and eightpence. The Liverpool waits had one way of extracting cash out of folks peculiar to themselves, it being their habit to go to the house of the master of any newly arrived vessel the day after he came into port, and

in jubilant strains congratulate him upon having brought his voyage to a happy conclusion. With the dissolution of the waits, courtship lost one of its most ancient features; the serenade so often alluded to by our older poets, became lost to the ladies for ever. A hundred and fifty years ago, no lover pretending to do things as they should be done, made love without it. 'As the custom prevails at present,' says the *Tatler*, 'there is scarce a young man of any fashion in a corporation who does not make love with the town-music. The waits often bring him through his courtship. One would think they hoped to conquer their mistresses' hearts as people tame hawks and eagles, by keeping them awake, or breaking their sleep.'

Of our modern Christmas waits, not much can be said; their spiriting is of a very prosaic order, although a little quaintness is infused into the performance here and there; in York, for instance, where, as a lady-correspondent of *Notes and Queries* tells us, the waits perambulate the principal streets for the five Mondays preceding the great festival, playing one tune, and one only, in each street, and then saluting the head of each house by name. When they came to St Mary's Convent, in which this lady was a boarder, after going through one tune by way of preliminary, a stentorian voice roared out: 'Good-morning to the Lady-Abbess! Good-morning to the nuns! Three o'clock in the morning; a fine morning! Good-morning to the chaplain! Good-morning to all! Good-morning! Good-morning!' Of course, all these greetings were given in lively expectation of favours to come, when the waits called some days afterwards for the customary acknowledgment of their claims for a Christmas-box.

It was the custom in a country town familiar to us in our youth to sit up for the minstrels who,

On a winter's night,
By moon or lantern light,

went their rounds through hail, rain, frost, or snow, and regale them with plenty of strong home-brewed, so liberally dispensed, that after a few such stoppages, exhilarated or something more by the good cheer, each musician asserted his independence by adopting original variations, the result being the production of effects more novel than pleasing. The scratch-bands perambulating through our streets at Christmas-tide may be but sorry shadows of their blue-cloaked namesakes; they may 'crack the voice of melody, and break the legs of Time,' until

Poor Home, Sweet Home would seem to be
A very dismal place;
Your Auld Acquaintance all at once
Is altered in the face.

Yet, despite their sins of commission and omission, we should grieve at their becoming extinct. Their labours are rewarded meagrely enough, goodness knows, and at this season we cannot begrudge them a pittance. The 'Autocrat of the Breakfast-table' himself would assuredly yield to the influence of Christmas-tide, and unbutton his pockets in behalf of the waits, although he has written—

If you are a portly man,
Put on your fiercest frown,
And talk about a constable
To turn them out of town;
Then close your sentence with an oath,
And shut the window down.

And if you are a slender man,
Not big enough for that,
Or if you cannot make a speech
Because you are a flat,
Go very quietly, and drop
A button in the hat!

PROVIDENCE.

THE wise observe their brethren, and withhold
The quick reflection in their breast untold:
Their prudence tests the purpose of each word,
Lest self-complacence be to use preferred;
They balance anger with a phrase of skill,
And lead obedient the ungoverned will:
They warn and chafe not, while an impress deep
Of their own spirit makes suspicion sleep;
Sifting they drop a jewel in the sieve,
And seem to find the sentiment they give.

Thus mortals imitate the immortal Mind;
Though oft perplexed by issues undesigned:
An unknown step to left or right may change
The bubble's colour in the sunbeam's range;
A minute scorned its web of error weave;
A speech intent on pleasing vex or grieve.
Among so many, who the end can choose
That draws the line without a knot or noose?

The wise think deep; they sow, they irrigate;
The watchman watches early, watches late;
But who can shew a rule the blind may follow
Safe to the end through mazy wood and hollow?
Who make the green blade pierce the heavy clod,
Who keep the city but the Unseen God?

The Novel, BROUGHT TO LIGHT, now finished, will be followed, in January 1867, by another ORIGINAL SERIAL TALE, by the Author of LADY FLAVIA, entitled

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SHOEBURYNESS.

THE northern bank of the Thames ends very abruptly opposite Sheerness, in the headland known as Shoeburyness. Here, in a quiet out-of-the-way corner of Essex, lies the government reserve, occupying some two hundred and seventy acres, where most of the experiments in artillery of our land-service are carried on.

It is a difficult place to arrive at, for, though surrounded on nearly three sides by the sea, yet the high and extensive sands render it inaccessible to any but the shallow barges which ply up and down—from Woolwich or London with government stores and ammunition, or forage and coals. On the land-side, too, it is not easy for a stranger to discover, for the rail from London does not extend further than Southend, a small yet rising watering-place about five miles from Shoebury—government having wisely prohibited more immediate railway communication with her little military colony.

Shoeburyness was formerly well known to the Danes, who made a settlement here for predatory purposes, and built a stronghold or fort, which, from its horseshoe shape, they called Skoen-berg—Anglicised into Shoebury, and of which there are traces still visible in the middle of the government land; and from hence, in their small craft, they would surprise and prey upon the ships laden with merchandise for the port of London.

Shortly before the Crimean war, when the attention of artillerymen had been called to the increasing necessity for ordnance of longer range, Shoeburyness was recommended to government, for the great range and security to be had over the extensive sands, and the facility of transport of guns and stores from the arsenal at Woolwich. The latter advantage, indeed, becomes an absolute necessity, as it would be impracticable to move thither by rail the huge weights and masses of metal, such as guns, shields, iron targets, embrasures, &c. which are easily brought down by water.

Almost the first object that catches the sight

from the river, or along the shore, is a very large pair of sheers, which form a fine landmark. They are two wooden spars, over sixty feet high, fitted into movable sockets, and made to bend over so as to lift any weight out of a lighter or barge brought alongside the pier on which they stand. To them are attached two sets of chains and pulleys, registered to lift fifty tons weight. The machinery by which both the sheers and pulleys are worked is of great power; and it is surprising to see the ease and rapidity with which the well-trained gunners can shift the position of the sheers with enormous weights attached to them. They are placed on a pier-head, and under them runs a line of rails, so that targets or guns of any weight may be easily drawn from the side of the vessel to the battery or position where they are to be experimented on.

There are two departments at Shoeburyness—the School of Gunnery, and the Experimental Department. Of these, the oldest and principal is the Experimental, presided over by the Ordnance Select Committee, and conducted by a superintendent and assistants. By these have been carried on the long experiments upon the comparative merits of Armstrong, Whitworth, Britten, Scott, Lancaster, and other systems, the French and Swedish guns, and the various adaptations by Palisser, Miller, and others; as well as the perpetual trials of new powder, shot, shells, and projectiles of all descriptions. Here, too, are tried, by battering with shot and shell, each new system of iron-plating for ships, embrasures, and casemates; here we find iron-plates by scores, varying in thickness from three inches to eleven and twelve of iron, with a couple of feet of wood-backing, or eight or ten feet of granite; plates of all kinds, cast-iron, wrought-iron, and steel of all tempers—tried, punished, and riddled with almost every kind of shot known; some that admitted the shot through them without more ado; some that offered enough resistance, to cause all the greater destruction behind from the splinters; others of tougher material, which, though they must let the shot through, are bent up at the edges like bits of crumpled paper; others, again, so enduring that the huge mass that

plunged into them, lies embedded in the plate, having pushed its nose only through to the other side, perhaps. There is one that has dents like saucers in it, as if nothing could pierce it; but this is the celebrated Hercules target, which was not pierced: however, it was not tried with our heaviest shot or the highest charges of powder. But look at this one. Woe be to the ship that is treated in this way, for you see that though it has some nine or ten inches of iron, and a very stiff wooden backing, it was pierced—in this case by a shell, which pushed its way nearly through the metal, and then burst. Look at the fifteen inches of oak behind, and the iron 'skin' behind that, shattered into hundreds of splinters, and most of the bolts and rivets started or broken off altogether. Better to have no resistance at all, you will say, than such a treacherous one as that. But go on a little further, and let us look at this large casemate and embrasure. Here is a spacious vaulted chamber for men, guns, powder-magazines, &c. and a small embrasure just wide enough to admit the muzzle of the gun. The iron is eleven inches thick, in horizontal layers, kept firmly together by plates before and behind, and backed by solid masonry; and you may see what frightful havoc was made with it by firing at it at a distance of one thousand yards. The whole place is knocked to pieces; the granite, eight and ten feet thick, split into halves; the gun not dismounted only, but broken up into bits; the whole archway of the casemate destroyed, and blocks of granite carried bodily away to some distance. This has shewn the uselessness of this kind of embrasure, and still more of granite walls. Still men must be protected while working ordnance; and it is becoming every day more evident that we shall have, sooner or later, to protect our shores and towns with earthworks and revolving turrets, in which to work heavy guns.

Let us pass on to that battery, and see what is going on. It is the new pattern of the muzzle-loading rifled nine-inch gun. The report of it is perfectly deafening, and well it may be, for, do you see, they are putting in something like a bolster into the gun. That, we are told, is a charge of forty-five pounds of powder, and the shot weighs three hundred pounds. But that is every way only half as large as this huge six hundred-pounder. This has been fired with some fifty odd rounds, when it then burst, for the metal could not stand the enormous charges. It is made of a steel 'core' or tube next the bore, with seven wrought-iron tubes, called 'coils,' shrunk on to it; that is, each is made so as to slip one over the other while at a red-heat, and as it cools, it contracts; thus holding the inner one as in a vice. The steel core could not stand the high charge, and opened at the grooves; to do this, it had to expand the other coils, which it did until two of the outer ones split open the whole of their length. The first six hundred-pounder, known as Big Will, had not a steel core, and stood five hundred rounds, and was undamaged at the end of it. From this, it is considered that the best wrought-iron is superior to steel in withstanding the pressure of explosion beyond a certain degree. Both these six hundred-pounders were turned out at the Elswick factory: the first was considered a very good one; the second burst; and a third—supposed to be superior to these two—is being made. This one is marked on its trunnions 51,074 pounds-weight, or over twenty-two tons; its greatest circumference is close

upon sixteen feet; and the bore is so large that you can easily put your head in it, and see the bottom of the bore. Yet, with these enormous proportions, it could not stand the high charges with which it was proved. The first two rounds were one hundred pounds of large-grained powder, and six-hundred-pound shot; the succeeding ones varied down to seventy-five pounds of powder, and five-hundred-and-fifty pound shot, till it burst at the fifty-fifth round. During these experiments, the remarkable appearance of each shot in its flight attracted great attention. After it had passed through the first five hundred or six hundred feet of its flight, a white halo was visible round the base of the shot, and became larger and more distinct until the shot struck the ground at its first graze. This peculiarity had never been observed before; in fact, it could hardly be produced with any projectile but those of such large calibre and weight.

The following is supposed to be the *rationale* of the phenomenon. In the case of a shot weighing from five hundred pounds to six hundred pounds, fired with charges varying from seventy-five pounds to one hundred pounds, it will readily be perceived that the pressure on the base of the shot must be much greater than in the case of a light projectile and lower charge. The gases thus liberated by the explosion become highly condensed behind the shot in the bore. Now, every shot moving with a greater velocity than that with which the air can close round it, carries behind it a vacuum, which becomes less perfect as the shot is retarded. In the instances noticed, it seems that a small portion of the highly condensed gases and vapour released by the explosion, filled the large vacuum behind the shot; and that these became visible, and by degrees clearer and more defined, as the shot lost velocity, and the air gradually mingled with them—in the same manner as the steam escaping from a boiler is so condensed that it must rise and mix with the air before it becomes perceptible. Two circumstances bear out this theory on the subject. Firstly, under a good telescope, this white halo presented a *radial* appearance, owing, no doubt, to the rotation imparted to the contained gases by the rifling of the shot—causing them in their escape to fly off tangentially. The second corroboration is, that at its first graze, the halo disappeared from behind the shot; or, carrying out the theory, the concussion against the ground dislodged the receptacle of the gases, and thus released them.

But let us stand behind this eight-inch gun while they are firing, where the report is less deafening, and where we can see the flight of the shot. You see the shot fall close by a line of pegs, called the range. These pegs are placed at an interval of fifty yards from each other, and are marked with their distance from the battery. There are thirteen or fourteen different ranges for the several batteries, laid out for special purposes—some for the trial of particular guns. The longest range is marked up to ten thousand yards; and the sands stretch as far again in that direction to low-water mark. The greater part of these sands belong to neighbouring manors, and government pays an annual sum of two hundred and fifty pounds for the right of firing over them; for in this country, as in many others, by a very old feudal law, the manorial rights extend 'as far as a man may ride on a roan horse into the sea.' The whole of this tract in

government use is carefully marked out with buoys and landmarks.

As they have ceased firing with this gun, let us go forward and examine those posts in front. There is an open frame about ten feet square attached to them, which we saw lowered after every shot. Down the sides of this frame are pins an inch apart; round these is wound, from side to side, a continuous copper wire; and forty feet further along the range are another couple of posts and a similar frame with wire. Every shot passes through these two, and cuts the wire, when the frame is pulled down, to have the wire renewed. The use of these is to ascertain the initial velocity of the shot. The ends of these wires are in connection with a galvanic battery a quarter of a mile off, which works a dial graduated to thousandths of a second. The gun is laid so that the shot shall pass through and cut both wires. The effect of cutting the nearest wire is to set the clock-work of the dial going, and of the second to stop it. This is performed so instantaneously by the aid of electricity as to give an exact reading of the minute portion of a second that the shot took to traverse the forty feet between the wires. This complicated and beautiful apparatus is the invention of a M. Narnez, of the Belgian artillery, and is considered one of the most perfect combinations of chemistry and mechanics for practical purposes.

Let us stop this sergeant, and learn what he is holding. It is a circular disc of canvas, stretched over a hoop about thirty inches in diameter, and held by a wooden handle about three feet long. It is painted black on one side, and white on the other. He tells us it is used for signalling. There is a man half a mile off who is talking with him by means of a similar one. You may notice that we see him against the sky on a parapet, therefore he shews us the black side; but this man shews him the white, because the sun is shining on it, and he can see it better than the black. He is signalling now. He twists the handle in his hand so as to turn it alternately perpendicular and visible to the other man, and then horizontal or invisible; and signs are made by the number and duration of the times it is visible; thus, one long and two short, two short, one long and one short, two long, one short and one long. This means: 'There will be practice to-morrow from the mortar battery.' There are two codes of signals—one of letters, by which words are spelled out; the other, an arbitrary one of numbers, similar to the naval code of flags, and made and read off according to a book of signals. Of course there are several methods of using these codes: one by the discs we have seen; another by a frame-work of slots similar to a Venetian blind, which are opened and shut simultaneously with one handle: this may be advantageously used against the white side of a house, or the sky.

Another contrivance is a piece of black canvas stretched over hoops, and which, when pulled open, looks like a barrel, or one of the signals used at naval stations to shew the weather. It closes together by a spring; so that, pulling it open for short or long spaces, and letting it close by itself, you may make the same signals. By night, a similar adaptation of signals is used, by flashing—that is, by uncovering, for the same spaces, a lantern containing a powerful light. It is easy to learn to use these instruments; the hand soon becomes accustomed to make the spaces quickly, and the eye to read them off; and the principle is

a very good one for signalling to great distances. It is the invention of an officer in the line. The large slots on the splinter-proof may be seen on a clear day at Sheerness, which is six miles distant; and with the aid of a large lamp and a powerful light, these signals may be distinguished on a clear night at great distances—eighteen or twenty miles. They would, of course, be extremely useful in case of war—always supposing that the code in use does not fall into the enemy's hands, as the French naval code did when Lord Cochrane seized one of their brigs with a copy on board, and managed to delude them with their own signals.

It would be difficult to count the varieties of guns here, mounted and dismounted, and issued or not as sealed patterns for service. So different are the occasions, the positions, and uses for which guns are required, that there must be, of necessity, many kinds; but the object of government now is to simplify these as much as possible, and to reduce their numbers. This, when accomplished, will save an immense amount of labour and confusion, both in their manufacture, their transport, and use. To this end are the constant experiments going on with guns of various merits and powers, and with different kinds of gunpowder as well as projectiles. Here lie guns of every sort—rifled nine-inch and eight-inch guns of various patterns; sixty-eight pounders; eight-inch smooth bores; thirty-two bore, and with a rifled steel coil screwed into it; Armstrongs of all calibres—one hundred and ten pounds, or seven-inch, forty-pounders, twenty-pounders, twelves, and nines; wedge guns; foreign guns of various forms, as the French and the Engström; smooth-bore service-guns of all calibres; mortars; old guns mounted on new pattern carriages to be experimented on; carriages with curiously fashioned wheels. Here is a gun without any trunnions at all; it does not lie on its carriage, but the carriage seems to fit into it: in place of trunnions, it has slots in its sides, into which projections on the sides of the carriage run. This is an arrangement to diminish recoil.

With regard to gunpowder, the present idea seems in favour of the large-grained. They are trying a powder with grains as large as peas, and hollow, called pellet-powder; but it is not thought well of, as too quick in combustion. At one of the batteries yonder, they are trying gunpowder mixed with charcoal, to obtain a less rapid ignition of the charge—it is the reason of that very black smoke. There, again, is an Armstrong: you may know it by the slow flight of the shot, and the peculiarly dense and yellow hue of the smoke: this is due to the large amount of lubricating grease made up in each cartridge.

The School of Gunnery is one of the most efficient and practical of our military institutions. It has several classes, called 'courses.' The chief of these is for the instruction of officers and non-commissioned officers (in the proportion of one of the former and two of the latter per brigade annually) in practical artillery, such as the entire service of rifled guns, and light and smooth bore ordnance and rocket-drill, pontooning and bridge-making. This course occupies a period of fifteen months, of which the first three are spent at Woolwich in a theoretical course of science as applied to artillery, such as electricity, mechanics, chemistry, &c. There are also shorter courses of instruction—one in rifled ordnance; another in the service of heavy ordnance, which includes the drill and practice

with the larger guns and mortars, mounting and dismounting guns by various methods, and gun and sheer drill; another is the annual practice of the mounted batteries; another, that of the garrison batteries. These various drills are superintended by four officers—a principal instructor in gunnery, and three assistants, with a staff of non-commissioned officers. There are usually three batteries of garrison artillery temporarily stationed at Shobury, to undergo the various courses of instruction, to perform the general duties of the garrison, and the fatigue-works of the experimental department. For these purposes, they generally remain eight or ten weeks, and are then relieved by others in their turn. Besides these, during the drill-season, several batteries of the horse and field brigades are sent down to carry on their annual practice; so that in the course of every twelve months several hundred men and officers have been under instruction. This is rather a quiet day; there seems more drill going on than practice, yet you feel rather bewildered with five or six guns blazing about you; but often, during the summer months, you would be deafened with the reports of a dozen pieces firing in every direction; and if you happen to be strolling along the beach, you may have to keep a sharp look-out for the various danger-flags, if you are not altogether stopped by the sentries. If we walk a few hundred yards further, we can visit the drill-shed, the lecture and drawing rooms. In the former—one of the finest of its kind in England—you may sometimes see one hundred and fifty men or more at artillery-drill of all kinds; here two or three detachments are drilling with thirty-two-pounders in a wooden casemate, and rushing about as if the fire of a dozen guns were on them; behind them are another batch of men, working at sixty-eight-pounders on traversing-platforms. In the middle of the shed is a large squad of the 'long course' dismounting a gun from a travelling-platform; and from long practice at working together, they seem to make light of its fifty hundredweights, and treat it as a toy. Beyond them is a party raising a gun by means of a triangle gyn. The other end of the shed is devoted to Armstrong guns, where a fresh battery is being initiated into the mysteries of time-fuses and tangent scales; while near the end-wall is a batch of recruits learning the intricacies of all kinds of knots and bends. You were noticing just now how the officers and non-commissioned officers were mixed together at drill, hauling on the same ropes, and working together, and the difference between this and the parade of a regiment of the line, where the officers are supposed only to command; but this is the *régime* of the place. While at this instruction, just as there is no royal road to learning, so while at work, difference of rank subsides, and all put their shoulders equally to the wheel. And this must needs have a beneficial effect on both; for as there is the same respect paid from the soldier to his superior as ever, this is one of the few occasions where familiarity does not breed contempt; for, on the contrary, by mutual help, the officer gains trust and interest in his men; and the men, esteem for their officers.

At one end of the shed is the drawing-room. Here are a number of non-commissioned officers, learning military drawing. Some of their best etchings and sketches hang round the room; and beautifully done they are; for most of them have the appearance of engravings, even under a close

inspection. At the other end is the model and lecture room. The walls are covered with drawings of machinery used in making gunpowder, bullets, and shot; and with photographs of various subjects, and models, *en petit*, of guns and carriages.

Shoburyness is found to be one of the healthiest stations in England, for in a garrison of about five hundred souls—in spite of the great heat in summer on these marshes, and exposure to the bitter cold of the north and east winds in winter—the office of surgeon is almost a sinecure, there being but a very small percentage of sick, and very rarely an accident, owing to the careful arrangements that are necessary with such dangerous arms and materials.

The practical nature of the duties, and rough and hard work at Shoburyness, present to a stranger an appearance of much more real and business-like preparation for the sterner field of active service than do the more formal and precise, yet feather-bed soldiering and etiquette of a garrison town; and teaches a large and magnificent arm of our service that an intimate acquaintance with the thews and sinews of war, and with the smallest details of their work, and an aptitude for applying all available resources at hand in time of difficulty, must underlie all the amenities of home-service, and the more sedentary accomplishments of the pen and red-tape.

It is extremely to be regretted that the authorities at the Horse Guards are so impairing the efficiency of the brigades of garrison artillery by diminishing the field of their scientific employments, and reducing them to little more than the narrow limits of battalion and company drill, and garrison duties, that belong essentially to the regiments of the line; and that they are gradually taking from them professional duties peculiarly their own, such as surveying and astronomy, telegraphy, pontooning, and the construction of their own earthworks and batteries in the field.

In spite of all that has been fulminated by papers actuated by party-spirit or private ill-will; in spite of omissions and defects that must be discovered in all human judgments—it is impossible to overlook the fact that, since the days of the last war, our two establishments—the arsenal at Woolwich, the largest and most inexhaustible in the world; and the experimental department at Shoburyness—have kept the *matériel* ahead of that of all foreign nations; while the School of Gunnery, though later established, has had an important effect in educating and improving our *personnel*—combining to render our Regiment of Artillery still foremost among the armies of the earth.

WINTER-LIFE IN LAPPMARK.

TAKING THE CENSUS.

I ACCEPTED the offer of accompanying an official one winter, whose duty it was to take the census in Finnmarken, Norway's most northerly province. It was not a very pleasant time for travelling in the far north; nor was it without feelings of regret that I arose from my warm bed, with its eider-down quilt, in Tromsøe, the morning of my departure, for I knew it would be some weeks before I should sleep so comfortably again.

In perfect health, in warm fur-cloaks, ditto caps and gloves, and boots of seal-skin, we left home,

on the said biting February morning, on a journey that would take us three weeks, during which it would be an impossibility to sleep under what is properly termed a roof.

The weather, which of late had been very stormy, cleared up, which fact, as we had a hundred and fifty miles to travel before reaching the first Lapp, was no undesirable thing. Of course, we travelled in sledges drawn by reindeer. It is not an unpleasant mode of transit, provided one has a good deer, and knows how to drive it. Of course, a tyro must expect to be turned over about every hundred yards; but an experienced whip, by hand, voice, and eye, can make a well-disposed reindeer do what he likes. But sometimes they take it into their heads to be disagreeable; indeed, I remember once laughing as if I should kill myself at a friend of mine who had a vicious deer. All at once, the animal turned right round, and looked at the driver, as much as to say: 'You lay that rope across my back again, and I'll let you know where you are!' The driver, however, did soon after give him another touch, when round whips the deer, and charges his driver, and sends him spinning into the snow. Laughing, and the deep snow, rendered it almost impossible for me to get to his aid, though the infuriated beast was striking at him violently. 'Get under the pulk (sledge),' I cried. It had been turned over. So he crawled under till the reindeer's passion was over. It was a scene worth witnessing, I can tell you.

Well, the cold was intense, especially one memorable night, when our hair, and beards, and eyelashes froze into such a compact mass that we thought our beauty must have been for ever spoiled. So severe was it, that though famishing with hunger, we dared not take off our fur-gloves, to get the food out of the provision-bag. I did do so on one occasion, to my great sorrow; for the cold had such an effect on my hand that it felt as if it was being pricked all over with pins and needles, and my fingers assumed a crooked form. As for our poor feet, they were literally without feeling; and to add to our miseries, both our noses got frozen. It had been agreed upon between us to keep guard over each other's noses, and directly we should see danger in the tip, to give timely notice thereof to the owner.

'Your nose is certainly bitten,' all at once ejaculated my companion in a tone which made me jump. 'See if you can feel it.'

'Deuce a bit,' I answered, as I jumped out of the pulk, and got a handful of snow, in which I bathed it and rubbed it gently till the pale tallowy look had disappeared, and animation had returned. But it soon came to my turn.

'Why, yours is frozen, I do declare,' I sang out.

'The devil—so it is!' and out jumped my friend, tumbling a header in the snow, thus giving nose and all the upper-works a complete snow-bath.

Yes, that was a cold night; and you, reader, will think the same when I tell you that the thermometer sunk to thirty-six degrees below zero Fahrenheit.

Stiff with cold, and starving with hunger, we reached the first Lapp encampment on the fifth day; we hailed it, need I say, with as much delight as if it had been a first-class hotel.

Those of my readers whose lot it has not been to visit a Lapp tent, might possibly like to have some idea about it and of its domestic economy. Imagine, then, some thirty poles, about one inch

and a half thick, set up aslant, so that their tops form a circle some two feet in diameter. Then round these poles imagine a thick covering, forming the sides and roof of the tent. The door is of the same material. The first thing that meets the eye, on peeping into this uninviting residence, is a pile of wood burning in the centre of the tent. If you enter, the next thing that meets it is the smoke, which at once suggests the expediency of assuming a devotional attitude, for it floats in the form of a thick ceiling, some few feet above the ground, on which alone the atmosphere is comparatively pure. The furniture is very homely, and the domestic arrangements of the most simple nature, and therefore readily described. The floor, which consists of fir-boughs and birch-twigs, is covered with reindeer and other skins, which serve as quilts or bolsters at night; some provision-bags form excellent pillows; and this, I think, is about all in respect to furniture. The ground, of course, is bed, chair, and table.

The people are divided into two sections round the fire; of which the one is composed of the ladies, the other, of the gentlemen. On entering, the stranger is very hospitably received, but particularly requested to leave the door, and close it after him as quickly as possible. He is then invited to seat himself by the ladies. After the usual compliments have been passed, and particular inquiries as to everybody's health in the tent been made, the coffee-pot is put in requisition. As a rule, the Lapps are very curious—I might say inquisitive. No wonder, therefore, that any one who has just left the civilised world is bombarded with all kinds of questions, which he must try and answer in the best way he can, while the host is cutting, or rather pulling, off a juicy reindeer steak.

Never did dish taste so grandly as that reindeer steak; and if the fire hadn't roasted one's face, and if one's back hadn't smarted with cold, I should have thought myself in Elysium, after the cold dreary journey we had taken.

At last, night came on (of course it had been night all day, for, as you will remember, the sun is too busy in other parts of the world at this season to shine in Lapland), or rather bedtime came on, bringing with it, of course, visions of a four-poster, white curtains, and an eider-down quilt, besides the snowy clean sheets. But where are they? Look well around you, and then make up your mind to make yourself as comfortable as you can, under existing circumstances, and don't mind the ladies. Pull your warm fur-cap down over your ears, and don't think of taking off your fur-cloak (mine never once came off from the time I left home till I returned to the Penates: dirty of me, perhaps; but very warm, my good friend, very warm!); pop your legs into a hay-bag, pull your gloves on, and cover yourself up with a skin, and then good-night, and God bless you. No doubt, you will freeze a little; probably, you won't sleep a wink; but never mind, you'll soon get used to it. The dogs—of which there were thirteen—kindly took a fancy to sleeping on my legs; and I'm sure I was very much obliged to them for keeping them so nice and warm, and I didn't mind the fleas!

From life inside, we will now pass to life out of doors. Generally, the tent is pitched on the margin of a lake, under the shelter of some large pine-trees. The site, in the present instance, was most

romantic ; nature magnificent, but devoid of life ; not even a bird was to be heard. Everything seemed not at home, and a deadly silence reigned supreme. No wonder, then, that the appearance of a live being is hailed with delight. Taking the census in the tent was soon ended, and now off to the reindeer herd. The Lapp on ski (snow-shoes), accompanied by his pack of dogs, plunges into the forest. The spectators—namely, myself and companion—were stationed on a place agreed on. All is still, till suddenly the barking of the dogs in the forest, accompanied by a crashing, rushing sound, affords a relief to the ear, and presently to the eye, for in a few minutes a sight is presented which many would gladly witness. Imagine the whole scene, which just before appeared so destitute of animal life, suddenly to become enlivened ; imagine the graceful reindeer rushing in hundreds from all parts of the forest towards the lake, where they are headed by the dogs. These sagacious animals know each turn of their master's voice, and drive the herd to the appointed spot with the precision of a collie-dog. But the front rank press on to the lake, whereon the master again calls to the dogs, and makes them a signal ; they understand it, and drive the deer back. At last, they are assembled in the desired place, and offer a sight I would not exchange for any tableau in the world. The Lapp then proceeds to divide them into two bodies, after which they are allowed a few moments' peace, and we begin taking the census. Generally, when the owner has thus got all his deer together, he may need one for domestic use ; accordingly, he enters within the circle, and begins to examine the distinguishing ear-marks, till at last he has fixed on the animal he requires. And now stillness in the camp prevails no longer, for none of the reindeer have any particular wish to be lassoed. You hear a shrill whistling sound as the long rope uncoils itself through the air ; the deer's horns are entangled in the lasso, and the rest of his companions retire, to leave him to his fate. Now the fun begins in real earnest. The Lapp at one end of a long line of fifty feet, and the reindeer at the other, afford two striking contrasts. The not very graceful movements of the former, which accompanied his exertions to keep a tight hold of his prey ; and, on the other hand, the reindeer dancing a most charming minuet, more aerial than any ballet-dancer can execute, afford us the pleasure of witnessing a *pas de deux* which is as comic as it is graceful.

I will not weary my reader's patience by asking him to follow me on my journey from tent to tent, and from settlement to settlement ; the journey might be as fatiguing to him as it was cold and unpleasant, I cannot say uninteresting, to us. In describing one tent and its occupants, I have described all. The reindeer herds are just the same ; there is the same hospitable reception awaiting us—the same uncomfortable nights—the same frozen nose-tips ! Rather, then, let me direct his attention to Fjeld-life in general, and to Lapp characteristics in particular.

The ease with which the reindeer makes its way through the masses of snow is wonderful. It seems scarcely credible that so small an animal can wade up to its belly in the snow, and yet be able to drag a pulk containing a good weight (I am fourteen stone without my boots) after it. Often my pulk would sink so deep that it was exactly as if one was passing through a snow-cutting, the

sides of which towered far above one's head. Often, too, it made me grieved to see what hard work it was for the poor patient beast, and yet how obediently it would obey the rein, attached to its left horn—how meekly it would receive a whacking, giving utterance perhaps to a grunt, while its tongue would hang down out of its mouth—a sure sign of distress. To say nothing of their numberless enemies in the summer, in the shape of all kinds of insects, and not to speak of their winter-foes, the wolves, it is often terribly hard work for them to find provender during this latter season ; for the moss on which alone they feed is frequently at a depth of several feet below the surface of the snow, and this they have to scratch on one side, and bore a deep hole till they find it ; and it frequently happens that when they have worked hard for a length of time, their mining operations prove fruitless, for there is no moss. But the young calves, how do they manage ? They are not strong enough to scratch the snow aside, like the old ones ; so they stand around, waiting for the pieces of moss to be scratched up, which the old deer in its burrowing scatters far and wide.

The Fjeld Lapps are fast diminishing in numbers, as are their reindeer herds ; for instance, a man who, ten years ago, owned two thousand head of reindeer, has now not more than three hundred and fifty head left ; consequently, poverty has begun to make its appearance among them, and with it the difficulty of existing only on the Fjelds. Numbers of them, accordingly, have moved nearer to the sea-coast, where the rich cod and herring fisheries furnish them with the means of subsistence.

The Fjeld Lapp has many more difficulties to struggle against than people are aware of, for it is only those who can talk their language, and who visit them in their abodes, that can form any adequate idea of their real circumstances. Though living generally on the borders of wild forest tracts, they have countless enemies to contend against. In summer, frequent are the quarrels among neighbouring settlements concerning the right of pasture ; while in winter, there are the wolves to engross their attention. The havoc these brutes commit is inconceivable. In one winter, they killed a hundred and fifty head out of one herd. That same year, the same man lost three hundred other deer. They strayed across the Russian frontier, and were at once appropriated by the Russian Finns. But independently of these natural hardships, as we may term them, they have another and a no less pressing one to submit to. By the law of the country, they are bound to convey travellers certain stages. A man has often to send, or rather take his deer to the station whither he has been ordered, a hundred and fifty miles distant from his home, to convey a traveller a distance of forty miles. Accordingly, he has to travel altogether three hundred and eighty miles ! It takes him about a fortnight, under the most favourable circumstances ; but often, when the weather is bad, four weeks. And now for his remuneration. According to the fixed tariff, he receives two dollars for the journey, out of which he has to pay all his own expenses, and to find fodder for his deer ; and thus he finds himself out of pocket some three or four dollars.

The powers of endurance of these hardy little people are as marvellous as are those of their reindeer, as the following well-authenticated anecdote

will, I think, shew. One May, a couple of Lapp families had encamped on a certain place, in order to superintend the calving of their hinds; but as the wolves proved troublesome, and would not leave the deer at peace, they deemed it best to shift their quarters to a place about a hundred miles off. But as some of the hinds had only recently calved, two half-grown girls were left behind, with a tent and provisions for a whole month, to see after them. When night drew on, the girls went to keep watch over their little herd, and, it seems, fell asleep. Little did they dream of what was about to happen.

Meanwhile, the father of the family, who had been absent for some weeks by the sea-side, and who therefore knew nothing about what had taken place, returned unexpectedly during the night; and finding the tent devoid of inmates, concluded that some calamity had happened, and had induced the family to shift their quarters, and that they had left tent and provisions behind, in case of his return. Little thinking that two of his olive branches were sleeping but a short distance off, he immediately set to work, and packed up everything, and started off in pursuit. The surprise of the poor girls on awaking can scarcely be imagined; but they suspected what had happened, so, instead of sitting down and crying about it, they started off, like sensible girls, on the trail, having first collected their little herd together. Thus they drove them, day and night, till, at last, on the morning of the eighth day, they reached the end of their journey. The long fast, and the exertion they had undergone—for they never stopped day or night, and had only one biscuit and some milk to subsist on all that time—made them very ill for a long time.

Now, that a Lapp can go without food for a protracted period, is as much a matter of fact as that he eats to repletion when he gets a chance. Eating with him is a business. I suppose he must have several stomachs, like the camel, or else that he is a ruminant animal, and chews the cud. A Lapp, by the way, eats but once in the twenty-four hours, but then he lays in enough for six days.

Generally speaking, the Lapps are a very religious, and frequently very fanatical people. One Saturday, I remember we arrived at an encampment, and after we had talked on all manner of topics, one of the party urgently begged us to stay the Sunday over, and hold prayers for them and the neighbouring families. Though but little used to that sort of thing, we of course complied. Indeed, so eager did the poor people seem to attend at the service, that one man who was obliged to keep guard that night over the rein-flocks, begged us not to begin till he should be able to get back from his post next morning—some nine or ten miles distant. Sunday came, and with it the watcher; and my companion, who could speak the language fluently, filled the priestly office; and I can confidently aver that, in the midst of those desert wilds, I listened to the best sermon I ever heard in my life. It was earnest, to the point, and short! What more can be desired?

Both on our return, and on our journey out, I had on several occasions been struck with the extraordinary acuteness the Lapps possess in finding their road in the dark. One day especially I remember; we were on the bare Fjeld, when a violent snow-storm overtook us. The wind whistled, and the flakes of snow pelted in our faces, so that it was impossible to see a handbreadth in advance. Of

course, we left it to our guide to steer. They say that dogs possess the faculty of being able to smell out their way in the dark, and I certainly think our Lapp must have made use of his olfactory organs on the present occasion, for I cannot conceive which of his other senses he could have employed; he managed to hit off the only pass there was down into the valley with the utmost ease and certainty. Only on two occasions did he seem at a loss, and then but for a moment, and on we dashed again, faster than ever, to the great disgust of the deer, who seemed to approve of the pelting snow as little as the travellers behind them. While I was calculating on the contingency of our having to be out all night in the open, and wondering whether we should not be quite snowed up by the morning, a sudden bound awoke me from my reverie, the pulk seemed to fall down suddenly several feet, and the next moment we found ourselves in comparative quiet in the valley below. It was still here, and there was no snow pelting in our faces; but we could hear the wind howling above our heads, as if in wrathful ire that we had escaped it.

Now for the first time I was able to speak to our guide, and express my admiration at the sagacity he had displayed.

‘If I could not find my way,’ he replied in a proud tone, ‘I should be unworthy the name of a Fjeld Lapp.’ And he was right; for if these people do not possess many other good qualities, certainly in the matter of finding their road in the dark they are unsurpassed.

It was better travelling now; and late in the evening we reached a humble dwelling belonging to a family of the Skolte Finns. It was a wooded structure without a roof, and only covered above by a few thin boards, through which light, rain, and wind could easily penetrate. I think a brief description of these strange people may be interesting. The Skolte Finns are a cross between the Lapps and the Russian Finns, a sort of bastard Lapp, if such a term can be applied to a human being; neither fish nor fowl, speaking neither Russian nor Finnish, in fact, no language at all. They are a very peculiar people; acknowledging outwardly the Greek-Catholic religion, but in reality, like many other people, observing none.

The family in question consisted of a man, his wife, two sons, and two daughters, all of whom were originals. Their dress was a comic medley of Russian and Lappish attire; only the head-dress was peculiar to the tribe. The old wife was a regular harridan, and scolded, I dare say swore, like a Turk; and was highly indignant with us for presuming to drink out of her water-vessel, and for lighting our pipes. She considered it sinful!

But the filth and the accompanying stench rendered a little tobacco a necessity, so we continued to puff away, as if we did not understand what she meant. I will not speak of the insects that swarmed in myriads; suffice it to say, that this was doubtless the head-quarters of all the B-flats in the country.

I know there is a fish that is cooked with its *inwards* in—the red mullet, I think; the wood-cock of the sea; but that, I believe, is the only fish that will bear such treatment. These people, however, seemed to think differently, for they cooked their fish, a kind of cod, whole. ‘It makes the soup stronger,’ they said! Supper over, which consisted of the above fish boiled with its internals, the whole family began to bow and to cross them-

selves, that is, to manœuvre with the forefinger from the forehead down to the stomach, and then transversely from shoulder to shoulder; giving utterance meanwhile to several strange sounds, which might have been prayers, but resembled hiccoughs! And indeed I am inclined to think it was more a matter of form than of devotion; for in the middle of it two of the children grabbed hold of a fish, and began to fight over it, whereon their mother stopped short in her religious exercise, and most emphatically punched their heads! After grace, or whatever it be termed, we were witnesses to a scene I have never seen before, and trust I may never see repeated. It was a washing-scene. I suppose they considered that washing belonged to the luxuries of life, and therefore adopted a simpler but very ingenious method of performing their ablutions. First, they filled their mouths with water, which they spat out again into the hollow of their hands, and then commenced scrubbing away at their begrimed faces; the result of which was, that, after repeated applications, a whitish-brown patch gradually made its appearance in the middle of the face, looking like a dirty blotch set in a black frame.

We passed a most uncomfortable night on the floor, and left a great portion of ourselves behind, for we were almost devoured (but let me be silent; the mere remembrance of it educes a scratching tendency); we were glad when morning came, and it was time to leave the roof of this distinguished family.

Learning that there were some Quæn settlements on our road, we determined to pay them a visit. In one of their huts, we found an old man of seventy years of age. He looked as dirty and as filthy as the rest of them; but still there was an air about him that proclaimed that he had seen better days. He walked up to us, and shook us by the hand, addressing us in pure Swedish. After having described to him our journey, its haps and mishaps, he again astonished us by speaking in the Latin tongue. Imagine Latin being talked in the wilds of Finmarken! My friend excused himself from participating in the conversation by avowing his entire ignorance of that tongue; but I, who had once learned it at school, thought it *infra dig.* not to pay him back in the same coin. To ransack my stock of Latin words was easily done, for alas! I could not find above ten.

'*Latine loqueris, Domine?*' he began.
'*Etiam, Domine!*' And I could get no further. Indeed, the only course open to me was either to follow the plan Holberg makes a worthy dean adopt, who, when he found himself at a loss in Latin conversation, took refuge in declining *Musa* aloud, to the bewilderment of his listeners; or else to beat a retreat. I adopted the latter course, and we conversed in Swedish and in German for the rest of the time. Our host, he told us, had formerly been a student in the theology at the Russian university of Helsingfors; but his father having died, and misfortunes overtaking him, he had been compelled to relinquish the idea of entering orders; and at length, after undergoing several vicissitudes, had pitched his tent in the remote wilds, where he hoped to remain till he died. It made one feel sad to see a well-educated man thus cut off from contact with the civilised world, and buried among the Fjelds and snow of the Finmark wilds. But we had no time to stay and commiserate with him, but, bidding him adieu, pushed on towards home.

After fourteen days' and nights' hard travelling, we reached the Penates once more, glad to be able at last to change our clothes; happy to be able to sit down to a clean and comfortable meal, and charmed above all to turn in between clean sheets, and dream till far on in the next day about reindeer minuets, Latin-speaking Quæns, and the ablutions of Skolte Finns.

THE INTEREST OF A SHILLING.

IN SIX CHAPTERS.

CHAPTER I.—CATCHING THE OMNIBUS.

'In five minutes I must be off, Grace, dear,' said Mr Hargrave.

'What! without kissing baby? O fie, Ned! cruel Ned!' said his pretty young wife, darting up-stairs for the unconscious cherub.

Mr Hargrave, cashier in the well-known bank of Messrs Brettles, Crevasse, and Glashier, Fenchurch Street, put on his hat, and took up his neat gloves and trim umbrella, and opened the front-door of his little cottage in Elm Tree Road, Holloway, and by so doing let into the narrow hall an irresistible flood of sunshine, that instantly covered the smart new oil-cloth with a sheet of leaf-gold that eclipsed all its garish colours.

There were few happier men in Holloway, that pleasant June morning, than the young husband standing on his snowy-white door-step, waiting to kiss his child before he started to business, and the care and fret of a long day in the city. The custard-coloured and great purple roses blooming over the doorway were waving gently and proudly in the sunshine; the canary sang hilariously in the parlour; baby crowed from the bedroom; Betty, the fat little maid-of-all-work, sang a country ditty in the kitchen. Far down the road, there sounds that pleasant suburban cry—so musical, so well-cadenced, so full of summer reminiscences—'Any ornaments for your fire-stoves?' A glimpse of the vender's banners, of coloured paper, could be caught round the corner by the baker's. The other way, towards Highgate, came a large open truck, full of flowering geraniums, propelled by a hearty, cheery, young costermonger, who was offering a laughing servant-girl at a lilac-shadowed garden-gate, 'Any one you like for an old hat, my dear.' The gracious warmth and gaiety of summer pervaded the air. The distant roll of the Highgate omnibuses, sweeping down towards London, came upon the ear with a pleasant sense of animation. The great city was awaking to its toil; the upper-crust workmen were hurrying gaily to their work.

'Now then, Grace—now then, quick's the word,' said Mr Hargrave reproachfully; 'not another moment.' Stern despot, and not two years married.

'Here's pet, you cruel, impatient tyrant,' said the smiling young wife, as she placed the baby in her husband's arms.

As Mr Hargrave stooped to kiss it, a great purple rose let fall a shower of leaves upon his hat, and one of them fluttered down upon the little rosy face of baby. The blue eyes, so like those of the

mother, laughed, and the tiny hands stretched out to seize the leaf.

'Dear little pet!' said the mother, showering kisses on it, as she took it back into her arms.—'Do you know, Ned,' she said—'it is very foolish, but I never see you come home of an evening but I fancy you'll run in and surprise me by telling me all at once that you have been made a partner.'

'Very likely, Grace, you little goose, you.'

'Well, there have been more unlikely things, Ned. They all like you very much.—I do hope that's not true what the paper said yesterday about a panic coming. Oh, how dreadful that would be! Suppose anything happened to Messrs Brettles, Crevasse, and Glashier.'

'Don't let foolish people's talk get into your silly head. There's no panic coming. With honesty and prudence, there'll be no run on any one—a little alarm, perhaps, but soon over. Your own little silly head runs alternately on partnerships and panics. Old Mrs Grandsham again, I suppose—chattering, spiteful old woman; why do you listen to her?'

'Well, Ned, don't be angry. I don't listen to her; but how can I help being alarmed when she tells me every one is afraid there will be a panic?'

'Stuff and nonsense about a panic. Our house is firm as St Paul's. I never saw our partners look so cheerful as yesterday, when the silly rumour was about. But there's that rotten concern of Shatterton and Gilberts; they're rather rickety, but then they have been so for five years.—Good-bye, dear—I shall be late. Good-bye. Don't you trouble yourself now, mind, with City matters.'

'There is no fear,' said his wife to herself, as the garden-gate slammed after him. 'Ned is all truth. No; there is not a shadow on his face. Then all that Mrs Grandsham told me was nonsense—perhaps said to vex me.' And she tossed her baby in the air, till it shook down a bunch of roses, and crowed with delight.

CHAPTER II.—THE SHABBY-GENTEEL MAN.

Hargrave had walked about a mile along the road, when the Highgate omnibus came racing behind him—harness rattling, whip cracking gaily, driver hailing cheerily every one he passed: 'Islington, City Road, Bank, Fenchurch Street.' He was a jovial driver; and as for the conductor, he was a wit.

The omnibus stopped for Hargrave.

'Sorry, Mustur Hargrave, we couldn't keep your seat this morning nohow,' said the driver, touching his hat. 'Sporting friend of mine going up.'

Hargrave said it was no matter at all, in a pleasant, hearty way, and got inside. He was one of those good-natured, agreeable men that nothing ruffles. He was happy, and determined to be pleased. The sunshine did not scorch him; it was just warm enough; the air was pleasant. The loss of the box-seat—that was indifferent. The smallest things amused him: boys going to school and skirmishing with their bags of books; servant-girls coquetting with the tradesmen's emissaries; old gentlemen driving in to business; haymakers resting at roadside public-houses; children dancing round a laughing organ-man—passed like snatches of a pleasant panorama before his eyes. There was no anxiety, no feverish greediness about him. He

was not a slave of Mammon at all; his idols were Independence and Domestic Love. He was a happy, honest man, who tried to do his duty in life, and earn a competence in a reasonable time. The usual average of people got in and out: a fat, anxious, hot-faced woman, with a bundle tied up in a handkerchief, and a hand-basket; a sailor-boy, a farmer, two city clerks, an old maid with wiry ringlets and a roll of music, a ruefully poor woman, a drawing-master, and a baby.

A quarter of a mile before the *Angel*, a tall, thin, old gentleman, shabby-genteel in dress, and remarkable for a queer brown spencer (an impoverished sort of old-fashioned garment at the best of times), beneath which depended two lank, rusty, black-coat tails, hailed the omnibus by raising silently in the air a large faded umbrella, and got in.

The conductor winked, as he approached, to Hargrave, who sat near the door.

'Here comes one of your regular old begging-letter impostors,' he said. 'They always try to do the clerical dodge. I know 'em.—Here, come along,' he shouted; 'we can't wait about all day. Look alive, old gentleman.—My eyes, wouldn't he do to let out as a scarecrow? His wittles don't cost much. He'd do for the apothecary without starving—~~he~~ would.'

The other passengers laughed. Jokes against poverty and leanness are always telling. The fat man enjoyed it; the old maid, who had just been paid for a quarter, smiled, after her manner; the farmer, rejoicing in many beeves, chuckled selfishly. Hargrave alone looked at the new arrival with rather pity than ridicule.

Old age alone is bad enough; but sickly and impoverished, it is worthy of all tenderness. Youth is the time when we can best bear the rain and the storm—the loss of those we love—the cruel grave, opening for its victim, and closing up on it while we pray in vain—the disappointments of friendship, and the gathering of bitter experiences; the time to reap the thorns we sowed, and drink the gall we have brewed for ourselves. Age should bask calmly in the afterglow of twilight; and, solaced, cherished, indulged, forgiven, sit with folded hands, waiting for the inevitable but silent blow. A disconsolate, childless, sordid old age, racked with sickness, tormented with poverty, and uncheered by love, is surely one of the saddest sights in this earth of ours.

So thought Hargrave—by no means an unreflective man—as the new-comer arranged a treaty of knees with him, and sat down by the door, facing him deprecatingly, with his long poddy black gloves on the top of the yellow ivory knob of his seedy umbrella. His tight threadbare trousers were greasy at the knees, and scarcely contrived to reach to the pinched drab gaiters that partly covered the old wrinkled boots. His hat was of a bygone fashion, and half-covered with coarse dusty crape. The very ribbon of his watch was grimy, and betrayed poverty. The old gentleman in the spencer had a long, pale, but not unpleasant face; a long, thin, prominent nose, small lips, a long chin, and scant gray whiskers; yet the expression was good, and the eyes had a depth in them that could not be overlooked. The old gentleman in the spencer might be poor, but he was certainly no beggar; he might be a low bill-discounter, but he was no man to be insulted or patronised.

With the kindly feeling with which old age

looks back and sees in bright vigorous youth its own past, the shabby-genteel man eyed Hargrave from time to time. There were indeed worse faces than that calm bright one before him, crowned with a luxuriance of wavy brown hair. The large brown eyes were so manful, and so frank and unsuspecting in their expression; the mouth so firm without sternness; the whole bearing of the man so self-reliant, without being contemptuous or insolent. There was no guile possible in such a man. Yet the feeling in seeing him was that he was not a man to be trifled with either. Presently they began to talk. The old gentleman in the spencer asked Mr Hargrave if he was a business-man—had partly guessed he was. Was there any chance of the long-dreaded panic coming? Was it not pretty nearly sure that some of the old houses were tottering? Was there any fear of (say) Brettles, Crevasse, and Glashier? Of course it was all up with Shatterton and Gilberts.

The old gentleman did not speak like an alarmist; but still he evidently had fears. He did not talk like one who felt much interest in the question. Alas! those rubbed elbows and those worn knees were not the signs of a man who had much to lose. His pale eyes grew a little more firm, and the pupils a little darker and larger, as he leaned on that old companion, the umbrella, and waited, with one thin hand scooped up towards his left ear (the omnibus rumbled so), for Hargrave's answers.

Hargrave replied with careless buoyancy (for he hardly relished being catechised by a rather doubtful stranger); but the quiet, unobtrusive manner of the old man rather won upon him, and he condescended to answer categorically. He derided all idea of a panic—rumours spread abroad by interested persons. He knew of no old house that was tottering. It mattered little to any one but Gilberts and Shatterton what became of Shatterton and Gilberts. From his own experience (here he looked rather angry, and his brow contracted)—being, he was proud to say, cashier of Messrs Brettles, Crevasse, and Glashier—he could affirm that never had that firmly established house been more triumphantly prosperous, more certain to ride through the worst storm that could blow up for mischief. He would scarcely be believed if he mentioned the amount to which the securities then in their safes had reached.

The old gentleman looked down, and pinched a tube of straw under the bulging ferule of his umbrella; and when he looked up, a rueful smile just raised the corners of his lips.

'You are sanguine,' he said: 'young men should be. I suppose I was once. May you be right. God trust you are so; but I doubt. I never saw swallows fly low unless rain was near. The bears are about and growling.'

'But it is so. It is my business, sir, to know that it is so.'

'You are young and happy; you see things as you wish to see them. I know the signs of bad weather too well. Glass bottles are brittle as they used to be, and brittle things will break.'

The old gentleman laid a certain emphasis on the word *brittle* the first time, and infused a certain acidity into it the second, that rather nettled the young man.

'If you mean a bad pun on the name of one of the partners of our house,' he said, effervescing, 'I say it was an impertinent thing, and'—

'Your fares, gentlemen, if you please,' said a

rough voice at the door. The omnibus had stopped at the entrance to a stable-yard in Fenchurch Street; it had reached its destination.

The old gentleman was first and nearest the door, and he pulled off a long podded black glove with his teeth, and proceeded to get his purse from his right-hand trousers-pocket: it was not there; in his left—it was not there either; in his spencer breast-pocket—no; in his waistcoat—no; in his tail-pocket—right—no; in his left tail-pocket—no. A slight pink flush came on his cheek-bones—his lips grew dry with ill-concealed nervousness. He looked uneasily round, and then on the cushion behind where he sat.

'It's very odd,' he said—'very careless of me—dear me, how very careless—but I'm really afraid I've left my purse at home.'

'Now then, sir; don't keep the gents all day,' said the conductor, clashing his pocketful of pence spitefully.

'I really don't know what to do. Suppose I leave it till to-morrow, conductor?'

'Oh, that's your little game, is it, you old duffer?' said the conductor with insolent violence. 'O no; you don't get the pull over me in that way. You pay, or I'll have you up, right off. Come, where's your money? Pay up.'

The old gentleman buttoned his spencer together, and looked round. A crowd began to collect; some street-boys began to shout and practise bird-calls and thieves' whistles.

'Jack, here's a row—here's an old gent's cheek-ign Fighting Jo. Wire in.'

One good-natured old woman called for the police, and of course the more she called, the more the police did not come.

'Come, come, sir, pay the man,' said the other impatient people, trying to jostle out of that long cave of an omnibus, the entrance to which was impeded by that troublesome old cheat (as some one called him).

'Pay like a man!' shouted the boys.

'Can any gentleman oblige me with sixpence?' said the old man (now palpably a mere Joseph Adey), turning round nervously with calm entreaty. 'I've left my purse in another coat, and I do not wish to incur any more of this vulgar fellow's insolence.—Most careless of me; a most unpleasant thing; but I have no remedy, for I won't trust my watch with such a low fellow as this. It would only encourage him in such conduct.—Will no one oblige me?'

The other passengers looked cross, or blank, or insolently amused, but not one produced the solicited sixpence.

'Call the perlice!' shouted the conductor. 'I'll have it out of him. Strike me silly, if I don't have it out of him in half an hour, if there's justice at the Mansion'-us. Old scoundrel!'

A feeling of pity came over Hargrave as he stood watching the scene. Half ashamed of himself at being, perhaps, after all the mere victim of an old trick, he handed the old man a shilling, and begged to relieve him from the accidental annoyance. One or two of the passengers laughed, and winked at the crowd.

The old man in the spencer, cheat as he might be, behaved with all the conventions of a gentleman: he lifted his well-worn hat, and bowed to Hargrave as he took the shilling; then he handed it to the conductor, who had thrust his tongue into his cheek, and was shouting to the driver.

'My last ride with you, my man,' he said.

'Don't want to see you again, for you are not our sort at all,' retorted Fighting Jo, giving him the change.

'I have to thank you, sir,' said the old man, as he walked for a moment at Hargrave's side, 'for shewing some confidence in poor human nature. Sir, I thank you extremely. It was the act of a gentleman, and a good heart prompted it. I will not insult you by asking you where I shall return the shilling. Good-morning, sir; and may your hopes about business affairs prove all my fears to be fallacious. I wish you a very good-morning, sir; and once more thank you.'

'What a tongue the old fellow has, and perhaps does the same thing almost every day. Well, I suppose it is a wicked city, this London,' thought Hargrave to himself, as the old gentleman in the spencer walked rapidly back northward.

CHAPTER III.—GLASS BOTTLES ARE STILL BRITTLE.

The rumour of the panic proved too true. A friend with his cheque-book chained to his waist, told Hargrave, in a moment's nervous conversation at the door of Messrs Brettles, Crevasse, and Glashier, that several houses were in danger, and that there was a run on Shatterton and Gilberts. He had hardly been able himself to get past the crowds round the door of Thawton, Melmore, and Droppets. Bad news from France—America, nasty—everything going to the bad—meet at dinner-time, but perhaps no dinner-time—governor cut up root and branch—afraid of ruin.

Hargrave hurried in. His fellow-clerks were silent, and they looked pale and anxious. A little sour yellow fellow, named Cross, a clever accountant, darted across the counter, and button-holed him. 'Shatterton's all in a hole,' he said; 'egad, sir, he's in a hole. Governor wants you directly in the parlour. It's U. P. with Shatterton. I think, from what I hear, they're hard hit; but it won't hurt us much, eh? I hope we ain't hit hard; we shan't suffer!'

'Not a ha'p'orth: we're sound enough,' said Hargrave, flinging open his gray summer-coat in a way that would have given the most frightened investor comfort. 'You know we wouldn't mix ourselves up with that frothy lot, though old Shatterton begged us almost on his knees—old swindler!'

Hargrave was a generous, kindly-judging fellow, and not a bit of a Pharisee; but then Shatterton was such a plausible rascal, such an infamous, lying bubble-monger, and he traded, as every one knew, on the ruin of unsuspecting and thrifty people.

In the parlour, with a letter-weight, the red Alps of the Post-office Directory, an ink-stand, and an envelope-box before them, sat the triumvirate, Messrs Brettles, Crevasse, and Glashier.

Mr Brettles was a port-wine fed, jolly man of the old school, with large white whiskers, a red face, and a white waistcoat. He represented the social *bon-vivant* humbug. Mr Crevasse was a thin wiry man, with a high, checkered neckcloth, and large, sharp, erect collars, strapped boots, and watch-seals. He was the respectable and philanthropic humbug. Mr Glashier was a dark, sharp-looking, clean-shaven man, austere, severe—plain dressed, and remarkable for gold spectacles. He was the keen commercial humbug.

'Good-morning, Mr Hargrave. D. V., a blessed morning indeed,' said the lover of mankind.

'How de do?' said Bibulus gaily—'how de do?'

'We have some business to talk over, of importance, great importance; sit down,' said the curt Cato of commercial enterprise. 'Be seated.'

Hargrave was seated.

'A gracious Providence,' said Cato, drawing up his neck stiffly in a Dombeyish manner—cold, precise, and pharisaical, and putting the fingers of both hands together, as if to match them, 'has so ordered it that a run seems imminent. A gracious'—

'The long and the short, Mr Hargrave, is,' broke in Bibulus, 'not to put too fine a point on it, that unknown to you, we have long been entangled with that infernal beast Shatterton, and now we're going to catch it hot.'

'We want time, nothing but time. Every moment,' said Glashier, 'is worth a hundred pounds. Delay, and we float over this crisis.'

'I'll sell two hours of mine, and glad to do it,' laughed Bibulus, coughing apoplectically at his own immense drollery. 'But just look at Hargrave; he's struck all of a heap.'

'Brettles, these expressions are flippant and unbusiness-like,' said Glashier. 'Our cashier is distressed and surprised. I was distressed and surprised—wasn't I?'

'Brettles, be a Christian first, and a banker afterwards,' said Crevasse.

'Can't be done at once, I suppose? Well, I like that. Come, how do we stand? Shew Hargrave himself how we stand: let him know the worst.'

'There's only one man, I tell you, can help us, and that's old Brownsmith of Fore Street; he'd set our colours flying again—but catch him.'

Misfortune had made Bibulus rather jovial and familiar with his cashier; he had been insolent and purse-proud enough a day or two before. He and his partners relied on Hargrave to save them from bankruptcy.

Long was the discussion—patient the investigation—manifold the comparisons—much brown sherry drank Bibulus—many texts quoted Crevasse—many axioms propounded Cato, *alias* Glashier—Hargrave worked silently, but like a dragon; but one result was eliminated from all—Ruin; hopeless, crushing ruin. The wind had been sown, and the reaping of the whirlwind was at hand.

CHAPTER IV.—THE SPENCER AGAIN.

'But Ned, dear, why didn't you tell them you were sure there was some concealment—something dishonest; that ruin must come, if all was not honest and fair? Dear Ned—you so bold and so brave—how could you let those bad men think they were deceiving you, when you found they had altered the books? O Ned, dear Ned, it was not like your own brave self.—Hark! at baby-crowling!'

Hargrave and his wife sat together at the open window of the little cottage at Holloway, hidden from the road by a great laburnum, that streamed over the little plot of lawn with golden cascades of bright linked blossom.

He looked worn and sad—how different from the bright morning of a day before—and Grace had her arms round his neck, and her hands clasped upon his left shoulder.

Down fell a batch of purple rose-leaves from the wall above on the window-sill—so had fallen his

hopes. He had lost confidence in mankind. He had found the three men he had so respected, to be little better than rogues. But how pure, and gentle, and loving the young wife looked, as she soothed and comforted him, and bade him look up to the only source of real comfort.

Hargrave answered, after a long pause.

'Grace, dear,' he said, 'you know that I could not swerve from truth and honour; but when I thought of our dear home, and all we might have to surrender, my heart seemed to melt away till no grain of it was left. What could I say? My very brain refused to answer the helm. I seemed a mere living automaton; and I added figures and wrote almost without knowing what I did. It was not for me to stand up and reproach these dishonest schemers. I thought— But who's that at our gate? He looks— Why, he's actually stopping and looking at us.'

'It isn't Uncle Arthur,' said Grace. 'Why, it's an old gentleman in a spencer, Ned. Oh, what a queer creature! He's coming in.'

'Why, it's the very man, I declare, whom I lent sixpence to, on Monday, to pay his omnibus. How did he find me out? Come, Grace; there's one more honest man in the world!'

Yes, the same bad hat, same scanty spencer, same gloves, same dusty-brown cotton umbrella. There he stood, eyeing the pair, as if the domestic picture pleased him, and he was really quite loath to break the grouping. In a moment more, he lifted the latch of the gate, and walked up the paved walk, and ascended the steps of the front-door, lifting his hat as he approached the window, and met Grace's wondering eyes.

'Evidently a gentleman,' said the care-worn man to himself; 'but still I wish he wouldn't come bothering here. Perhaps it is some trick, after all. I suspect everybody now.'

At that moment, Betsy ushered in the old gentleman, not cringing now or nervous, but observant and at his ease.

'Good-evening, madam; good-evening, sir,' he said, bowing first to Grace, and then to her husband. 'I hope, I'm sure, that I'm not intruding upon you; but I have come to pay a small debt.'

He drew a shilling from his glove, and put it quietly on the table as he said this. Hargrave pushed it back rather contemptuously. It was annoying to have a man exaggerate a small kindness into a positive loan.

The old gentleman smiled blandly. 'Take it up, young man,' he said. 'A shilling is, after all, twelve pence. It may be a truism, but still a shilling is not at all to be despised, especially in these times.'

'Here is a character,' thought Hargrave, offering him a chair politely. After all, why be offended by honest eccentricity? It was a way, though an odd way, of acknowledging a kindness.

'And may I ask you how you found out my address?' said the young City-man.

'By the simplest way possible: you told me your bank. Passing yesterday, as the doors were closing, I asked the man who was sweeping the passage.—I do not live very far from here—up at Highgate—and so I thought I'd call, and in person return the sum you so kindly and unsuspectingly lent me. The kindness I will, at all events, answer for.'

'What a polite old gentleman,' thought Grace,

'And now, having intruded,' said the mysterious old gentleman, 'may I ask, Mr—Mr—'

'Hargrave.'

'Thank you—yes, Hargrave, whether you did not find my fears only too well founded? Yes, I can see you did. I need not conceal from you that I have been a banker myself, and am still much in the City. I do not require you to tell me that Brettles, Crevasse, and Glashier are in a bad way, for I know it from the highest sources.'

Hargrave started.

'Yes, I do occasionally learn secrets. There is but one way to retrieve these men, and that is by a way they will never adopt—Honesty.'

Hargrave started to his feet, indignant at this impertinent intrusion into his private affairs.

'Sir,' he said, 'whoever you may be, or whatever you may be, I will not allow any one to come into my house to slander my employers.'

'Ned, Ned!'

'Ned, Ned!'

'Your zeal I admire,' said the stranger; 'I can only lament that it is expended on such men. I tell you, circumstances have revealed their true position to me; I know it as well now as if their books lay open here upon the table. I have come here to-night as a friend—not to them, but to you—to give you the benefit of fifty years' experience. I can save the bank for a week—longer, if Honesty is tried; but even if it is not, for one week. To-morrow, there will be a run; I tell you there will—you fear it yourself.'

A strange feeling seemed to come over Hargrave as he looked and saw his wife's eyes fixed beseechingly upon the mysterious stranger—the magician who seemed to read his mind, and have power to direct events.

'I see you know all,' said Hargrave, resuming his seat, and resting his head between his hands. 'Yes, time—time is what we want—time till we can prove our resources, and borrow from some great capitalist.'

'Whose address is permanently—Bedlam. Tush! I can give you time; but the bank has, I fear, no real roots—it must go.'

'Oh, don't say so!' cried Grace, wringing her little hands, as if the man in the spencer had been Rhadamanthus himself, and she the suppliant Proserpine.

'I will listen to your advice,' said Hargrave, with a sudden recurrence of distrust; 'but I will not reveal any inkling of the secrets of our firm. I have allowed, in a moment of excitement, that we are anxiously awaiting events—you will not betray my confidence. You say there will be a run; we shall meet it. To-night, a loan may have been effected with Mr Brownsmith of Fore Street.'

'Do not trust to it; trust to stratagem, as I did three times, when I had a bank in Exeter. As a young man, I have often been sent to London for boxes of guineas, and come back with them under the seat of the mail-coach. Sir, I have a dozen stratagems to restore public confidence, and disarm foolish fears. The run to-morrow will be slight: you can meet it; that will give you time to adopt my plans, if you like them, and avert the crisis of the day after.—But mind, Mrs Hargrave, that I tell your worthy husband that I can tie flowers to sticks, as children do, but I cannot make the rootless flowers grow. If the firm is dishonest, down it will go, in spite of a thousand artifices like mine.'

Just at this moment the door opened, and in

her arms. Betsy stepped back alarmed when she saw the stranger.

'Pray, come in, nurse,' he said; 'I and your husband, Mrs Hargrave, can talk over our business notwithstanding.'

Poor Mrs Hargrave would not hear, of it, and marched off in procession to the drawing-room.

CHAPTER V.—THE RUN.

'Well, I never heard a grosser calumny,' said one City-man to another at the door of Messrs Bretties, Crevasse, and Glashier. 'They talked as if the whole firm was on its last legs, and yet I never saw so much gold behind a counter in my life! Did you see those kegs of sovereigns they kept unloading? Several fellows refused to draw at all.'

'Yes; and did you see those swells come in for their eight and ten thousand each, and have it out in gold? Oh, they're sound enough. Why, I saw a country gentleman draw four thousand pounds.'

Even City-men are fallible. The kegs of sovereigns had only layers of gold upon false tray-tops; and two-thirds of the swells and country gentlemen had been friends of the clerks, persons paid to personate the characters, and receive at one side of the building, to pay back at the other.

The moment the doors fairly closed, Cross rushed to congratulate Hargrave, and a volley of laughter ran round the building. 'The run is over,' said the atrabilious clerk; 'thanks to you, Hargrave. By Jove, sir, if they don't give you a partnership, they ought to be shot! You've saved them, by Jove! And what a lark! I could hardly keep my countenance when the spree began. And how slow we doled it out to 'em. By Jove, it was a caution! Fancy Jones's brother, Sir Thomas Byng, and such a blue tie! Oh, I shall kill myself laughing.—Hollo, look; there's the governor calling.'

The three directors received Hargrave in triumph. Mr Bretties drank his health in brown sherry, with all the honours, and a convivial speech; Mr Crevasse raised his eyes to the ceiling in mute thankfulness; Mr Glashier hinted mysteriously at a partnership.

'Now, look here, gentlemen,' said Bretties, turning round upon them with his jovial face, and with his thumb in the arm-holes of his white waistcoat; 'this won't do, you know—this really won't do; I'm very, very sure it won't do. Hargrave here has saved our firm—restored our credit. Brownsmith is certain to come forward now. Hargrave must have a partnership before the year's out.'

'Providence has clearly marked out our course,' said Mr Crevasse with a groan, as if Providence had hurt him—'marked it out.'

'It is a simple business-like return,' said Glashier, coughing as if the words had a reluctance to come forth; 'mere return for goods actually received.—Not even necessary to thank us, is it, Bretties?'

'Certainly not; by Jove, no!' said Bretties pompously.

Hargrave's honest face glowed with pleasure, his eyes were touched with gratitude. He thanked the directors for their generosity. 'The most remarkable thing, gentlemen,' he said, 'is, that the plan I adopted, and which turned out so successfully, was suggested to me by an old gentleman, poorly dressed, I met in an omnibus, and to whom I

lent a shilling to pay his fare with, as he had left his purse at home.'

'Capital, capital!' shouted Bretties. 'By Jove, look at that!'

'Perhaps an angel unawares,' said Crevasse, improving the occasion.

'This day-year, Mr Hargrave, you are a partner in our firm; it is the least we can do,' said Glashier.

That night was a joyful one at the little cottage at Holloway, and Grace shed tears of joy when Ned told baby in his funny way that he was son of a partner-elect in the great firm of Bretties, Crevasse, and Glashier of Fenchurch Street.

'Ned, dear, that was a well-spent shilling,' said Grace, as she kissed him on the forehead, and sat down to tell her joy to the piano in some rejoicing music. Mrs Grandsham had been wrong after all. She had been prophesying terrible things lately.

CHAPTER VI.—BROWNSMITH.

A week from that day, Hargrave took a day's holiday. He had promised to take Grace to the Academy, and she and baby were to go to the City, on their way westward to the photographer. It was a glorious morning—sky miraculously blue, pleasant breeze, and hot sun. Costermongers, with flowering geraniums on their heads, that waved like plumes, walked down the City Road, shouting their prices like war-cries. Great brimming wagon-loads of hay, speckled with dead flowers, that, a few days before, had been floating upward in country meadows like the specks of gold-leaf in Danzig water. Hargrave and Grace were in high spirits; and as for baby, who followed behind in Betsy's arms, she had to be repeatedly called to order for making furtive snatches at passing bonnet-ribbons, and crowing too uproariously. Just before they turned the corner of Fenchurch Street facing the bank, Grace said: 'Ned, dear, do let us go past the bank. I want to go and fancy myself coming for you in my open carriage.'

Hargrave laughed, and Grace tripped round the corner laughing.

The bank was now in sight. Gracious Heaven! the shutters were up, the doors closed, and a crowd collecting. No wonder he turned pale, as Grace clutched his arm. They both stood fixed like statues. At that moment, the door opened, and out darted Cross, sharp and alert. He had a square sheet of paper in his hand, and this he rapidly wafered up on the shutters. There was a groan and hiss from the crowd. It announced the closing of the bank. It had gone at last. Honesty had not been tried, or if it had been tried, too late. Every moment, widows and distressed-looking depositors began to collect round the door. The crowd stood gaping, as if it really expected to see the house split in two, or the three directors simultaneously throw themselves out of windows. It was quite a sight for the street-boys to behold persons who had actually put money into a bank, and lost it.

With an exclamation of surprise and horror rapidly exchanged, Hargrave and his wife darted across the street, and in a moment were in the bank, just as Cross was about to close it.

'What is this, Cross?' he said. 'I must see the directors. Take care of my wife, while I go and confront these men. There has been fraud here. I have been giving my aid to deception. I will tell them so; I will!'

Cross seized his arm, and several other clerks crowded around him expostulating. 'Not yet,' they said; 'you can't go. Brownsmith is in there with them, and no one must disturb them.'

They all stood looking awe-struck at the glass-door that hid the great unshaken capitalist. 'Yes, Brownsmith's there. He can save the bank, and no one else. Hush, you fellows; here he comes.'

Hargrave looked with a curiosity he could not restrain; he held his wife's hand as he looked. The door opened, and out came a thin, seedily-dressed man in a brown spencer. It was the old gentleman of the omnibus; yes, it was beyond a doubt the same, even to his faded umbrella!

Messrs Brettles, Crevasse, and Glashier, pale and anxious, followed him, expostulating.

Once, and once only, he turned, and addressed them. 'Not a sixpence,' he said. 'I advised honesty, and you would not try it. Now, you want a loan, and I refuse it—yes, finally refuse it. I'll never enter this bank again.—Good-morning, gentlemen. Another time, try honesty—take my advice.'

'This is unchristian,' said Crevasse.

'Unbusiness-like,' said Glashier.

'D—— impertinent,' said Brettles. 'Before the clerks too.'

The great capitalist made no reply, but walked straight out, casting a glance on every clerk he met. Half-way to the door he stopped, fixed his eyes steadily on Hargrave and his wife, baby and Betsy, and going up to them, handed Hargrave a letter.

'Read it,' he said, 'at your leisure, and let me hear. I thought I should find you here. Good-bye, till we meet again.'

As the door closed on Brownsmith, Hargrave opened the letter, and taking Grace's arm, they read it together. It ran thus:

DEAR SIR—An act of kindness sometimes bears fruit. I am sorry to see you connected with such a bank. Our excellent cashier is getting old, and wants help. Will you act as his deputy? I have no doubt you will finally replace him, and become most useful to us. I am sure we shall get on well together.—I am, dear sir, yours faithfully,

JOSEPH BROWNSMITH.

With what glad hearts Hargrave and Grace left that doomed house, through the diamond-holes in whose shutters the three directors, pale and alarmed, mounted on chairs, were watching the mob outside, under the supervision (as to the chairs) of the active and indefatigable Cross. That night, the Ostend steamer bore off to the sheltering continent three as great and plausible rogues as the London commercial world had ever known; their pockets were by no means empty, nor their trunks either. The New World was very soon afterwards enriched by the addition of three enlightened citizens—a great *bon-vivant*, a great philanthropist, and a commercial genius.

When Hargrave opened the door of his cottage that evening, a visiting-card lay on the hall-table. He handed it laughingly to Grace. It bore the name of 'Mrs Grandsham,' and below was written:

MY DARLING MRS HARGRAVE—That horrible bank closed an hour ago. So sorry for you. Always feared it.

'Horrid old woman!' said Grace; 'I detest her. So pleased to give pain.—But how wonderful

that shabby old gentleman should turn out a millionaire, who could help us just in this time of trouble too!'

'God has indeed been good to us, Grace,' said he. 'But even in ruin, your love would have supported me, dearest.'

Hargrave has long ago become a junior partner in the firm of Brownsmith & Co., and as successful and deservedly respected a man of business as any one within sound of Bow Bells. The little act of kindness did indeed bear fruit—the shilling was returned with interest.

THE MONTH:

SCIENCE AND ARTS.

THE reappearance of the November meteors—the fiery shower, as some observers delight to call it—has furnished a subject for remark and discussion, which astronomers and students of physical science generally have made much of, and will yet make more. The state of the weather was so favourable for observation, and the number of meteors was so great, that the spectacle will not soon be forgotten by those who witnessed it; though whether it was really so 'sublime' or 'magnificent' as some describe, may fairly be questioned. It was, however, a very impressive sight, and especially interesting as a demonstration of the accuracy of the calculations on which the time of the phenomenon had been predicted. When the reports come in from other parts of Europe and the United States, we shall have further details as to the number of meteors observed; whether any remarkable varieties occurred in their appearance, and whether any have actually fallen on the earth. If not, the question arises: Shall we always escape? or shall we in some of our future passages across the belt of meteors, find ourselves pelted with heavy masses, involving danger and destruction?

Mr Daubrée, a French geologist, has made a series of synthetic experiments relative to meteorites, with a view to extend the knowledge of those strange bodies which we have derived from analysis: an important subject, for it may lead to a widening of our geological horizon, as well as to astronomical results. He shews that in no single instance has a meteorite been found containing granite or gneiss, nor any of the rocks therewith associated in our own globe. But the substance known as peridot is found in meteorites; and this same substance is at times thrown out from great depths in the earth by the eruptions of volcanoes; from which Mr Daubrée concludes that the planetary bodies (or whatever may be the source of the meteorites) are in a less advanced stage of evolution than our own globe; and he attributes our superiority to the ocean, to the co-operation of which we owe the origin of granitic and of the stratified rocks: and he thinks that the ubiquity of peridot is explained by its being, in some sort, a 'universal scoria.'

In his opening address to the Royal Institute of British Architects, the President, Mr Beresford Hope, mentioned that the Institute had offered a prize for the best design for a Gothic theatre, and expressed his hope that the response would be a hearty one. He considers the Gothic style well adapted for a theatre, inasmuch as each of its lower stories legitimately throws up its shafts to support the one above, and does not necessitate the sticking

out of tiers of boxes like trays from the walls. After other suggestions, Mr Hope said, 'for these reasons, I venture, in the name of progress and of eclecticism, to call on all here present to aid in vindicating the theatre no less than the church as a legitimate object for Gothic treatment; at the same time, I conjure the competitors to consider seriously how they may reduce the risk of fire.'

Mr Hope noticed the improvements which the Marquis of Westminster is making in the Belgravia district, where rebuilding in a handsome style, and on a very extensive scale, is now in progress. He dwelt with emphasis on the endeavours now in progress for the better housing of the labouring classes, on the care taken for the integrity of our public parks and open spaces, and stated that 'what remains of Epping Forest is also to pass into the category of public parks, by being transferred from the Office of Woods and Forests, which only regards the financial value of its trusts, to that of Public Works, which deals with them for the general recreation and the decorative improvement of the ground.' This latter fact will be hailed with pleasure by thousands of Londoners.

As is well known, animal and vegetable substances can be kept for any length of time in perfectly air-tight cases, especially if the air be pumped out from the inside. Dr Louvel of Paris has demonstrated the fact on a large scale under supervision of a Commission appointed by the French government, and with results that are well worth attention. His apparatus consists of a large sheet-iron cylinder, fitted with a man-hole at the top, a hopper below, and an instrument to measure the amount of vacuum, which is produced in the usual way by a forcing-pump. Three such cylinders were set up at Vincennes, two being in the open air; and in July 1864, in presence of the Commission, fifty hectolitres of wheat and twenty litres of lively beer were poured into one of the cylinders, which was then closed, and the air exhausted by eight men pumping for forty minutes. A ton of half-eaten biscuit, swarming with worms and weevils, was put into another cylinder; a ton of best flour into the third; and both were treated in the same way as the first. In January 1865, the cylinders were opened: the wheat in the first was in excellent preservation, not a grain was eaten, and of the weevils, nothing remained but dry empty skins. They had been laid in layers all through the wheat, but it was nowhere injured, and it was afterwards sold at the full market-price. The half-eaten biscuits were in the same condition as when put into the cylinder, but the worms and weevils were all dead, and completely dried up. The flour was unaltered: bread made from it was pronounced to be of the first quality.

With these results before them, we are not surprised to hear that the Commission fully approved of Dr Louvel's process, which seems the more satisfactory when we remember that two of the cylinders had been exposed out of doors to all changes of weather for six months. The same process has been adopted for the preservation of hops in cylinders tinned inside, and found to answer so well that there is neither loss of weight nor of the delicate aroma peculiar to the hop. Only let the process have a wider application, and there will be no such thing as perishable commodities, for all organic substances may thereby be preserved, with the further advantage, that products which would

not bear a long sea-voyage may be imported from all parts of the globe, however distant.

A new kind of button has just been invented, which can be fixed without the trouble of sewing. The mode of construction is similar to that of the paper-fastener seen in stationers' shops, two strips of pliable metal or wire being introduced as fastening. These strips are fixed to the back of the button; are passed through a small slit in the cloth or linen, and are then bent down tightly upon a small washer of metal, which gives them firm hold, and is supplied with the button. Though susceptible of improvement, this appears to us the best among the many self-fastening buttons over which inventors have puzzled their brains.

Dr Daubeny has published a short paper, which he read at the last meeting of the British Association, containing a statement of the number of B.A. degrees conferred by the university of Oxford in each year from the middle of the 17th century until now; and he points out that the increase in the number is by no means proportionate to the progress of the realm in population, wealth, and intelligence. There were more B.A.'s to each 5,000,000 of the population formerly than at the present time. Among the causes for this difference, Dr Daubeny places the fact, that a university education is regarded rather as a preparation for the church than for the liberal professions generally, and to a mistaken notion as to the cost of university education. He shews that a scientific education may be obtained in Oxford at a moderate cost, and with important advantages.

The severe and destructive floods which still shew their effects in our northern counties, will, it is to be hoped, lead to the adoption of preventive measures, such as may be derived from an intelligent application of meteorological data and principles of mechanical science. As an example, we mention what has been done at Lyon. That city is built on low ground, at the confluence of the Saone and Rhone, and is very liable to inundation. Twenty years ago, rain-gauges were set up at different places along each of the two river-valleys, particularly in the upper parts about the water-shed. These were regularly observed, their indications estimated, and whenever a flood seemed impending, notice of its probable height was sent down to the city, where measures were taken according to the circumstances to remove merchandise to warehouses above the line of danger, and to warn people whose houses were threatened.

In a paper on Cyclones read before the Academy of Sciences at Paris, the author states as a rule by which to know the position of the centre of the cyclone, always the most dangerous point, that if the observer places himself directly facing the wind, the centre will be on his left hand.—The French government have made a survey of the Brazilian coast between the La Plata and the Amazons, in which there were taken 178,000 angles and 160,000 soundings.—The Hudson's Bay Company have provided the materials for an electric telegraph across their territory.—In India, there are 14,500 miles of telegraph belonging to the government, and 3141 miles owned by the eight railway companies.

The project of a twice-a-month mail to the antipodes has at length been realised, and a line of steamers is now established between Panama and Australia across the whole breadth of the Pacific—8000 miles. Thus, by way of the West

as well as the East, letters can now be received and despatched; an advantage which will be appreciated alike in the colonies and at home. Among the items of news by the last mail *via* Panama is one that will be especially interesting to palaeontologists. Dr Hector, F.R.S., Director of the government geological survey of New Zealand, has sent to this country drawings of a portion of a Moa's egg enclosing a skeleton of the chick, which proves that the process of hatching was well advanced when the egg was broken. Every instalment of information on this subject will be acceptable to naturalists, for it is said that the Moa, the giant bird of New Zealand, is not yet extinct, that living specimens are sometimes seen by the natives in inaccessible places; hence, if one could be captured, there would be the more interest in comparing it with the fossil remains of the Moa of bygone ages.

The bronze statue set up in the open space near the Duke of York's Column to commemorate Sir John Franklin, is a noteworthy work of art. It represents the ill-fated arctic explorer in a dignified attitude, while a well-executed bas-relief on the pedestal offers a pathetic and picturesque memorial of the closing scene of his eventful career.

OUR LANE.

WHEN the grass springs, and soft winds blow,
And hawthorns wear the only snow;
When lads and lasses stop once more
To play about the school-house door;
And lambs are white upon the leas,
And stars on the horse-chestnut trees,
And birds begin to build again—
'Tis sweet to watch them in Our Lane.

When swallows have their summer made;
And lazy sheep move with the shade;
And the dew loiters on the grass,
Where sweet-breathed cows gaze as you pass;
When greedy trout leap by the mill;
And youth goes gaily down the hill—
Who would not be a lad again,
To meet his lassie in Our Lane?

When gossamer floats everywhere;
And golden apples scent the air;
And round about their ancient roots,
Vast pear-trees shower their tiny fruits;
And red plums blush 'midst yellow leaves;
And summer-friends have left our eaves;
When oaks their leaves no longer hold,
And chestnut-trees change green for gold;
And wheat is stacked and sown again—
Then wondrous tints light up Our Lane.

When cheeks look brighter 'gainst the snow;
And crimson holly-berries glow,
And ivy reigns, and yew-trees sneer
At oak and elm, now sad and drear;
When apples all are pressed or stored;
And ants sit proudly by their hoard;
When pleasant paths look dull and gray,
And old men rest upon their way;
And black-birds know not where to feast,
And all their pleasant songs have ceased—
Let them be thankful in Our Lane,
If hips and haws may yet remain.

Hearken to what wise black-birds say:
'Our spring saw many a merry day;
In summer, there were strawberries;
In autumn, we'd the filbert trees:
We tasted all the year could bring.
To mellow autumn from bright spring.
If nuts and cherries all are gone,
There's something to look back upon:
We deem not life unjust because
It comes at last to hips and haws.'

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CHAMBERS'S JOURNAL

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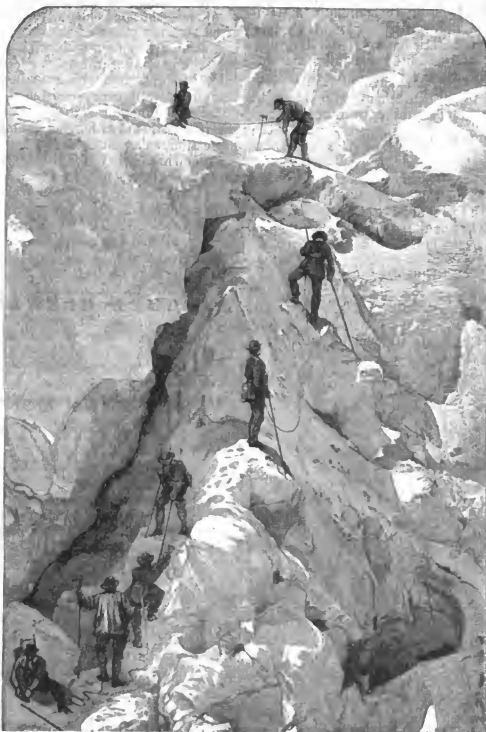
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CHRISTMAS, 1866.

PRICE THREEPENCE.

I HAVE always had a taste for the ascent of high places. I have surveyed London from the Duke of York's Column and the dome of St Paul's; I have climbed the slopes of Primrose Hill, and gallantly breasted the steeper acclivities of Hampstead Heath. It was not, therefore, without a certain confidence in my natural abilities, that I descended from the diligence which conveys passengers from Geneva to Chamouni, and standing in front of the *Hôtel Royal*, gazed for the first time upon the snows of Mont Blanc. The scenery is of course magnificent, and makes a man

almost inclined to quote poetry; still, if there weren't quite so many stones, and if there were a few more trees, the Valley of Chamouni would, I must confess, be more to my taste than at present, with its (say) ten million tons of ice, piled



up in the middle of a meadow. It would not be thought inspiring to put yourself at the bottom of a railway-cutting some thousand feet deep, even if it was covered with ice and snow at the top; and the aforesaid valley is remarkably like a trench cut by the Metropolitan Railway through the heart of the city, with *aiguilles* instead of chimneys, and Mont Blanc in the place of St Paul's.

Just as I was working out this accurate, if not poetical comparison, I felt a slap on the back. Turning round sharply, I saw my friend Jones—one of those gentlemen who have the faculty (which I myself do not possess) of seeing the joke of a slap on the back or a dig in the ribs. His costume was sufficiently startling. A shooting-coat with an infinite variety of outrageous pockets, knickerbockers and thick stockings displaying his manly

lives to popular admiration; boots, with soles an inch thick, and studded with nails which set sympathetic thrills through the corns of bystanders; and a wide-awake of no particular shape, with a veil round it, as though he was meditating start for the Derby, were the garments which replaced his ordinary decent clerical costume. Nor would the congregation which admires his outward man in surplice and white tie have recognised the drab face which was looking down upon me with a benevolent smile. A fortnight's beard bristled roughly from his chin; the tip of his nose and his cheeks looked as though a hot iron had been recently passed over them, and, sad to relate, a short black neckerchief was stuck between his lips. The change from his usual decorum suggested the Archbishop of Canterbury disguising himself to witness the meeting between Tom Sayers and Heenan. Before I could gasp out a salutation, he exclaimed: 'Just in time, old fellow! I am going up Blank to-morrow, and you shall come with me.' (Blank is the playful name by which members of that mysterious association, called the Alpine Club, claim to be on terms of familiarity with the monarch of mountains.) 'I have got a first-rate guide'—pointing to a gentleman who strongly reminded me by his general appearance of the domestic organ-grinder of London—'and the weather is good for a couple of days. I know you will say "yes,"'

I am ashamed to confess my weakness. Nothing is more offensive to me than the man of muscular excellence. That he is generally good-natured and condescending, I will not dispute; but I never could understand why a man should think himself entitled to be good-natured and condescending, because he has more roomy lungs and better developed calves than his neighbours. In a happier mood, I should have wrapped myself up in intellectual superiority, as in a cloak; I should have thrown a glance of contempt at the representative of mere brute force; I should have said in effect, if not in words: 'I may be bigger round the waist, and wheezier in my general way of breathing than I used to be; but those are not the qualities by which a civilised being should be judged in the nineteenth century: go up your mountain if you like, but bow before the majesty of mind, though embodied in feeble thews and sinews.' Somehow, this line of action seemed inappropriate: Jones was on his own ground; I could see a group of half-fledged tourists regarding him with evident admiration, and even glancing respectfully at me, as shining by reflected splendour from my familiar intercourse with so noble a creature. In a rash moment, I determined to rival Jones in his own chosen stronghold; the thoughts of Primrose Hill and St Paul's rushed inspiringly upon my mind, and with an air of hearty satisfaction, I responded: 'I'm your man.'

All that evening and the next morning, I walked about with an air of conscious pride, like a man selected to lead a forlorn-hope. Tourists furtively pointed to the great Jones—generally describing him as President of the Alpine Club—and to me as Jones's companion. We were looked upon as the lions of the day; and those who were happy enough to sit next me at the *table-d'hôte*, were flattered by my easy talk about the top of Mont Blanc, though I could not match the nonchalant air with which Jones narrated hairbreadth 'escapes from *crevasses* and avalanches, and falling stones, and various unimaginable dangers. 'Can this,' I thought, 'be

the quiet curate whose mild exhortations spread a sleepy influence over restless parishioners at home?' I became still more humbled as he introduced me to sundry necessary preparations. He made me buy a veil, that my skin might not be scorched off by the blinding glare of the snow; a pair of green spectacles, to save my eyes; and a thick heavy pole, armed with a gigantic axe-head, instead of the pretty little *Alpenstock*, tipped with a chamois-horn, which I had bought in the innocence of my heart. He had the soles of my shoes filled with gigantic nails; warm gloves provided for my hands; and finally, introduced me, in apologetic terms, to the great Cachat (all guides at Chamouni are called Cachat, unless they are called Balmat), who was on the morrow to be my guide, philosopher, and friend. Cachat spoke to me affably, but with the tone in which a President of the Royal Academy might address a pupil just beginning his studies. 'M. Jones,' said Cachat, 'goes like a chamois'—looking at me with an eye which implied that my gait was anything but chamois-like, and straightway demanded an extra man or two to help me in case of difficulty. 'We often have,' he said, 'to encounter places where Messieurs the travellers want every assistance—unless they can go like M. Jones or *le diable*.' Jones accepted the compliment, notwithstanding the nature of his profession, as a matter of course.

Somewhat awed by these preparatives, but adopting a gay, not to say a swaggering air, I joined the muster about ten o'clock next morning in front of the *Royal*. We were to sleep that night at the Grands Mulets, which was only (only!) six hours' walk from the inn; and Jones proposed after our arrival to take a preparatory walk on the glacier, by way of stretching my legs. I could not avoid seeing that he looked at his own knickerbockers with contemptible complacency as he made this unpleasant remark. Our little army of guides and porters got slowly under-way. Each man carried on his back a burden like that under which Christian staggered across the Slough of Despond. It consisted of a huge military knapsack, surmounted by a roll of blankets. Within the knapsacks were contained provisions enough to have supported an ordinary man through an Arctic expedition. There were loaves of gigantic size to satisfy the appetites of the guides; there were more delicate white loaves for the travellers; there were sausages, and legs of mutton, and cold fowls; there was butter, and honey, and pepper and salt, and dried plums, and hard-boiled eggs; and from subsequent investigations, I discovered that either the innkeepers of Chamouni make an unreasonable profit (which I should be the last to suggest), or that eggs in the Valley of Chamouni cost about twelve times as much as in London. But it was perhaps in the liquid department that our commissariat came out strongest. How much brandy, and how many bottles of wine, were contained in those knapsacks, I am unable to say. The bottle of champagne, to be drunk on the top of the mountain, excited my liveliest emotions. So practical a preparation seemed to imply that we should actually get there. The guides, who left most of the weight to the porters, presented to my disturbed imagination the picture of Mr Calcraft on a holiday trip, each of them being surrounded with a coil of thick rope. Filled with the melancholy associations excited by this last arrangement, I bade adieu to the waiters and landlord, who

gathered to see us off, and assumed a jaunty air as we passed the last groups of travellers. Jones calmly lighted a pipe, and tried to look as if he wasn't conscious that he was doing a fine thing; and I abandoned myself to the reflection, that I was about to be separated for hours from the rest of mankind in a dreary waste of snow and ice, when I might have been lying on my back on the grass in the pleasant sunshine, and watching Jones through a telescope. Such are the evil effects of a misplaced vanity.

Through a few pleasant meadows and groves, our progress was agreeable enough; but presently a phenomenon took place, not uncommon in mountain districts, but said to have been considered as a miracle by an honest Scotch minister, who encountered it in the streets of Glasgow, after a tumbler of whisky-toddy: the pavement, he said, rose up, and smote him in the face. The meadows and woods began to heave themselves up under my feet; though the little row of four porters and two guides proceeded onwards with a steady step, as though their backs were burdenless, and the ground level. Half an hour of this work, under a pitiless sun, began to produce upon me the effect of a Turkish bath; all the substance which I had acquired during eleven months in London seemed to be oozing through my skin. I presently observed a small *châlet*, in front of which a native had spread a table with mountain-strawberries, and was about to fling myself in ecstasy upon these refreshing luxuries, when Jones sternly interposed, and enabled me to realise the full extent of my bondage. 'None of those, young man, till we are coming back again; I don't want you to break down—yet.' Girding up my loins (metaphorically), I strode doggedly forwards up one of those hateful zigzag paths by which the lower elevations are scaled. A hundred yards to the right, and then a hundred yards to the left, and then a hundred to the right again, in unceasing monotony, each flight seeming to ascend at a steeper angle, to be stonier, and hotter, and more tiresome than the preceding. Guides and porters in front worked on as regularly, and I thought about as agreeably, as prisoners in a tread-mill. Jones followed, never turning a hair (the brute!), although he had encumbered himself with a few mathematical instruments (an aneroid, a theodolite, a prismatic compass, and a sympiesometer, I believe), slung over one shoulder, a telescope round the other, and a Scotch plaid folded artistically upon his back. For my own part, I wisely confined the strain upon my energies to the weight of a flask, formerly devoted to whisky, and now to the best cognac of the *Royal*. I found it a pleasant companion, though Jones regarded me with severity when I attempted to taste it. He looked still fiercer when I took off my coat and waistcoat, and gave them to the guide to carry. 'Cachat,' he said, 'will have quite enough to do presently without carrying your clothes for you.' At length, to my delight, our men halted suddenly under a forest, and I threw myself on my back, to endeavour to determine whether I had a pulse, for the blood seemed to be rushing from my heart in one continuous stream. The purpose of the halt, as I presently understood, was to gather wood for that evening's fire; 'It's always freezing at the Grands Mulets,' Jones told me; and before long we presented the appearance of a fragment of Birnam Wood on its justly celebrated march. Jones, who was always playing with his telescope, had sat down

beside me, and was pointing it towards the valley. Suddenly, he sprang up with a (strictly clerical) exclamation. 'Look alive, old boy!' he exclaimed; 'jump up at once; don't be lying there all day, lazy!'

'What's the matter now?'

'Why, here's another party after us, from the *Angleterre*.'

'Well, it will be pleasant to join them.'

'My good sir,' replied Jones in his most solemn manner, 'in the first place, there isn't too much room at the Grands Mulets, and we had better get the choice of places; secondly, if I'm not mistaken, that party includes the strong-minded woman; and thirdly, if you don't make haste, and walk better than you have done, they will catch us up.'

The dread of the strong-minded woman, who had been pointed out to me with horror by two or three of the loungers at Chamouni, and Jones's sarcasm, brought me on my legs. They staggered under me, as if they had been drinking; but a resolute will, I have always heard, can do wonders, and I forced them to the assault. Our line was formed again in a few minutes, and the abominable zigzagging process recommenced.

Over the horrors which beset me for the two or three hours which followed, I draw a veil. I only remember that we passed a house called, for some inscrutable reason, the Pointed Stone, where, by Jones's special permission, I had a pint of champagne—Jones condescended to take a glass, 'to see whether it was drinkable;' and that we afterwards climbed, as it seemed to me, for many hours along the side of a huge frozen water-fall, called the Glacier des Bossons, which pours down from the top of Blanc right into the Chamouni meadows. The path wound in and out, past huge mounds of stone lying at a steep angle, partly covered with turf and rhododendron, but with never a tree to shade us. How the glacier managed to be so cold whilst I was so hot, puzzled the little fragment of intellect left in me. But it was not much. The sun struck down viciously upon my neat black pot-hat (Jones had cunningly covered his wide-awake with white linen), and specially seemed to be burning a hole in the nape of my neck. A queer pain all along the front of my shins caused me acute torture; my thighs ached at every step, as if I was raising ten-pound weights with my feet. My chest seemed to be too small to contain my lungs, and the whole of my internal organs to be in process of shaking up into an indistinguishable mass. The greatest part of my blood seemed to be collecting in my head. Meanwhile, through the mist which covered my eyes, I could see guides and porters moving steadily backwards and forwards across my field of vision, like figures in a dream. Jones was stepping quietly along as cool as before—taking up positions at intervals upon bits of rock, composing himself into picturesque attitudes like the chamois-hunter in carvings and paintings, ostentatiously waiting for the rest of the party, and making airy remarks to Balmat and Cachat. Sometimes they glanced at me and smiled, or, still more vexatiously, carefully turned away their faces, and shook visibly. Whenever I sat down, which I found occasionally necessary, and, indeed, more necessary at every step, Jones fired off little snappish aphorisms at me: 'The longer you sit, the stiffer you'll be;' or tried me with such weak sarcasms as he is capable of inventing, for example: 'You are staying here to admire the view, I suppose?' As a rule, I can

reduce Jones to silence at a chaffing-match, after a very few discharges; but he had me now at a disadvantage. I felt like Falstaff under Herne's oak, unable to return a single quip or retort. Indeed, I sympathised more than I had ever done before with that exemplary character, 'larding the lean earth as I walked along; eight yards of uneven ground was threescore and ten miles afoot with me, and the stony-hearted villains [Jones and Cachat] knew it well enough.' I am not exactly as fat as Falstaff, it is true, but neither is Gadshill so steep as Mont Blanc.

The cruellest part of my sufferings, however, was the pursuit of our party by the strong-minded female and her companions. Jones carefully told me of their progress. 'They are catching us up, by Jove!' he exclaimed. 'Do get on a bit faster, old fellow.'

'Can't' (my conversation was of necessity monosyllabic).

'I can make out the pattern of her petticoat, and distinguish the features of her guides. Step out, or they will catch us at the Pierre de l'Echelle.'

'Won't.'

'I tell you, if you don't hurry, they'll get to the Grands Mulets first, and bag every corner of the hut.'

'Confound the Grands Mulets,' I managed to pant out; 'bother Mont Blanc; hang the Pierre de l'Echelle; and do, for goodness' sake, hold your tongue.'

It was just the hottest part of the afternoon when we reached a little platform of stone—level, as things go in the Alps—but bare and shadowless. We looked down upon a level plateau of the Glacier des Bossons, on the opposite side of which were the rocks of the Grands Mulets. The guides and porters laid down their loads; and we set to work upon a picnic; I cut up a fowl with my pen-knife, and consumed it with bread and honey; but oh! the delight of a good long pull at a bottle of infamous red wine afterwards! In the valley, it would have set my teeth on edge, and turned my stomach; here it was ambrosial and divine. Jones was rapidly growing restless, and looking down towards the approaching party. 'The strong-minded female will be upon us,' he remarked, 'before we've started; and once in her clutches, you might as well be in the gripe of Victor Hugo's cuttlefish.'

At this point, however, I thought it well to take a distinct stand. I filled a pipe emphatically, lighted it with deliberation, and, somewhat encouraged by Cachat's assertion, that the worst was over, sat resolutely down to enjoy myself. Jones quailed before my resolute glance, and sat down reluctantly to keep me company. We had just got into a pleasant conversation (as to the destruction of some travellers ascending Mont Blanc, by an avalanche—'An avalanche,' said Jones, 'is just as irresistible as an express-train, and may come at any moment'), when a deep voice behind us exclaimed: 'Good-morning, gentlemen!' and we knew that our fate was sealed. The strong-minded woman had grappled us! Jones affected to talk darkly with Cachat as to the probabilities of a lady slipping into a crevasse by pure accident; I might have taken comfort in the hint, but I knew too well that if the strong-minded one slipped in she would drag us after. Accordingly, our two parties amalgamated, about as willingly as South Carolina joined the Union, and with as little prospect of another secession. The new-comers consisted, besides the strong-minded, of three persons, whom she had swept up in her train as the whirlwind carries off

sticks and straws in its vortex—namely, her unfortunate husband; a friend of his, Mr Brown, who shared the labour of piloting, and sometimes actually towing the said lady into out-of-the-way places; and his friend, one Mr Robinson, who, in addition to the usual incumbrance of an Alpine traveller, appeared to be burdened with some secret sorrow, which kept his mouth shut except in the passage of sighs. I doubt whether he spoke ten consecutive words (with one exception, presently to be recorded), from the top of Mont Blanc to the bottom, and of course far less *versâ*. The avowed object of the party was not to ascend Mont Blanc, but to pass a night at the Grands Mulets. I have reason to imagine, however, that the strong-minded had a traitorous design to lure them on to the ascent the next morning; but at present she confined herself to talking Ruskin by the yard, about the beauties of nature and the geology of the Alps.

There were at least eight porters and three guides with the new-comers, so that our total force now amounted, as I calculate, to twenty-three persons. The guides talked an unintelligible patois, which appeared on investigation to be German; one of them, a broad-shouldered, blue-eyed giant, long-armed, long-legged, and with a jovial laugh, was a distinguished native of Grindelwald. He talked only a few words of French, but was soon on excellent terms with our Chamouni friends. I observe that the various persons who prey upon travellers are apt to fraternise with each other. Jones, with the inextinguishable conceit of a mountaineer—I began to see the weak points of Jones's character very distinctly—at once laid himself out to flatter this gigantic guide, no doubt in the hopes of a compliment in return. Just as a sporting-man is civil to a celebrated jockey, or a rowing-man to the champion of the Thames, so Jones immediately cottoned to the distinguished Johann. He affected to believe in the man's opinion about the weather—as if anybody ever had any opinion about the weather worth listening to. He gradually got up a conversation upon what I may call Alpine shop, which consists principally in recounting all the awful accidents that have happened in the last century. Of course, Jones got his reward; the guide paid him the eternal compliment about going like a chamois—a compliment of which I am amazed that the recipients never get sick; no one has yet dared to attempt flattering me by comparison to a brute beast, but I believe I should know how to reject such adulation with proper scorn. Jones, however, was evidently tickled, and attitudinised with his Alpenstock even more offensively than before; he really looked like a gentleman about to be photographed, and had clearly forgotten the ill-temper with which the arrival of the strong-minded lady had inspired him. That excellent person, however, having fully recovered her wind, began to treat us to a bit of eloquence.

'How gloriously the valley sweeps away from our feet! Look at the raving Arveiron—a silver thread, drawn through all the delicate green and gold of the meadows and corn-land! The valley-floor gleams with unsubstantial and shadowy lustre through the six thousand feet of vaporous air; and see how the mountain-ranges rise in long succession, like the sapphire rollers of a broad sea where no rocks break the steady sweep of the ocean-swell; one after another comes on in sad procession, as if

they were going to hurl themselves in a mountain-surf against the everlasting granite cliffs of Mont Blanc. How exquisitely faint, and sad, and solemn, are the purples of the distant hills! Geologists would tell us—

'It's time to be off,' broke in Jones. '*En route, messieurs et dames! Vorwärts!* quick march!'

We jumped up, and prepared to cross the glacier. Jones put on a gigantic pair of gaiters, bristling with buckles, to keep the snow out of his boots, and a white mask, to ward the glare off his face: which mask being bestridden by a pair of green spectacles, and surmounted by the aforesaid wide-awake with a blue veil, added considerably to the picturesqueness of his appearance. I made up a feeble imitation, and turned to the glacier—a tolerably level sheet of snow, as it appeared at this height—with tottering knees. The first little amusement in store for us was more exciting than agreeable. Jones pointed to a cliff on my right, and informing me that it was constantly discharging large masses of rock across our path, said that I must run to a certain mark upon the glacier. If I ran quickly, he said, I should probably escape. Putting my best foot forwards, and mentally taking leave of my wife and family, I started at a brisk run. Tired as I was, and half blinded in my spectacles, my right foot suddenly descended into a pit, my left somehow slipped after it, and in a second I was in the ridiculous position of Tom Thumb when stuck into the marrow-bone. The crevasse was luckily narrow enough to prevent my descent into the very bowels of the glacier; but, for the moment, I felt more acutely the vexation of being held, as it were, in a gigantic vice. At the same time, I heard a rattle upon the ice, and a number of little stones came hopping, jumping, and scuttling about my ears, and merrily descending to the glacier below. Presently came a large, flat, round fellow, trundled along on his edge like a hoop, and apparently aimed straight at my unfortunate body. I was in the position of an animated wicket set up to be bowled at, and truly glad I was when the biggest stone went off at an angle, making a decided case of wide-ball. I was speculating vaguely as to the chances of the next ball taking (say) my off-stump, when I felt some one seize me by the scruff of the neck, and in the next moment, I was extracted like a tooth, and placed upon the surface of the glacier. '*Vorwärts!*' screamed a big hearty voice, and I broke into a jog-trot across big hummocks of ice, and jumped sundry crevasses in magnificent style, until, exhausted and breathless, I sank upon the snow in the midst of our party.

They had crossed the track of the stones, and were waiting for me. They, of course, all considered my misfortunes as a fit subject for joke, except Jones, who took them as a personal insult, and asked me what I meant by keeping them all waiting. Brown and the Strong-minded had got into a conversation about the marvellous disintegrating powers of the weather, and endeavoured to calculate how long the whole mountain would take in crumbling to pieces; they were also arguing with some bitterness as to the number of years in which my body would reach Chamouni if abandoned in the crevasse. Jones, who considers everything that has not immediate reference to climbing to be sacrilegious on a mountain, put a stop to this discussion, interesting though it seemed to me, although the blessed consummation

to which they referred of the total abolition of Mont Blanc appeared to be lamentably distant.

'We must push on,' said the restless and perturbing Jones, 'if we are to get to the Grands Mulets to-night.'

'Mayn't I have a pipe to restore my nerves?'

'Not unless you mean to sleep on the glacier.'

I compounded for a glass of cognac, and sulkily got under-way, feeling like an overdriven sheep in a herd, with Jones snapping at me like the dog. For the next two hours, I hated him with an intensity such as I never felt towards any human being previously. My own extreme distress was unpleasantly contrasted by his jaunty air of perfect self-complacency, and he almost recovered his temper whilst giving me good advice with the most obtrusive air of condescension; he was, in fact, holding me up as a miserably raw and inexperienced traveller, and making me a mere pedestal to shew off his superiority. 'If ever I get off this detestable mountain,' I thought, 'and back to old England, with a volume of your sermons to review, my friend, I'll give you a piece of my mind.'

I feel unable to describe specifically the awful positions in which we were placed for some time to come. The maniacs of the Alpine Club affect to despise Mont Blanc, and to treat this ascent as a mere joke. I can only say that, to a stout and middle-aged gentleman, the joke is rather too near earnest. We were, of course, tied together with ropes, Jones being proudly at the head of the line, next to Cachat, and shewing off with exuberant self-applause, in the hopes of astonishing the lady. My own sufferings prevented me from clearly understanding anything that was going on. I remember wandering through huge blocks as big as a house, whose upper stories seemed to be snow, and which passed in the cellarage into clear green and blue ice. Brown and the Strong-minded pointed out and wrangled over stratification, and ribboned structure, and planes of cleavage, and goodness knows what. Round us yawned deep trenches in the ice, which we were invited to cross upon trembling bridges of snow. Rows of icicles hung over our heads, and one at least got down my back as I squeezed along the side of a monstrous lump, called, as Jones told me, a *serac*. The snow was up to my knees, and filled my boots. The sun was hotter than ever. The guides were, of course, occupied in making themselves agreeable to the lady, and left me in dangerous places to wriggle along on my stomach like a snake; or, at the utmost, hoisted me over awkward bits by laying hold of any part of my garments that came handy. My miseries culminated at a fearful spot, which Jones in an ecstasy described as a glorious *bergschrund*, or, to speak more plainly, a great-great-grandfather of crevasses. The Strong-minded became poetical again about the azure hues of the ice below; Brown took the opportunity of explaining nominally to the lady (but really to astonish the company generally) the formation of *bergschrunds*. I, meanwhile, was clutching frantically the sides of a ladder which the guides had fixed, very insecurely as I thought, across the crevasse. I glanced downwards to its horrid depths, expecting to see the bones of former travellers embedded in the ice, like cherries in a jelly. My figure, I have reason to suppose, strongly resembled that of a wasp; the guides being totally ignorant, it seems, of any kind of knot, with the exception of a

slip-knot; consequently, when they hauled upon the rope to help me, which, I must say, they did with a will, the principal effect was to squeeze all the breath (there was not much) out of my body. A weary and almost lifeless lump, I was at last deposited upon the snow above, whilst Jones pleasantly observed: 'Well, I always thought you were a muff, old fellow; but I could not have thought you quite such a duffer as this.' I had only strength to gasp out in reply: 'A drop more cognac!'

I remember faintly some process of going along a ridge between two profound crevasses, and exciting Jones's wrath by seating myself astride of it, instead of walking gracefully after the fashion of Blondin. He told me I was spoiling the steps for the lady. What business have ladies to undertake such unladylike expeditions, I should like to know? Somehow or other, this phase of misery passed away, and I presently found myself plodding knee-deep in snow, with a slow, monotonous motion, like a fly in a honey-pot, never, as it seemed, getting nearer any place in particular. The glare from the snow cruelly scorched every bit of skin exposed, whilst the snow somehow insinuated itself not only into my shoes, but into my pockets, and even inside my coat. I fancy I must have lain down during the march, or gone into a crevasse, or come to some kind of grief; but beyond the fact, that I was undergoing ceaseless torture, I remember nothing clearly. At last, when all hope seemed to be nearly extinct, I suddenly felt firm rock beneath my feet. A voice said: 'Grands Mulets;' and sinking wearily upon the rock, I asked for another drop of cognac.

The bottle was pretty well exhausted by this time, and I began to doubt the propriety of attacking Mont Blanc itself. Meanwhile, the guides, as I found out afterwards, wrapped me up in a Scotch plaid, and laid me out to dry on a warm shelf of rock, with a good exposure to the sun. I went to sleep instantaneously, and woke in a couple of hours as fresh as a lark. There is, I believe, something in the mountain air after all. I set about to examine our resting-place, which I knew from photographs, and from telescopic observations from the valley, but of which I had somehow failed to realise the peculiarities. The rock of the Grands Mulets strikes up from the glacier, somewhat as the well-known needle rises from the sea at the Isle of Wight. It looks from a distance precipitous and inaccessible, but on approach, it rises gradually enough, and, were it better situated, it would be a charming position for a lazy man to smoke his pipe. There are ledges, indeed, which seem to have been made expressly for this purpose; and it at once occurred to me that if Jones insisted upon climbing this monstrous hill much further, I could wait for him very comfortably at this place. I would secrete the bottle of champagne—an act which would be merely a fair retaliation for the various insults to which he had subjected me—and with a cold fowl, a loaf of bread, and a good supply of tobacco, I could while away a few hours very successfully, as I flattered myself. I should have liked a volume of Tennyson, but I could compose a lotus-eater's chorus tolerably well for myself. There was something dreamy in the sensation of lying upon these ledges in mid-air, and seeing valley, and mountain, and river stretched out in a slumbrous haze far below. The village of Chamouni, with its inns and its bridge, was plainly perceptible; but the crowds

of curious travellers and their hangers-on could happily disturb none of my senses. I should enter into the feelings of the eagle, dozing in his eyrie, in some inaccessible crag—with the clear advantage over him of a pipe after my meals.

These thoughts occurred to me, as I sat at meat, tearing up my food with my fingers, and listening to the talk of my companions. Jones was laying down the law dictatorially as to mountain and glacier, and receiving the respectful attention of the whole party, for, after all, he was on his own ground. 'The weather,' he said, 'is magnificent, and we shall start at 1.45 to-morrow; so we had better get a little rest.' The weather was, in fact, splendid. The sun was setting beyond the distant ranges of purple mountain, and the great snow-fields all round us glowed for miles with a glorious warm rose-colour. In the Valley of Chamouni, the sun had long set, and the light gradually died off the neighbouring hills; but we still remained an island of day, looking down into the night. By degrees, the glow died off our rocks, and crept up the snow-fields above us, seeming to linger a few moments on the top of the mountain. It disappeared, and then Jones exclaimed authoritatively: 'Make yourselves comfortable for the night.'

This was, although I did not understand it for the moment, a bitter sarcasm. I stooped my head, and entered the low door of the hut, which has been built for the benefit of travellers. I shuddered as I looked and reflected that twenty-two human beings, whereof one was a lady, were to pass some hours in this dungeon-like box. I call it a box, because it is all built of wood, and is in shape a long rectangle. There is, if I remember rightly, one small window, which no amount of persuasion would induce the guides to open. There are two conspicuous objects of furniture: one is a long table, running nearly the whole length of the room, and immovably fixed; the other is a stove, in the corner, the smoke of which manifests an excusable reluctance to leave the interior of the hut for the cold night-air. The only other conveniences consist of a few pegs, upon which to suspend knapsacks, plaids, and odds and ends generally. In short, a young couple about to marry, and desirous of reducing their expenses within the narrowest possible limits, could hardly take a better model than this edifice. There is only one door at the end of the building, close to which the stove is placed; and in order to give the ladies the best place, they were passed up to the other end, where all the smoke and bad air were gradually collected, but where, as a compensation, it was tolerably warm, and not quite so full of draughts. For the lady, a certain amount of comfort had been provided by laying down plaids sufficient to make a kind of divan, or raised couch. She subsided into the darkness, for the miserable hut was only lighted by two or three tallow-candles, stuck into the necks of bottles, and placed upon the table; and I say it to her credit, I did not hear her groan. I turned to Cachat with a dignified air, and asked him emphatically where I was to sleep. He answered me with a stare of astonishment: 'Here, Monsieur; this is an excellent place for sleeping.'

'Certainly,' chimed in Jones. 'Bar the fleas, and the smoke, and the bad air, and the draughts, it is not so bad. It is twice as good as the Aiguille de Gontté, isn't it, Cachat? or the Faulberg, Johann?'

Now, Johann being a native of the Oberland, where, it seems, the Faulberg is situated, thought it right to answer this last assertion with some asperity, and to dwell upon Chamouni and its arrangements from a very unfavourable point of view. A discussion ensued between him and Cachat, which was considerably entangled by the fact, that neither understood half-a-dozen words of the other's language, but it was not the less animated. Under cover of it, I repeated my question to Jones pathetically: 'Where am I to sleep?'

'Wherever you like,' replied Jones vaguely, and sank down behind the table, as gentlemen are apt sometimes to collapse after dinner. He disappeared into the darkness which surrounded our little centre of light, and, for anything I knew, there might be a commodious couch, upon which he had deposited his limbs. Accordingly, I took my courage in both hands, as the French say, and bravely sat down. Alas! I felt myself descending against no soft cushion such as my fancy had pictured; my back came violently against the planks which form the outer wall of the building; my head struck one of the before-mentioned pegs, and I found myself sitting on the toes of somebody's nailed boots, who, with an unjustifiable epithet or two, asked me what I meant by it. At the same time, by a judicious jerk, he lifted me off his feet, and I bumped down on the hard and not over-clean floor. Sticking out my elbows suddenly, I encountered two soft substances, which, from the exclamations that followed, I identified with the bodies of Jones and Brown. Common misfortune made us friendly, and we united in demanding a light. We arranged ourselves with a plaid or two in a position of endurable discomfort. The reader may easily realise it by getting into an empty railway luggage-van on a cold night with a couple of friends, and sitting down in a row with backs to the side of the van. If he will imagine that at one end there is a lady, and that the other is occupied by seventeen guides and porters jammed together like herrings in a barrel, he will approximate to our actual position. The guides and porters indulged in a ceaseless chatter, and to judge by the energy with which the talk was kept up, it must have been deeply interesting. The fire had to be made up at intervals, and a process began which seemed rather mysterious. The guides took off their shoes, and carefully lined them with paper, which they had previously covered with tallow-grease. The object of this, as I was told, was to keep out the cold; and Jones told me several legends of the fearful frost-bites caused by a little carelessness. Sleep was evidently becoming impossible; keen little draughts of wind played about my back; the boards seemed to harden every moment; Jones and Brown, against whom I was closely pressed, seemed to throw out new bony processes, which stuck into all my tenderest parts; in short, my hopes of recovering from the toils of the day in a refreshing sleep were doomed to cruel disappointment. Instead of rising like a giant refreshed with wine, I should turn out limp, and miserable, and exhausted. My one pleasure, under these circumstances, was the very natural one of making my friends as miserable as myself. Whenever Jones had been quiet for a minute or two, and was apparently sinking into a doze, I gave a sudden start or a peculiar wriggle, and he woke up with a muttered groan. He, without

doubt, retaliated, although I cannot say for certain whether his annoying motions were involuntary or dictated by malice prepense.

After some minutes, or hours, or nights (as it seemed) of this misery, it became necessary to find some distraction. 'Sing us a song, Jones,' I suggested.

'Sing! I should as soon think of singing in a noisome dungeon; but suppose we tell a few stories—that is the orthodox way of passing time, and I fancy these guides could tell us something.—Cachat, give us a story.'

Cachat, accordingly, after a little pressing, treated us to the following:

'We Savoyards had had a good many quarrels with our Swiss neighbours over the chamois. When a hunter crossed the glaciers, he sometimes met with an accident; nobody knew how or why he did not come back. A cousin of my own went out with his rifle one day, and was found a month after lying among the Alpine roses, with a bullet through his breast. Perhaps he had shot himself by accident; but people did say that Jean Simond, the Valaisan, had been afterwards seen with a knife remarkably like one belonging to poor Pierre. If Jean had met one of our lads on the hillside after that, he might have found that it is as easy to shoot a man as a chamois, and a good deal easier to kill him.'

'Well, I was out one day looking for the chamois amongst the cliffs that we call the Horse-shoe. I had had a long walk and bad-luck, and was coming home without so much as a marmot. Suddenly, I heard some stones rattle in a gully that I was about to descend. I threw myself flat on my face, and saw three chamois coming straight up. One was a fine fat fellow, with horns straight and long, a beautiful hide, and a beard like a goat's. I aimed at him, resting my rifle on a big stone. Just opposite me, he stopped. Crack! went the rifle, and away went the chamois, as fast as an eagle. I was right angry at missing, for I had had a good easy shot. "That beast must have been hit," I thought; and a chamois can run a long way even with a bullet through his body. I rushed to the place where he had been standing, and there were marks of blood. I had hit him, sure enough, and pretty hard too. "I shall have you yet, my beauty!" I thought; and away I went on his traces, without thinking of the time of day, or the way he was going. I had slept out often enough on the edge of the snow, and I was not afraid to trust myself anywhere with my rifle. Still, when, after a long hot pull, I had topped the ridge, and looked down to the valley beyond it, I felt a moment's fear. It was a wild little cove, high up in the hills. Snow lay there till late in the summer; it was a well-known haunt for the chamois. Unluckily, it was also well known as Simond's hunting-ground. People said that he kept a little flock of chamois there for himself; that he put salt for them to keep them from straying; and that he would shoot any man poaching on his preserves, like a dog. I thought of this, and halted for a moment; but as I looked at the valley, I saw my three chamois crossing a patch of snow in the distance, and one of them was limping painfully, as I thought, behind the others. I was young and rash, and without another minute's thought I scrambled down some dangerous rocks, and started in pursuit. Just where the little valley falls into a bigger one, there is a great buttress of rock. It is all slippery and steep, and more than one good hunter has had hard work amongst the crags. However, it was a favourite haunt for chamois, who could look out as from a watch-tower up the two valleys, and I thought my wounded friend might lie down there to rest. I was after him at once; and it took me a good hour creeping behind stones, and crawling through beds of

Alpine rose, before I got near. At last I got behind a huge boulder, raised my head slowly and cautiously, and there was my friend, not a hundred yards away, amongst the cliffs. He stood on a little ledge, from which the rocks sank away for hundreds of feet. If I moved another yard towards him, it would probably frighten him away, and he might have strength enough left to escape. Should I fire? I was now on Swiss ground, and if Simond was anywhere about, the shot might call his attention. I remembered vaguely that on a little patch of snow in the valley, I had seen something like the mark of a foot. I might have time, however, to bag the chamois, and be back before any one could see me. My rifle was ready and pointed. Just as I hesitated, the chamois moved. It was too much! Crack! went the rifle again, and as the echoes thundered down the valley, the chamois made one leap, and fell dead. Unluckily, he had sprung a little forwards, and fell close to the edge of the cliff. As I rushed forwards, he rolled over, and tumbled down a little gully to a steep slippery ledge, beyond which the sheer precipice sank down. Just on the very edge of the little platform, he stopped. I threw down my rifle, took off my shoes, and tried to get down to him. Clinging to little tufts of Alpine rose, I managed to let myself carefully down the gully to the ledge where he lay. The rock was fearfully slippery, and sank down just beyond him without a break for a distance that made me giddy to look at. I slipped off my stockings, took out my knife, and just cut the soles of my feet enough to make them bleed. The blood acted like a glue, and made my feet stick close enough to the rocks to be tolerably secure. I crept down, scarcely daring to breathe, got close to my chamois, crouched down slowly, seized him by the legs, and without daring to turn or to take my eyes off the rock where I was standing, backed slowly upwards till I reached the little gully. There I turned, and by a great effort, clambered up to the top, and sat down to put on my shoes. I looked round for my rifle. Where was it? A laugh from close by made my blood run cold. Not thirty yards off, I saw Jean Simond with a companion looking at me from behind a rock. Both their rifles were pointed straight at me, and I could see right down the barrel of one. "Here's a pretty mess," I thought, and it only occurred to me to ask time to say my prayers before I was shot, and tumbled down the rocks.

"Well, my friend," said Simond, "what do you think of chamois-hunting in the Valais?"

"I think," I said, for I felt desperate, "that the Valaisans are apt to steal a man's rifle—like cowardly thieves."

"And why do you steal their chamois?"

"Steal! I only followed my own from the Savoy side."

"Well," said Simond, "that's true; and it's lucky for you that I saw the beast cross the ridge. So you may go home; but you'll leave that chamois, and I shall take your rifle, by way of fee. You'll just have time to cross the *Mauvais Pas* to-night."—The *Mauvais Pas* was the name of the point of the ridge I had crossed.

'It is ill arguing with a man who has a rifle pointed straight at your head. So I said very little more—at least very little aloud—and turned away. As I went, Jean shouted after me: "Your cousin Pierre should have told you not to shoot chamois too carelessly, where you have no right to be."

'I felt mad and angry at the time, but swallowed down my wrath, and walked slowly away, vowing vengeance a thousand times. Then Jean was the murderer of my cousin, as sure as I stand here. As I crossed the valley to the *Mauvais Pas*, a thought struck me. The sun was near setting, and I should barely have time to cross the ridge; but where could Jean and his friend be going? They would never have time to get back to the village before night, and

there was some awkward ground to cross in the dark. They would probably stay in some chalets which had, I knew, been deserted by this time of year, as the cattle were all driven down to the valleys. I had seen Jean and his friend shoulder the chamois and the rifles, and start downwards towards the Alps. Suppose I followed them, and saw where they were going? I turned back, and crept more carefully after them than ever I had stalked chamois when I was on the hunt. As I got near the place where I had left them, I could look downwards for a considerable distance. Just on the edge of the pine-forests, far below me, was a little open meadow with several chalets. I lay down and watched. Presently, I could see the two men cross the meadow, and go straight to one of the chalets. I descended, carefully keeping out of sight, though it was growing so dark that there was little risk. When near the chalets, I crept on hands and knees till I had got within earshot. Lying flat in the grass behind a rock, I could see Jean and his friend sitting by a fire of sticks, smoking their pipes, and laughing with each other about their day's work. I caught a word or two about Pierre, and felt madder than ever. The blood mounted to my head and ran into my eyes. At last they retired into the hut, and lay down. I crept closer still, and remained as quiet as a mouse till I heard a snore. Then I crawled to the door. The rifles were leaning against it, and the chamois was on the ground. I stretched out my hand, got hold of a rifle, lifted it slowly off the floor, and crept away again into the dark. It was not loaded, but they had forgotten to take my powder and shot. I loaded carefully, and far enough off to make it impossible to hear me, and then went back to the chalet. All was dark inside, and I could not make out how the men lay. I sat down, and felt no fear that I should doze off. I thought too much of poor Pierre's murder to be in any risk of that. I managed to get hold of the other two rifles during the night, and put them quietly away, and then made up my mind how to act. When the day began to dawn, I could peer through the cracks in the hut. The two men were lying fast asleep side by side on a little bundle of hay. I raised my rifle, and got the two in a line. Just press the trigger, and both of them would be dead on the spot. Somehow, it felt rather murderous work, though it was only fair revenge. They had let me off, I remembered, when they might have killed me easily. Then Jean's companion was not a murderer, so far as I knew, though I felt certain that he was in the secret. Still I remembered that I had heard him laughing about it, and the recollection made me so wild that I raised my rifle again, and took aim carefully. In another second, both would have been dead. I thought, however, as I brought the rifle to the right aim, that it would be a rather awkward story for me to tell the priest at my next confession. Suddenly, it struck me that these men could not have confessed since they stole my chamois. If I shot them, they would die in mortal sin, and I should destroy their souls as well as their bodies. I sat down quite horror-struck, and threw away the rifle, trembling.

Cachat paused, and Jones said to him: 'Well, and what did you do?'

'I went in, waked Simond and his friend, and told them what I had been doing.'

'And what did they say?'

'They thanked me, and gave me my rifle, and half the chamois, and I went home.'

'And a nice set of characters your friends seem to be!' I observed quietly to Jones.

'Certainly, they are nothing very great—simply romancers; however, it is fair to say that the story is true, though it did not happen to Cachat. Let's have another.'

'I propose,' I replied, 'that we make an effort to

get some sleep, instead of telling stories. I know that I shall be dog-tired to-morrow, as it is.'

'Well, we'll just try. But the first man who moves or makes a noise, and thereby proves that he can't sleep, shall tell the next story for his pains. It will punish him, and probably send us off, which will kill two birds with one stone.'

'Agreed!' exclaimed a feeble voice, which, as subsequent investigations proved, came from the husband of the Strong-minded.

'You are the first to speak, sir! Tell your story.'

The unfortunate gentleman remonstrated, but to no effect. A general chorus called on him to start, and his wife issued her decisive commands.

'Well, my dear, as you insist upon it, here goes; and I hope you will like it. You must excuse me if I refer to you.' And without stopping to listen to objections, the gentleman began as follows:

UNCLE RODERIC.

My Jenny was early left an orphan, and was brought up by rich, generous, careless cousins, who accustomed her to every luxury, even to a fire in her bedroom in winter, a thing almost unheard of between forty and fifty years ago. If any one had remonstrated with them on the mistaken kindness of pampering a penniless girl, who would probably have to rough it, they would have replied that, when she was old enough, she was to go out to her uncle, Roderic, at Rumbung. No one quite knew what Uncle Roderic was. He had a civil appointment; but that is a vague term, merely intimating that a man is not a soldier, a clerk in a government office, a turnpike-keeper, a bargee, or an official upon a Prussian or Austrian railway. He was supposed to be rich—all Anglo-Indians had that reputation in those days, when it was lawful, or, at all events, practicable, to receive propitiatory presents from the native princes—and to be free from incumbrances, as he had buried two wives and three children at Rumbung, which was probably not the most healthy place in the Company's territories, and none of his family had ever heard of his making a third effort for domestic happiness.

Upon one point, however, there was no doubt; when Uncle Roderic heard of his sister's death, he wrote word that if nothing better could be done for his orphan niece, she was to be brought up at a good school, at his expense, and sent out to him in India when her education was finished; and though the former part of this proposal was set aside by the kind cousins, who had already welcomed the little girl, and grown fond of her when the letter came, and thought it better to bring her up with their own children than to send her amongst strangers, the offer to receive her, when of a suitable age to go out to him, was unhesitatingly accepted; and it being from time to time repeated, there were no fears for the future of the girl thus provided for. A rich, widowed, childless uncle, and the pick of a thousand husbands; really not a bad prospect.

But Jenny did not fully appreciate it; and she stopped at home, and married me; and as I was one of those beings uncomfortably described as 'struggling men,' she had rather a disappointed life of it. No carriage, no riding-horse, no man-servant; and a necessity for economy, which I do believe she honestly thought a vice!

For myself, I do not complain. I suppose a man has no right to prefer idleness, with a mere competence, to hard labour, with wealth. Riches are to be valued for their own sake, and a life spent in distasteful employment is not wasted, if they are but accumulated. At anyrate, an Englishman who prefers dreaming to working, has no right to marry under a

thousand a year at least; and I richly deserved constant pecuniary difficulty, and the perpetual infliction of Uncle Roderic. Certainly I got it. That Rumbung nabob was laid across my shoulders, as it were, whenever I was considered to deserve chastisement, and my dear Jenny was very unsparing. When we settled in a Bower, which she sneered at as 'pokey,' she dilated upon the palaces that awaited her in the East, her ideas of which were drawn, I suspect, rather from descriptions of the Alhambra, and the various mansions inhabited by the principal characters of the *Arabian Nights*, than from any account contained in her uncle's letters. Any little difficulty about servants led to a dissertation upon the delights of an Indian household, with a special retainer for every imaginable want; with attendants to fan you, to feed you, to wash you, to carry you, to read to you, to wipe your eyes when you wept, to hold your sides when you laughed; offices which a very plain cook, and a somewhat awkward housemaid, were certainly incompetent to perform. Hashed mutton and rollypolly pudding called forth allusions to the innumerable delicacies which daily tempted the aristocratic appetite of the nabob; and we never went anywhere in a fly without her talking at me of the buggy—a name which, it occurred to me, might have been given aptly enough to one of the vehicles we used to hire—and the palanquin.

All this was avowedly intended to goad me into exertion, but I had at least one attribute of the donkey, who, much as he dislikes being thrashed, hates labour more, and acts accordingly.

Men of England, wherefore toil
For the wives who will not sew?

was my version of Shelley.

Uncle Roderic and his luxurious mode of life having been once established as perpetual foils to myself and my poverty, his mental, physical, and pecuniary virtues grew and strengthened month by month, till at length he culminated in a paragon of beauty, talent, grace, amiability, and princely expenditure; and in five years' time, Jenny firmly believed in the correctness of her fancy portrait, while, faith being less trouble than scepticism, I became imbued with a similar conviction myself.

But gentlemen who are desirous of leaving a spotless reputation in the memories of relatives who have never seen them, are earnestly recommended to die at a distance, and leave them all their money. Uncle Roderic committed the mistake of coming home.

We were middle-aged in years, though old in matrimony, at the time, and the announcement threw us into a state of great excitement.

'Now, Simon, I do hope that you will turn over a new leaf, and exert yourself a little,' said my better-half—my three-quarters, I may almost call her. 'You will now have an opportunity of making some amends for all the hardship and wretchedness which your indolence and apathy have brought upon me. You are not without social qualities, and can make yourself agreeable when you choose. Go and meet Uncle Roderic when he arrives at Southampton; insist on his coming here; see after his luggage for him; pay him every attention; devote yourself entirely to him, in fact. Perhaps he will live with us, and then I shall have some chance of finding myself at last in my proper position.'

'A wife's proper position is that of her husband, Jenny,' I observed with dignity.

'True,' she replied with a sigh; 'but my husband has allowed himself from sheer idleness to sink far below that which he ought properly to have filled.'

I always got the worst of it in these little encounters.

'Ah,' said I, endeavouring to assume a philosophical and virtuous air, 'you put too much value on wealth, which does not constitute happiness.'

'It is an excellent substitute,' said Jenny.

'Nevertheless,' I continued, 'I will do what you wish me, and endeavour to raise myself in the social scale by eating any number of toads for the propitiation of your relative from Rumbung.'

So, when the vessel which was to bring the nabob home was about due, I went to Southampton, leaving Jenny very busy indeed, making our limited home, and especially the spare room, as comfortable as possible, and searching diligently for a new cook of more artistic pretensions—I mean performances—than any we had yet had.

There are few conditions more uncomfortable than looking out for the arrival of a ship which may come every hour, but does not. The expectant hardly dares do anything but loaf about in the neighbourhood of the place where the earliest intelligence is attainable; he hurries through his meals, fancying that every fresh entrance into the room is a message; he sleeps at night with one ear open; as for taking a walk, ride, or drive to any neighbouring place five miles off, he would look upon that as wilfully throwing away the time he has already invested in waiting. This is not the nervous fidget of an individual, for the weakness is so universal, that if ever you see a man quietly absorbed in the occupation of eating, reading, or chatting easily on indifferent subjects, while waiting for the arrival of train, coach, or steam-boat, you may safely lay odds that he is a Bagman or a Queen's Messenger.

I know I nearly worried myself into a fever before the *Kurree* came in; but she did make her appearance at last; and, as soon as it was possible to do so, I hurried on board, and introduced myself to the short, withered, yellow, ugly old man who had taken his passage in the name of Mr Roderic Pagoda.

I very nearly ruined everything by scornfully repudiating his right to bear his own name, the moment I set eyes upon him, but fortunately remembered in time how purely theoretical was my wife's portrait of her uncle when she described him as a man of commanding stature and nobility of feature; and rushing frantically forward, I seized a hand which was more like the claw of a Cochinchina fowl than anything else I can think of, told him who I was, welcomed him to England, and urged him to consider my house as his home, at all events until his future plans were settled.

'Very good,' he replied; 'I will.—Where is my niece?'

I told him that she was at home, making preparations for his reception, the only duty which could have prevented her from being the first to greet him on landing.

'Very good,' he said again. 'Go back and tell her I'll come and see her the day after to-morrow.'

'Will you not come with me at once?' said I.

'No,' he replied; 'I have to go to London on business. You cannot be of any use to me; I have my native servants, and can do better without you.'

He so evidently wanted to get rid of me, and looked so savage at any resistance to his will, that I was afraid of offending him if I persisted, and left him as he desired. Jenny was disappointed when she saw me return alone, but was reasonable beyond her sex; and indeed she was a very just woman, and when I told my story, confessed that it would not have been prudent to have acted differently. 'These old Indians have their whims, I know, and are apt to be peremptory,' she said. But she was evidently sceptical about my description of his personal appearance, and thought me prejudiced.

She soon had an opportunity of judging for herself, for he arrived on the day he had mentioned, attended by one Hindu servant, who stuck to him like his shadow.

He came earlier than we expected—about twelve o'clock, not long after our breakfast, in fact, for we

were people of terribly indolent habits. Jenny was inclined to be somewhat affected on meeting for the first time with her only near relative, one who had offered, too, to receive her when she was left orphaned and helpless; and the warmth with which she greeted him was not entirely dictated by that kind of gratitude which has been described as 'a lively sense of favours to come.'

But Uncle Roderic's appearance forbade sentiment to expand, and the way in which he responded to her greetings caused it to shrink back into the furthest corner of its shell.

'How do?' he said, entering the hall.—'What a place to live in! Call this a house? Why, it's a hovel. Rooms are cupboards, and cupboards with low ceilings.—Where am I to sleep? Not facing the north or east, I hope.' Here he pulled out of his pocket a Morocco case, which we supposed to be a miniature, but which proved, on being opened, to contain a compass. 'Oh,' he continued, consulting it, 'house stands north and south, and—if my room is at the back, as you say, that will do.—Is tiffin ready? Because I am starved. Could get nothing to eat in London.—Oh, I have read all about your goings-on in the newspapers'—and he turned fiercely upon me, as if he alluded to my personal conduct—'adulterating everything, bread, beer, pepper, wine—living on poison. "Food and its Adulteration," I have read all about it. I should not have dared to come to England, only I had sent in my resignation, and could not help myself. However, I suppose one will be safer in a private family than at a hotel, and do let me have something to eat at once.'

This was a vexation for poor Jenny, who had prepared an elaborate lunch for two o'clock. But she did what she could, and had some cold meat, &c. spread out in the dining-room.

'Chicken?' said the nabob dubiously, turning up his yellow nose over a wing. 'You are sure it was not bought in London?'

'O no,' replied my wife; 'I got it of a neighbouring farmer.'

'Ah! then I'll try it. Never eat London poultry; it is fattened on poultices bought at the hospitals.—Pickles? No, thank you; take them away; they look green! Prepared with copper, I'll be bound.'

Here Uncle Roderic spoke words of mystery to his dusky familiar, who disappeared, and returned presently with a jar of chutnee.

'Sardines?' he continued. 'Well, if I could be sure they were not bleak?'

In the hope of infusing a more lively view of things in general into him, I pressed him to have a glass of sherry.

He turned round, laid down his knife and fork, and glared at me.

'Did you buy it at the wine-press in Spain?' he asked. 'Did you come home with the butt, sitting on it by day, and sleeping on it at night? Did you bottle it with your own hands? Even if you had done all this, there might be very little of the juice of the grape in it; but I would risk it. But drink a chemical mixture, prepared in a London cellar—no!'

'Will you try a glass of beer, then, uncle?' asked Jenny.

'Beer! Thank you, no. I smoke my tobacco, and do not drink it; and I happen to be aware of the effects of *Coccus Indicus* upon the coats of the stomach and the brain. No; I will take some potato spirit, if you have it reasonably pure, with cold water.'

'Potato spirit!' I cried. 'I am afraid that there is none in the house.'

'O Simon!' said Jenny, 'how could you be so negligent. No potato spirit!' As if it had been our customary tippie.

'Brandy, you call it,' explained Uncle Roderic; 'but it is all potato spirit artificially flavoured and

coloured. There is no real cognac to be had now a days.—Ah, this is less unwholesome than most things, I believe.—There is a very queer taste about the bread!’

‘Indeed!’ cried Jenny. ‘I am very sorry for that. Our baker’—

‘Baker!’ shouted Uncle Roderic. ‘You never mean to tell me that I have been eating baker’s bread! Do you wish to murder me? Do you take me for an ostrich, that you expect me to digest plaster of Paris, bones, and alum? Is that fit nourishment for an elderly man, an invalid, and a Christian? If I am to stay in this house, you must buy your own corn, grind it, mix it, and bake it at home.’

We fortunately possessed some home-made biscuits, and with these we pacified him; and when he had explained to us how noxious and disgusting substances had been forced by hydraulic pressure into our cheese, this trying meal terminated.

I hoped that with it the topic of adulteration would close, but it soon became evident that he had cogitated upon the matter until it had taken root and spread all over his mind like a fungus; and he hardly cared to speak of anything but that, or cognate subjects.

He told us how a Norwegian priest had poisoned all his congregation in the sacrament, because he believed that he had got them into a good frame of mind for death, and feared that if they lived on, some of them might relapse. He informed us that a large and miscellaneous contractor was engaged to provide an Oporto firm with five hundred thousand bushels of sloes per annum. He nearly turned poor Jenny sick by detailing the process of manufacturing milk and kidneys for the London market; and altogether it was a relief when he announced that it was his custom always of an afternoon to take forty winks, and that he would retire to his bedroom, and lie down for a while.

‘Poor Uncle Roderic!’ sighed Jenny when we were alone. ‘It is a pity he thinks so much about such subjects. It is better to eat what tastes nice and agrees with us, and ask no questions.’

‘Yes,’ I groaned. ‘If this is not a case where ignorance is bliss, and wisdom folly, Gray never knew of one. A nice life we shall have of it!’

‘Oh,’ she replied, ‘we shall get used to his ways; and when we have a large establishment, and everything arranged according to his fancy, he will be less nervous. No doubt, the sight of our humble way of living made him think that we put up with inferior things for the sake of economy.— Good gracious!’

The exclamation was startled out of her by a tremendous rumpus overhead; and rushing out to see what was the matter, we found Uncle Roderic standing on the staircase landing, storming in Hindustani at his servant in the bedroom, from which sounds of scratching and tearing proceeded. Our appearance diverted the storm.

‘What’d ye mean?’ he shouted in a tone of great excitement. ‘Have you done it on purpose? Have you brought me down here to your barrack of a house to murder me? I—I won’t stop here another hour. I—I’ll have the law of you.’

‘My dear sir,’ I cried, ‘what can be the matter?’

‘Matter!’ he roared. ‘Do you know that you have put me into a room with a green paper?’

‘Is it green?’ said Jenny, coming forward. ‘I believe it is. But, uncle dear, I had no idea that you objected to the colour.’

‘Object to the colour, indeed! Do you know what the green of paper is? Arsenic, madam, arsenic; and it is perpetually coming off in minute particles, and floating about the room. The unfortunate wretch who slept there would breathe arsenic, sneeze arsenic, snore arsenic, absorb arsenic at every pore.’

‘My dearest uncle, you horrify and astonish me. I never heard of such a thing!’

‘Then you ought to have heard; and the best thing you can do is to send some one to help my servant to tear the poisonous stuff down. He is hard at it.’

That he was, beyond question.

By giving up our own room, which was fortunately papered less objectionably, to him, we managed, with some trouble, to pacify him; he forgave us, condescended to remain our guest, and made us thoroughly uncomfortable. But several weeks elapsed, and he never said a word about setting up a larger establishment, never even offered to take a share of the current expenses; and as I had to hire a carriage for him daily, and the cost of the luxurious trifles and dinners he required was beyond what I could properly afford, it required no telescope to see to the end of my credit, and I began to grow seriously uneasy.

It was unsatisfactory also to observe that he did not become thoroughly domesticated with us for all our pains. We studied his tastes and nervous fancies so carefully indeed that he could not help a certain negative satisfaction—I mean, that he did not actually grumble or complain—though he never spoke in commendation of our efforts to please him. Then I would defy any man, however bilious, cross, or crotchety, to resist the softening influences of my Jenny when she is anxious to please, and Uncle Roderic did grow more social and less bearish certainly. Still, I repeat, she could not domesticate him, and one great proof of this was the restless manner in which he was continually running up to London. We lived out Richmond way, within easy reach of the metropolis, and he would start off early in the morning, before we were up, two or three times a week, without giving us notice of his intention, and not return till dinner. Jenny tried to make him ask her to accompany him on one of these expeditions, but could not even extract the slightest intimation as to how he employed his time. That was a mystery only known to himself and the Native, who trod in his footsteps all day, and slept across the threshold of his bedroom all night, sticking to him as though he had been a crustaceous Native, and Uncle Roderic his rock. I thought badly of this restlessness; Jenny put a very sanguine interpretation upon it.

‘He meditates a surprise for us,’ she said. ‘Mark my words, Simon; he is furnishing a house somewhere in London, and when it is ready, he will take us to live there;’ and here her imagination ran on castle-building, or rather furnishing, to a wildly poetical extent.

What pleased Uncle Roderic most was the kind way in which Jenny always spoke of the natives of India. He was excessively indignant at the idea of their being considered an inferior race, and loved to dilate on their merits, both physical and intellectual, and to uphold many of their customs which are generally considered degrading by Europeans. Caste, for example, he would urge, was an institution which would put an end to two-thirds of the petty jealousies and vanities of English society. When every man’s, and still more every woman’s, position was definitely fixed, there could be no doubt about whom to call upon, whom to bow to; there could be no cutting, that meanest and most vulgar result of diffident vanity. And so of other Hindu matters. Jenny saw at once how strongly her uncle really felt upon these subjects, and fell in warmly with all his ideas from the first, advocating perfect equality, and even intermarriage between the white and dusky races; so that I began to think it probable that the nabob would find it difficult to forego the society of so complaisant a niece, now that he had become used to her flattering ways; and I owned that her interpretation of his frequent absences was not an improbable one.

Well, I was in for it now, and anything was better than debt; or else the prospect of being Uncle Roderic’s head slave was not a very attractive one to me; I had sooner have stuck to my cottage and freedom—yes, freedom, for any little exertion of

authority on the part of my three-quarters was legitimate, voluntary, constitutional, and pleasant; besides, I revolted whenever I liked, without any very unpleasant consequences.

At length, Uncle Roderic unfolded his plans, and Jenny's surmises were proved to be correct, to a certain extent, at all events. He had been remarkably affable all day, and in the evening, after tea, when his hour for bed, a very early one, was drawing near, he said: 'As this is the last night that I shall spend under your roof!—'

'My dear uncle!' began Jenny; but he put up his hand with a gesture of remonstrance against interruption, and she was silent.

'The last night, unless the ghost turns me out of the haunted house that I have bought and furnished at Hampstead; and as I may very possibly feel inclined to leave early to-morrow morning before any one is up, I take this opportunity of expressing satisfaction with my entertainment here. You have done your best, I do believe. That wine' [alluding to a claret which I had got for him at enormous trouble and expense] 'I believe to be really pure, if not of a first-class vintage; and the last batch of potato-spirit' [*rieux cognac* at fifty shillings the gallon, if I owe a penny for it!] 'was both wholesome and palatable. My wishes and tastes have also been consulted in the cookery and other matters, and I thank you both. I will not ask you to come over and see me to-morrow, as I shall be busy on first entering my new house; but on the day after, I shall be happy to receive you. Come early.'

'Why, you sly uncle,' cried Jenny, 'to go and take a house without telling us!'

'I did not want to be bored with advice and questions,' he replied.

'Well, but what do you mean by the house being haunted?'

'What I say: it has that reputation, and I got it the cheaper for it. No one would take it: it has stood empty for the last ten years. However, it suits me: secluded situation, good grounds.—Good-night.'

'Well,' said I, when he was gone, 'we have failed, then.'

'Failed!' cried Jenny: 'not a bit of it. On the contrary, everything has turned out as I expected; only I'm sorry that he has gone poking out at Hampstead.'

'What!' said I, 'do you think that he intends us to live with him, then?'

'Of course. You men see nothing.'

When we came down next morning, Uncle Roderic was gone—he, his Native, and all his baggage. On the following day, we sought and found his Hampstead residence. Directions were not difficult to obtain; every neighbour knew the Haunted House, and was curious about the nabob who had taken it. It was an old-fashioned place, of course, surrounded by a large garden and paddock, and entirely shut in by a high wall, which had been lately repaired and built up in parts where it would before have been possible for a passer-by, mounted on a very high horse, to get a peep into the grounds.

'Not altogether a bad place,' said Jenny, as we walked up from the lodge to the house. 'Rather gloomy; but I shall have this shrubbery thinned, and a few of those large trees near the house cut down; and when I have gained complete influence over uncle—and in six months I shall be able to do what I like with him—will not these grounds be admirable for fêtes?'

Jenny made no doubt but what she was now at last about to live in proper style. To her delight, the hall-door was opened for us by a legitimate porter, who had a correct chair like a luxurious sentry-box; and two well-calved footmen bowed us up-stairs, to the first landing, where a Native took charge of us, and ushered us into the drawing-room.

Uncle Roderic laid down a number of the *Lancet*, and advanced quite courteously to meet us. Jenny took a step into the room, and then stopped abruptly, colouring a little. A woman was slowly rising from the sofa, where she had lain extended. A domestic could hardly take such a liberty, surely. A caller would have a bonnet on. She turned towards us—an Asiatic countenance!

'You have often expressed yourself so liberally towards the natives of India, my dear niece,' said Uncle Roderic, 'that I have no hesitation in breaking through a resolution which I had formed when I came to England, and introducing you to—my wife. She does not speak much English at present, but I have no doubt you will get on together somehow. She will take you, if you like, to the nursery.'

How he completed his sentence, I know not; everything swam before my eyes at that fatal word. Jenny behaved admirably, I remember that; not until we had left the house, and were in the lane outside the grounds, did she break down. Two dreadful tradesmen's boys came upon us suddenly while she was then seeking relief in tears, and their remarks were quite audible to my sensitive ears.

'Look, Bob, how that 'ere lady's a takin' on!'

'Ay, she's been a-callin' on old Livery and 'is niggers. P'raps she's seen the ghost.'

'What ghost?'

'Why, don't you know the 'ouse is 'aunted?'

'I've heerd tell summat about it, but I've not been long in these parts. What does it mean?'

'Why, when a 'ouse is 'aunted, it's 'aunted, stoopid; and this one is 'aunted.'

Cockney Bob unwittingly hit the blot. The house was *aunted*, and that was the mischief of it.

I lived for years at Dieppe—an outlawed man.

When this story was finished, we again tried the plan of enforcing silence, which was perhaps the reason why the Strong-minded uttered no objections as to the part she had played in the story. We remained so long quiet, that I began to entertain hopes that I was really getting off to sleep. I was speculating dimly as to why the gas was still lighted in my bedroom, when an accidental turn threw off part of my plaid, and by exposing me to a sudden draught of wind, roused me to a sense of realities, and to a consciousness of my position. The contrast between the Grands Mulets and my own bedroom thus suddenly brought to my mind was too strong, and I uttered an involuntary condemnation upon Mont Blanc. 'A story! a story!' cried my fellow-sufferers, all wide awake; and I indulged them with the following:

CAPTAIN GRAINGER.

UNTIL Twistleton got spoony, and married, I didn't believe anything could ever have disturbed his even style of going. However, he was let in for *la belle passion* at last, and so far lost his head that he did marry. They've a place down in Swamphire—a rambling, old-fashioned, two-storied, comfortable quarter enough, on the outskirts of the Forest, and several miles from anything; however, he's a sort of man who don't care for being bored by society, and the place suits him perfectly. He's built a theatre for his wife, who is mad on private theatricals; and, as her friends always fill it when she wants them, she's quite contented too. Twistleton's hobbies—it's needless to tell you, I suppose, that he abominates his wife's?—are yachting and plate. He's at sea regularly from April till November; sails his own schooner, *Wildfire*, himself; is thoroughly happy in the height of a hurricane in 'the Bay'; and—which more nearly concerns what I'm going to tell you—has the most wonderful collection of *vaseille*—

antique and modern, gold and silver—that you ever set eyes on. Hunt and Roskell, Emanuel, and the rest of them, always know where to look for a purchaser of some useless, fancy-priced drinking-cup, that holds about as much as a wine-glass; or some elaborate silver *plateau* that Rothschild himself might wince at paying for. Twistleton don't care what he pays for either of his hobbies; fortunately, he's one of the richest commoners in England—so it don't much matter. Well, he goes to bed every night with enough 'loot' in the house to make foundation for another Banda and Kirwee case; and, as I told you, his place is in the wildest part of Swamphshire, just outside the Forest. But the 'Gentlemen of the Shade,' as old Falstaff calls them, haven't troubled him yet, though, I suppose, the exact amount of plunder is known, to an ounce, to the Fagins of to-day. Perhaps they have an inkling of the reception the 'crib-crackers' would meet with if they tried a *soup* there, and have given it up as a hopeless job. Twistleton is a dead-shot; good alike with rifle, breech-loader, and pistol—but wonderful with the last. They knew that at Baden, fast enough, when he got into that gambling row there; and the fat Prussian apologised directly his seconds told him who his man was.

Down in Swamphshire, Twistleton always sleeps with a revolver under his pillow—it's a fancy he has, he says—and his wife has the daintiest little miniature ditto, hanging on its rest, within reach of her hand. And, let me tell you, for all her delicate womanhood, and her big violet eyes, and pretty hair, and baby's face, I'd be very sorry to be within fifteen paces of that murderous little toy, when my Lady had it pointed at me, and meant mischief! For a short range, she can beat her husband—*La Mignonne* (that's his *petit nom* for her) can; and she's as cool and determined in her way as Charlie is in his. They always laugh at the notion of a burglary at their place; but they would give a tolerably good account of any ruffians who should try one on there, I fancy. Charlie has a wonderful man, who was Twistleton's servant in the army; and when he left, Charlie bought Mr Farrell his discharge, and took him away with him. Farrell is a general factotum in the Swamphshire establishment. The established butler gave notice before he'd been there a year—couldn't stand Farrell's impudence, he said—the fact being, I believe, that the latter had caught him out in wholesale robbery. Farrell dropped, quite naturally, into the command of the cellar, with half-a-dozen fellows under him; attends to his master only, but sees that every one else is looked admirably after by the underlings, and, in especial, sees to the safe-keeping of that houseful of plate. He sleeps in a sort of strong-room, on the ground-floor somewhere, surrounded by the iron safes that contain it, and with the keys under his pillow. He keeps Charlie's rifles and pistols in his room, so the fortress is well armed. He's caught something of his master's quiet way; but I can answer for it, there are few more reckless dare-devils, when it comes to a row, than ex-private John Farrell; and, above all, he's as true as steel. There's nothing in the world he wouldn't do for Charlie, from risking or losing his own life in his service, to taking another man's. On the whole, therefore, you see that the Twistletons are right in thinking themselves pretty well safe from any ordinary burglarious attack. In fact, as Charlie said to me, when he told me the story I'm telling you; 'They'll never come here, old man, unless they come so strong that they won't mind making a row; and I don't fancy that's likely to be the case.'

Well, one winter, in February, the Twistletons gave a great amateur performance at their theatre. They had chosen some awfully heavy piece, in three acts and no end of scenes, for the display of pretty little Mrs Twistleton's powers in the tragic line. The house

was choke-full of women who were playing in the piece, and their chaperons; while a whole regiment of men whom they couldn't put up used to come over every day to dinner from Dedlock, the nearest town, where they were quartered. Among these last was a fellow whom nobody knew exactly, but who seemed somehow hand-in-glove with everybody, whether they liked it or not. He was very active in getting up the affair—showed vast knowledge of stage tactics, and quite won *La Mignonne's* heart by his zeal and energy. He knew so much more about the part than the man who had been cast for the lover in the melodrama, that it ended at last by the latter resigning his rôle to Captain Grainger, as the knowing one was called. He was a good-looking fellow enough—and I suppose he passed muster in the hurry and confusion of the time. Some men fought rather shy of the navy man (he called himself R.N., you know, and told people he was home from the Coast on sick-leave), about whom no one in that service present could remember anything; but, on the whole, Captain Grainger was considered, if 'a tiger,' not a very ferocious one, and held his ground accordingly. Twistleton had met him one day at the Club, dining with Croker (who had picked him up at Baden), and certainly at that time believed in him. The captain's knowledge of nautical matters was quite on a par with his theatrical experience, and was perfectly satisfactory, I don't doubt, to any one but an old-salt; so Charlie, after talking yachting shop with the stranger for a couple of hours after dinner, asked him down to stay with him in Swamphshire. The *soi-disant* Grainger accepted off-hand, and came down with bag and baggage a day or two after. While the theatricals were in progress, they had to quarter him with the others at Dedlock; but by and by, when the house was empty again, the captain was put up in a snug set of rooms in the Bachelors' Wing, and seemed to like his new quarters so well that he gave no signs whatever of vacating them at the end of a week. Charlie Twistleton is, I verily believe, the most hospitable man going; and though he began to get rather tired of his visitor after a while, would have let him stay on for ever, sooner than hint at the expediency of an exodus, had not something come to his ears which left him no choice in the matter.

It was about the end of the second week of the captain's visit, when Farrell, being at the time engaged in superintending his master's dinner toilet, mentioned a circumstance which was unpleasant, to say the least of it. It appeared that, in the afternoon, Farrell had been engaged on something at the theatre (which, by the way, was some distance from the house itself), and, on coming out of his room to go there, had, as usual, locked his door, and pocketed the key. He was absent nearly an hour. When he came back, he found the window of his room open, though, he said, he could almost have sworn he left it shut. His room, as I told you, was on the ground-floor, and was the room in which the plate was kept. The keys of the plate-chests were hanging where he left them; but, on unlocking one of the safes presently, he discovered in the wards of another key on the ring, a tiny speck of wax. On looking closer, he saw, or believed he saw, enough to satisfy him that some one had been taking a model of the key in wax. Who? That was the question. It might have been fancy or it might not; but, at all events, Farrell declares that, when he entered the plate-room, there lingered still a faint but recognisable odour, identical with that which Captain Grainger's handkerchiefs were wont to exhale. To a man of the captain's light weight and agility, there wasn't the faintest difficulty in entering the room by the window, though tolerably distant from the ground. The question was, *had* the captain so entered? Charlie laughed the matter off to Farrell in his careless way, and thought the whole story unlikely, of course; but still he couldn't help

feeling it was decidedly unpleasant. Suppose Farrell were right? What did the captain want in his strong-room? What was he taking models of patent keys for? And, again, who, *au bout du compte*, was the captain? He didn't know. He had been rather taken with a stranger that night at the Club, and had seen him there in decent society, at the same table with Croker, and believed him to be what he said he was—that was all. Altogether, it was annoying. The man might be all right (though Farrell had always looked askant on him, he remembered, since the day he came); but it is a bore to feel after dinner that you may be sitting opposite a housebreaker *in posse*, who drinks your Lafitte with all the keener appreciation for having taken the first step towards 'looting' your strong-room, that very afternoon. So Charlie thought, as he passed the claret to the captain across the table, and wondered whether that individual were really a Jack Sheppard, or only the victim of Farrell's dislike and suspicion. 'At all events,' he thought, as he undressed slowly before his fire that night—'at all events, we're a match for him by himself, if that is his game; and if he's got a gang in readiness for the job, why, now Farrell's taken the alarm, we're a match for them too. However, I'll either find out all about him from Croker, or get rid of him quietly at once, if Croker don't know more about him than I do.'

The next morning, however, Charlie felt rather ashamed of his suspicions, as he watched the captain performing various antics on the lawn, for the amusement of his little boy and girl, while La Mignonne looked on well pleased. It did seem absurd to fancy that good-natured fellow a housebreaker; and, after all, it might have been a mistake of Farrell's about the wax on the key; still, he determined to question Croker about the man on the earliest opportunity. There *was* a Grainger in the Navy List certainly, and his ship the *Pegasus* was on the Coast station: it surely wouldn't be very hard to find out if this were the man, though it went very much against the grain with Charlie to play the amateur detective on one who was his guest. That afternoon, he got a telegram from London, which called him there at once. The affair was one which couldn't be neglected, and might keep him there two or three days perhaps. It was just important enough to put all thoughts of yesterday out of his head for a time. Grainger heard of his host's intended departure by the 4.20 with the proper amount of regret, and volunteered to drive over to the Dedlock station with him, but said nothing whatever about accompanying him back to town.

'The captain goes back, does he, sir?' said Farrell to his master, on the platform. 'Very good. You sleep at Cox's, sir, I suppose?'

'Of course,' said Charlie, handing his wraps into the carriage. 'Send all letters there till Thursday.—Good-bye, Grainger.'

'Good-bye, my dear fellow!' said the captain. 'Come back as soon as you can, mind.' And then the express started; and, shortly afterwards, the captain drove the phaeton back in time for dinner.

Charlie got to town in time to see his lawyer that night, and make an appointment for next day. By the time he had dined, and fallen into his *fauteuil* in the Club smoking-room, cigar in mouth, and coffee and Curaçoa at his elbow, he had forgotten all about the captain. Croker coming in shortly afterwards, put him in mind of the questions he had to ask him. Croker, however, could tell him very little; but fancied he knew some one who could tell him everything. This man was a relation of Grainger's, it seemed, an army man; and Croker proposed to ask him to dine next day to meet Charlie; and so it was settled. The next night, after a fagging day's work over dusty parchments in a dustier legal sanctum, Twistleton came into the Strangers' Room at the Club. A tall, bronzed, Plunger-looking man was presented to him as Major

Grainger, and then all three sat down to dinner. Charlie was tired and hungry, and, besides, couldn't begin his inquiries off-hand; so the second flask of 'dry' was about half empty ere he broached the subject. It wasn't altogether reassuring to hear from the Plunger's lips that his only brother, a navy captain, had landed at Southampton two or three days before, on sick-leave from his ship the *Pegasus*, then on the Coast station. Nevertheless, this was what they *did* hear, to his own great annoyance, and to the discomfiture of poor Croker. It was testimony which couldn't be doubted for a moment. But who, then, was the other—the false Grainger? In a moment, all Farrell's half-expressed suspicions—all that story about the key, flashed across his mind. If that were true— It began to look serious. The man he had left down in Swamphire—who had been there long enough to know the house thoroughly—who, he remembered now, was always losing his way, and coming down wrong staircases, and opening wrong doors—who had taken such wonderful interest in that rare old plate his host had spent a whole morning in exhibiting to him—there was no question about it; that man was at the best an impostor. He didn't like to think what else he might be. He tried to laugh away his own presentiments, but it wouldn't do. He made some excuse, left the Club, and went back to Cox's. 'There were no letters for him,' the waiter said; 'but, yes, there *were* a telegram. The messenger had only just left, and they were just going to send it to him at the Club.' Charlie tore open the envelope. It was from Dedlock—from Farrell—and it contained just two words: 'Wanted here.' That was all. Charlie thought of La Mignonne, and made up his mind what to do at once. 'Get me a Hansom,' he said to the waiter. 'Leave my things up-stairs till I send for them. I may be back, perhaps, to-morrow.'

The Hansom took him to the Waterloo terminus in ten minutes. The down mail to Dedlock had been gone nearly two hours. It was the last train that night. Charlie had a private interview with the chief authority, and, for some three-quarters of an hour, paced up and down the platform while a 'special' was being got ready. The special whirled him down to Dedlock in some two hours more. There was a groom waiting half asleep over the porters' fire, who roused himself, and got his horses in readiness to start, when a certain telegram came to Dedlock, to tell the people there the special was on its way. The groom was there by Farrell's orders to await his master's arrival, or a message from him; so that it was barely an hour after midnight when Charlie got home. He rode quietly into the stable-yard, more from fear lest he should disturb La Mignonne's slumbers than from any excess of precaution. Farrell met him there, and smiled grimly when he saw him. 'It's all right now, sir, I think,' he said. 'He guessed I were fly on his game, and he's gone to bed quietly.' And then Farrell told his master all that had occurred since his departure. Coupled with what Charlie knew of his guest at present, it did look rather suspicious. The captain had had an interview, the day before, with an ugly-looking 'rough,' in a secluded part of the grounds. Then Farrell, whose suspicions had now become certainties, had discovered him in the strong-room, where, as I told you, Charlie's rifles and pistols were usually kept. He had come to look for a small-bore, he said, having a mind to practise at the bottle-mark on the lower lawn. Farrell had given him what he asked for, and had accompanied him himself, though the captain had several times hinted that he shot better alone. But Farrell had afterwards discovered that the charges of the two revolvers he had by him at night had been rendered perfectly harmless; and had considered this looked so like a coming *coup*, that he had sent that telegram to his master.

The captain had dined alone that evening, La Mignonne being occupied with one of the children who was ill. During dinner, he had 'deigned to chaff Farrell about his armoury; asked him what he'd do if anybody came into his room by accident; &c. To the first question, Farrell had replied: 'Well, sir, you'd better try!' and that answer had singularly discomposed the gallant captain. He had remained smoking for some time after dinner, going now and then to the window, and looking out at the night. Then he had taken his candle, and gone off, as though to bed. But, an hour afterwards, Farrell, waiting in the dark strong-room with two newly-charged revolvers on the table before him, had heard a stealthy step, as of one moving barefoot, cease for a moment at his door. Some one was listening. After a while, the step passed on. Then Farrell had slipped out, with a dark-lantern in his hand, and the revolvers in his pocket, and had reached the hall in time to surprise the captain, noiselessly undoing the fastenings of the door. Politely, after a grim sort, Farrell had begged to be allowed to help him; and the captain, thoroughly taken aback, had blurted out something about inability to sleep, and a wish to stroll on the lawn a little before turning in again. 'Better not, sir,' said Farrell. 'If my Lady happened to look out of window, and see you, she *might* think you was a burglar, and take a shot at you without much warning! It's a way we have in these parts, at night; and she's very dead at fifteen paces, my Lady is!' Whereupon the captain had laughed, not pleasantly, and, with an evil look at Farrell, had gone back to his room again—this time for good and all. His light was lit and extinguished twice, Farrell observed, and then all had remained quiet. 'You see, sir,' said that individual, 'he saw there was no chance to-night, with me sticking so close to him, or I do believe he meant business.—Ah! you may smile, sir, but I do—or I shouldn't have telegraphed to you. We'd better get rid of him quietly, I think, sir; it's no use to have a row now. I told the boy to order a fly from Dedlock for seven this morning; and you might see him in his room, without giving my Lady any trouble about the matter!'

In due course, the fly from Dedlock came, and into it, rather pale and nervous, got the daring Captain Grainger, R.N.—and they've seen no more of him. Charlie says he tried to bluster a bit when he talked to him; but when he heard about the arrival of the *real* Grainger, he gave in at once, and went off like a lamb. Glad enough to get away so easy, I daresay; though, of course, there was nothing exactly tangible against him. Who he was, or what he was, nobody ever knew.

As though in profound regret for this last circumstance, Mr Robinson here uttered so long a sigh, that he was immediately called upon for the next story; which, although it recorded the secret of his woe, may be aptly enough entitled

A CAT'S-PAW.

I WENT out, sick at heart, and thoroughly crest-fallen, as wretched a literary Alnaschar as ever saw the brittle foundation of his hopes shivered at a blow. I had thought myself the luckiest of men on being offered the post of Special Correspondent, in Italy, to the *Meteor* newspaper, one of the newly-established penny dailies. The salary was handsome; and the allowance for travelling-expenses had been fixed on a very liberal scale, for it was the famous spring season of the year 1859. Italy was to be free, according to the Emperor Napoleon's promise, from the Alps to the Adriatic; and France and Sardinia, side by side, were pressing upon the retreating forces of Austria. The emoluments of my new post seemed

fabulous to a young and briefless barrister, such as I then was, and I left my dreary chambers in Pump Court with bright hopes for the future; hopes, however, soon to be dashed to the ground.

The Sardinian head-quarters were then at Piacenza, lately abandoned by the Austrians; and on arriving, and applying for leave to follow the march of the army, I met with a peremptory refusal. The adjutant-general, Minghetti, belonged to the old Piedmontese nobility, as proud and unattractive a caste, in spite of some sterling merits, as Europe can shew. He had a hearty dislike for the press, and also a belief, not uncommon with military men of the old pedantic school, that a newspaper correspondent was a pestilent spy and mischief-maker, useless at all times, and often dangerous. Therefore, as I had no friend at court, my humble request for leave to remain with the army was bluntly denied.

'Digby! Charley, boy! don't you know me?' cried a well-known voice, as I left the presence of the old sour-visaged martinet almost heart-broken; and I turned to find myself face to face with an old friend of my family, Captain Griffith by name, and one of the best fellows breathing. He had always been kind to me, even when I was a raw school-boy, and he the object of my envy as a real captain in a red coat and epaulettes. He had sold out of the army years before, and was, as I knew, in some way connected with the *Greatgun* newspaper, a journal in comparison with which the newly-launched *Meteor*, on whose staff I served, was but as a pinnacle to a frigate. 'Well, Digby,' said Griffith, putting his arm through mine, 'here I am, Special to the *Greatgun*, pledged to pen a daily letter for their columns on the old subject—battle and murder—very much against the will of some of the military bigwigs here; but the king remembered me—I was here in 1848, you know, and on the staff at Novara. But hey! Charley, how out of sorts you seem! Nothing wrong at home, I hope?'

A few words served to explain matters, and the honest fellow was sincerely sorry for my disappointment. He could not, however, intercede for me with any hope of success. La Marmora and other dignitaries were averse to permitting journalists to follow the army; and it was only Griffith's old services, as a volunteer with the Piedmontese forces in the reign of Charles Albert, backed by the occult influence of the *Greatgun* at Turin, that had procured for him the rare privilege of a free pass. There seemed nothing for it but to go back to Pump Court and semi-starvation.

'I'll tell you what, Griffith,' said I bitterly; 'I've half a mind to take a musket in the ranks here, and let these Austrian beggars convert me into food for powder. Perhaps, if I escaped being shot, I might keep the *Meteor* posted up with news. I wish you'd hide me somehow, or call me your servant, or anything.'

Griffith burst into a laugh. 'Don't you speak excellent German?' he asked.

'Yes,' I said; 'but why?'

My friend smote me kindly on the shoulder. 'Eureka! Charles Digby, your fortune is made. You *shall* stay—not in your own character, but in that of my German courier. You can act the part, I know, for haven't I seen you figure in private theatricals; and we'll get you a disguise, and I'll send your valuable contributions to London, enclosed in my own. Come; it's a bargain.'

And we positively carried this madcap plan into execution. I had, like most Englishmen, the Teutonic fair complexion and light hair; and a false beard, braided coat, and huge meerschaum pipe dangling from my breast-pocket, a Tyrolian hat, and some mosaic jewellery, converted me into a very passable courier. I think old Minghetti himself might have seen me without recognising me as the young English

Special who had gone away, half-crying, out of his tent; and I found it easier than I had supposed to act the part of a German. As for the language, that was indeed familiar to me, since I had been a school-boy at Weimar and a student at Heidelberg; but the demand for the Deutschland gutturals was scanty among the Northman-hating Italians who surrounded me.

I lived at Griffith's quarters, keeping up my rôle of courier, of course, before company, but indemnifying myself by many a hearty laugh with my supposed master, as we sipped our wine, or smoked our cigars, over the mystification that we were practising. My letters were duly sent off to London, enclosed in those of Griffith; and the authorities were not in the least aware that one of their literary censors walked about their camp in the person of the unsuspected, tobacco-loving courier, whom Milordo Griffith, as they called him, chose to retain in his service.

At the same time, I found to my cost that a German is not very popular in Italy. It is true that Karl Schlotz—the name which I had assumed in place of my proper one of Charles Digby—professed to be a Bavarian, and no Austrian at all. The difference between the two nations was tacitly voted to be no greater than that between an alligator and a crocodile, and I was sent to Coventry by common consent. It was an awkward position for the correspondent of the *Meteor*, and, but for Griffith's good-nature in supplying me with camp-gossip, my daily budget could scarcely have been sent to that distinguished newspaper. I was not, however, entirely dependent for society on the presence of my confederate. Griffith had introduced me to some old friends of his, an Italian country-gentleman and his daughter, who lived in a villa, grandiloquently termed a 'palazzo' by their humbler neighbours, within cannon-shot of the outskirts of the camp. To this family I had been introduced, not as Karl Schlotz, but as Charles Digby, and I was kindly and hospitably made welcome whenever I turned my steps that way, which grew to be very often indeed.

Old Baron Bosco, a venerable white-haired gentleman, who had conspired with the Carbonari, and made war against Cardinal Ruffo and the Bourbons, was a Neapolitan noble, one of the few Liberals belonging to the aristocracy of Naples. He had been punished for his political offences by confiscation and exile, and was then living on the rents of a small estate which he owned on the banks of the Po. His daughter, whom the old servants invariably mentioned as Signorina Lucia, was about twenty years of age, and singularly beautiful, with that creamy Italian complexion, the whiteness of which is relieved by a faint glow of crimson in the peach-like cheek, and which goes so well with the dark hair and burning dark eyes—that could melt sometimes. A very beautiful girl was this Signorina Lucia; and it is hardly wonderful that I, a young English barrister, more used to musty law-books than to pretty faces, soon fell hopelessly in love with her.

Hopeless, indeed, did such love appear. Baron Bosco, although impoverished and out of favour with his sovereign, King Bomba, was of a proud old family, that could boast of great alliances, and claimed cousinship with princes and cardinals. Lucia, to the best of my belief, was his sole heiress, and she was certain to inherit at least three farms, into which the little estate was divided, and the rents of which, paid in kind, on the *metairie* plan, were equivalent to at least a thousand a year—a competence in that cheap country. Besides, she had a chance, as the baron sometimes hinted, of being put into possession of the confiscated Neapolitan property, of very much greater value than the few hundred acres of vineyard and rice-ground near the Po. It would have needed some effrontery to propose myself, with my salary from the *Meteor* for

a fortune, to a young lady who had Colonnas and Dorias among her kith and kin.

And yet there was one doorway left through which Hope could shine in upon me. Both the baron and his daughter were enthusiastic patriots. The sudden revival of what had hitherto been a mere dream, the aspirations of Italy towards national life and national unity, had affected them with a power such as I had never before conceived. And indeed it was hard for an undemonstrative Englishman, used to take his birthright of freedom as a matter of course, to enter into the feelings of those emotional Southerners, stirred by the awakening of their native country from the long frost-bound sleep of lethargy and bondage.

I racked my brains to think of some sudden and brilliant exploit, by which I might, while rendering real services to Italy, acquire distinction for myself.

How Lucia read my thoughts, I am unable to say. It may be that a woman's quick perception of a man's feelings gave her this insight into my heart; or it is possible that some unguarded expression of mine during one of my long conversations with her father, who had been one of Murat's officers, and spoke good French, had been repeated by the old baron. But at anyrate she was aware of my sentiments, of my rash hopes, and of my wish for some opportunity of winning renown which she might be induced to share with me.

Lucia's conduct was to me an enigma. At one time, she appeared to avoid me, and at another she sought my society, singing my favourite songs, playing my pet tunes, and doing her best—wicked young witch—to fascinate and enthrall me. Once or twice, I saw tears in her beautiful eyes, and, with the pardonable coxcomby of three-and-twenty, I drew the flattering conclusion, that I was not indifferent to her. One lovely evening, just as the moon began to glimmer on the gray leaves of the olive-trees and the deep green of the maize-fields, I told my love. Lucia and I were standing side by side in the open window, through which the tufted roses and white statues of the terrace could be seen. We were not alone. Somehow, we seldom or never were alone, for nothing like the simple freedom of English manners exists in Italian society; but the baron was fast asleep, to all appearance, in his deep arm-chair, close to the bookshelf, on which reposed the volumes of French and English philosophy and history—all condemned, no doubt, by the papal censor—in which he delighted.

Lucia, I could not help thinking, appeared rather to be excited than pleased by my proposal. Her hand, when I was permitted to take it for a moment in mine, was as cold as ice, and she trembled, and sighed deeply, and was very pale to look upon in the wan moonlight. She did not give a direct acceptance to my suit, but said, after a pause, and with a hesitation inexplicable to me at the time: 'Signor Carlo Digby, you say you love me, and—and I can only be the wife of a man who has risked much, and done much for our suffering Italy.' As she said these last words, her voice grew more clear and full, and her eyes shone like those of a spirit. I, too, caught at second-hand the patriotic emotion of this Italian girl, and expressed myself eager, as indeed I was, to do something that should make me worthy of her.

'If you really mean this, signor—if it be not a mere lip-homage,' said Lucia, looking me full in the face, 'I will point out to you a means by which you can render such a service to my struggling country as will win you the gratitude of every true Italian, and—and give you—a right—to hope!'—She faltered here, but presently went on to tell me, confidentially, that a plan had been formed by some friends of her father, elderly men, whom I had sometimes met at the palazzo, and who had for the most part a son or other relative in the Sardinian army—a plan which I alone, as a foreigner, could execute with a fair chance of success.

It seemed that among the many Lombard and Venetian officers of noble family who had been compelled, in accordance with the traditional policy of the empire, to wear the Kaiser's uniform, was a certain Major Carrara, Lucia's uncle. He was, in truth, the Count di Carrara, belonging to the Venetian branch of a great historical family, but was commonly spoken of by his military designation. He was an excellent officer, well read, experienced, and skilled in fortification and the scientific operations of the engineer, although at present serving in a lancer regiment. This regiment was quartered at Treviglio, in Austrian Lombardy, on the left flank of the Kaiser's force, and formed part of the division commanded by Lieutenant-general Holck. The major, like most of the Italians forced to do duty under the banners of Austria, longed to throw off the alien yoke, and to take his place among the advancing ranks of his countrymen, and he was in communication with certain patriots south of the Po, of whom Baron Bosco was one.

The plan was briefly this. Major Carrara, with a subaltern and some score of troopers, Italians like himself, had conspired to desert on the earliest opportunity, and to join the combined armies of the French and Piedmontese. However, the country being difficult, teeming with troops, and intersected with swamps and rivers, the bridges of which were guarded, and the causeways blocked by redoubts, there was great peril of recapture, unless an accurate map or plan of the district should be placed in the hands of the leader of the party. Such a chart had been prepared, and it was suggested that I, in my assumed character of Karl Schlotz, the German courier, should convey it to Major Carrara. Forged dispatches, purporting to come from the king of Naples, whose Austrian leanings were known, and which were calculated to throw the authorities off their guard, were to furnish me with a pretext for entering the hostile camp. I was to escape to the southern bank of the Po along with the rest, and should then have rendered such good service as would bridge over the disparity of rank and fortune between Lucia and myself.

Tempted by this promise, I gave my assent, received the forged dispatches, the map, and a note for Major Carrara, which last I concealed in an inner pocket; and on the very next night, I was ferried across the wide river, and provided with a *calessa*, drawn by two horses, in which I clattered off along the white Roman road, northwards. It was a rash business. At the especial wish, both of the baron and Lucia, I had said no word of my errand to Captain Griffith, but had merely told him that I was obliged to be absent for some days on private business. Wilfully shutting my eyes to the danger, I pushed on. True, I was now liable to the punishment of a spy—death, but the sanguine nature of youth buoyed me up. Lucia, in case of success, was to be mine, and I made my way hopefully towards Treviglio.

'Those, Herr Courier,' said the orderly who guided me from head-quarters, 'are the barracks occupied by the regiment of lancers, the Prinz Eugen Regiment, for which your Honour was inquiring.'

'Thanks, comrade; I can find my own way now,' said I in German, dropping a *zeranziger* into the man's hand, and I turned away. The soldier had treated me with considerable respect, since a state courier was a great man in the eyes of a poor fellow like himself, a mere white-coated pawn on the grand chess-board of war. I had as yet found all go smoothly with me. I had been permitted to pass the outposts, and to enter the camp and town of Treviglio quite freely, in my assumed character of a messenger sent by the Neapolitan government. My dispatches had for the moment imposed upon Count Holck, the Austrian general in command, who had received them in behalf of the Aulic Council, and who was to transmit them under his own seal; and no one had

doubted that Karl Schlotz, whose passport, thanks to the care of Baron Bosco's ingenious friends, was duly made out, was a Bavarian in King Bomba's pay, running on errands for which a German was a safer agent than an Italian. Most of the troops were under canvas; but some old barracks outside the town, in a semi-ruinous state, but the roof of whose buildings was yet a protection against the heavy rains, had been assigned to the Prinz Eugen Regiment, of which Major Carrara was an officer. A strip of neglected common ground, strewn by heaps of rubbish, such as may often be seen outside the walls of a town in Italy, had to be crossed before I should reach the dingy brick walls and the gateway where a white-plumed sentinel, with his carbine on his arm, paced slowly to and fro. My heart beat high with hope. Hitherto, all obstacles had seemed to vanish at a touch. All was going well with me.

'Halt! civilian, your passport!' said a coarse voice at my elbow, and I turned to meet the inquisitive eyes of a sort of soldier-policeman, wearing the hybrid uniform of the provost-marshal's guard. The man spoke the rough Venetian patois, hardly intelligible to me; and in his ugly face, swollen and flushed with drink, I could see an odd malicious expression blending with the insolence habitual to an Austrian petty official.

'Your passport, I say, Ingleso of evil fortune!' growled the military policeman. He was half intoxicated, but his eyes were keen, or perhaps the drink had sharpened his powers of guessing, for he had detected my English nationality, despite my meerschaum, my braided frock, my beard, and other High-Dutch embellishments. Trembling inwardly, I yet put a good face upon the matter, and resolved to brazen it out.

'Ingleso!' I said with a laugh. 'So you take me for a milordo, do you, my friend. I wish I had such luck. But look here, signor of the *polizia*, and see what a blunder you have made;' and I produced my passport, and pointed to the name of Karl Schlotz, state courier, throwing as strong a German accent as possible into my indifferent Italian.

The policeman begged my pardon. He was not aware, he said, that I had the honour to serve the king of Naples. He had taken me, like a blind bat as he was, for an Englishman; and he hated the English ever since he was a gondolier in Venice, and had been sent to prison at the instance of some traveller of that nation, on a charge of extorting double fare, and drawing a knife to enforce its payment. He had only to apologise, and—and to drink my Excellency's health, if such was the will of my Magnificence, he added fawningly. I gave the rogue some small coin, and thus got rid of him; none the less glad to do so, as there was still a queer look of cunning about the fellow's leering face, as if he only half believed my story, plausible though it might be. I parted from him, however, satisfied with the idea that a few more bumpers of the heady Lombard wine would wash away from his bemuddled brain all remembrance of Karl Schlotz, the Bavarian courier.

It was not until I drew near the barrack-gate that I felt in an inner pocket of my braided coat for the letter which I was to deliver along with the plan to Major Carrara. The map was still safe in its hiding-place, but the note was gone—dropped, as I could not but fancy, when I took from the same pocket a handful of shabby Austrian *soldi*, the drink-money that I had given to the knavish policeman a few minutes ago. The man was now quite out of sight; and when I hurried back across the waste to the spot where I had met with him, I could see nothing of the lost letter. Had he picked it up? and if so, would he understand its purport well enough to compromise my safety? I could not tell; but I comforted myself with the reflection, that I might very likely have lost the paper elsewhere, and that my late acquaintance

was most likely too illiterate to wade through a letter written in good Tuscan, even if he had it in his possession, which was a mere matter of conjecture.

I was admitted into the barracks without difficulty on the mention of Major Carrara's name, and was at once conducted to the quarters of that officer, whom I found in undress uniform, standing at the open window, watching the troopers as they groomed their fine Hungarian horses in the grass-grown courtyard below. I had pictured to myself a hale, elderly warrior, perhaps a little bald and grizzled; but to my surprise, I found myself in the presence of a dashing, soldierly fellow of eight-and-twenty, or thirty at the most, without a line of white to mar his clustering black curls, with bright bold eyes, and a very winning smile. And this was Lucia's uncle. It was very odd! The major received me affably enough; but before I could state my errand, there was a tap at the door, and the adjutant or sergeant-major of the regiment came in with an armful of papers, to make his report. A good deal of routine had to be transacted before the stiff old automaton of a German non-commissioned officer made his military salute, pivoted on his heel, and marched clanking down the stone stairs; and during all this time the major and I cast occasional glances at one another with some curiosity.

When at length we were left alone, a few words sufficed to explain who and what I was; and at the first mention of Baron Bosco's name, the major came across and shook me heartily by the hand, thanking me warmly for the kindness that had prompted me to take so dangerous a task upon myself.

'For an Italian, it would matter less,' he said frankly; 'we all owe our lives to the good cause. But you, Signor Digby, are an Englishman, and how shall I thank you enough for what you have done!' He wrung my hand hard again, while I looked at him puzzled.

'And have you no letter for me—besides the map, I mean?' he asked; 'no scrap of my dear hand-writing? It is long since I saw it.'

'To whom, sir, do you allude?' I asked in my turn, my pulses beating wildly, as a new and ghastly light seemed to break in upon me. It was for the major now to look at me with polite wonder.

'To whom, signor, could I allude, but to my darling wife—Lucia *mia carissima*—whose presence you have lately left.'

I think Major Carrara said more, but I heard him not. The hot blood was boiling and surging through the swollen veins in my temples; there was a roaring in my ears, and I staggered, sick and stunned, against the wall, and was dead to everything but the dull weight of crushing misery that had come upon me so suddenly. His wife! Lucia his wife! and I—what was I?—a dupe, a poor deceived wretch, who had been tricked by an artful woman into doing her behests, at the price, perhaps, of his own life!

'Good heavens, signor, you are ill—too much fatigue, and the hot sun, perhaps,' said Carrara, with good-natured sympathy, as he loosened my cravat, and thrust me into the most comfortable of the eastern arm-chairs. 'I am very sorry for this.'

Even in that moment of agony, I could do justice to my unconscious rival. Evidently, he knew nothing of the subterfuge of which I was the victim—nothing of my rash love for Lucia, in the firm belief which I entertained of her being unwedded and unbetrothed; nothing of her mock acceptance of my suit. No. The stratagem was none of his; but Lucia—false, cruel—A knocking at the door cut short my reverie. Then the door opened, revealing several men in the uniform of the provost's guard. My half-tipsy friend was at their head.

'Here is the spy!' he cried; and rough hands were laid on me at once, while I was gruffly bidden to consider myself under arrest. Still benumbed by the

shock of the recent discovery, I made no attempt to assert my innocence, but allowed myself to be led off, passive as a sheep in the hands of the butcher. Major Carrara remonstrated, but the sergeant in charge of the party shook his head. 'Orders must be obeyed, Herr Major. Count Holck intends personally to preside over the interrogatory of the prisoner. Bring him along smartly, men!'

And back to the camp I was dragged, hooted by a horde of the miscellaneous hangers-on that always swarm around an army, and stared at, with a dull curiosity, by every flaxen-moustached detachment that passed by, with shouldered muskets and in heavy marching-order.

Lieutenant-general Count Holck, a fine type of the Austrian veteran, florid, stout, and resolute, with cold blue eyes, and drooping gray moustache, sat at the head of a green-covered table, at which several other officers were seated. There were writing-materials before the general, and the tent was crowded with captains, majors, and subalterns, who had hurried to head-quarters on hearing the rumour that a spy had been caught.

'Clear the tent,' was the order, as I was brought in between two of the provost's men, followed by the others. 'Be pleased to retire, gentlemen, all except the members of the court,' said Count Holck; and the spectators withdrew. 'Now bring forward the prisoner.'

I was led to the foot of the table, and the interrogatory at once began.

The ex-gondolier glibly deposed that he, Luigi Stacco, of the Imperial, Royal, and Apostolic service, police department, attached to the army, had met the prisoner near the barracks of the Prinz Eugen Regiment, and had at once known him for an Englishman; that the prisoner, on being asked for his passport, had exhibited one declaring him to be a Bavarian; and that he had picked up a letter that had fallen from the prisoner's pocket, which letter was before the court.—I was searched, and the map of the country, with the position of every ford and fieldwork marked upon it, was taken from me, and given to the president. This map, but for the accident of the major's allusion to Lucia as his wife, would have been in his possession, not in mine; but as it was, I had omitted to hand it to him, and this damnable piece of evidence was found upon my person.

Browbeaten, threatened, and tormented with incessant questions, I admitted myself to be the English Charles Digby, barrister-at-law, and newspaper correspondent, instead of Karl Schlott, the courier. Nor did I rebut the accusation of carrying fictitious dispatches. But I refused to say one word that could throw a light on what they were pleased to call the 'conspiracy.'

'Fetch Major Carrara here. Take a guard. Put him under arrest, and bring him before the court instantly,' said the general, knitting his brows; and an officer at once obeyed. There was a long pause, and then a distant crackling fire of musketry, and presently in rushed the officer to whom the count's directions had been given. 'They are off—deserted—gone!' he gasped out, breathless and excited. 'My people fired at them as they crossed the bridge, but the range was too great.' And it appeared that Major Carrara, with a lieutenant and ten troopers, having hastily saddled their horses, had left their barracks, riding down an infantry picket that guarded the causeway, and had galloped off towards the river Adda and the frontier, hotly chased by a portion of their own regiment, under the command of a German *ritmeister*. Their intention was evidently to reach the Piedmontese army.

Such intelligence was not likely to inspire a court-martial with feelings of lenity; and after a very brief consultation, Charles Digby, British subject, was

found guilty on all the counts of the accusation. The sentence was death. I was to be shot by a platoon of grenadiers, in the piazza of Treviglio, at daybreak of the next morning.

I could not help wondering, as I sat, passive, in the hut which did duty for a prison, with a sentinel at the door, and two soldiers lounging and smoking their cigars in a corner, that I was not more powerfully affected by my sentence than was the case. But probably the shock of Lucia's treachery, the cruel trifling with my affections, the bitter pain that I had undergone, had dulled my nerves, and rendered them almost insensible to the frightful doom that awaited me. I was not ill-treated. No one annoyed me, either by harshness or unfeeling inquisitiveness. My guardians repeatedly offered me food and wine, and they conversed together in low tones, so as not to disturb me. Towards evening, an officer came to ask if I would wish to see a priest. 'The general desired me to inquire,' he said, with a shrug, as he buckled on his sabre afresh; 'though we knew you islanders to be heretics. I will give orders for a bed to be prepared for you. You had better take some refreshment, and then lie down for a few hours. You will not be disturbed till dawn to-morrow.' So he wished me *buona notte*, civilly enough, and left me.

To-morrow! It was sunset by this time, the last sunset I was ever to see, and I remember gazing with a childlike curiosity on the blaze of crimson colour sinking to westward. I was to die as soon as that sun should rise again. But still, if I pitied myself, it was rather as if I were some one else, and the Charles Digby who was to be shot to death in the public square of Treviglio was quite a different person. My mind was very sad and weary, and the coming of the King of Terrors did not scare me, as I had once dreamed that it would do. There was now no living soul in England who would mourn for me more deeply than with such slight regret as is conveyed by the 'Poor fellow!' with which those who had known me would receive the tidings of my fate. Unloved, uncared for, I should be better spared than those whose place in the world could be less easily filled. And no repining could avail; the sentence of the court was certain to be executed to the letter. I lay down, after a while, on the straw mattress that had been brought in for my use, and fell asleep like a tired child.

I was awakened by a storm of sounds, loud, confused, and deafening, and was immediately conscious of a bright light, red and angry, that gushed through the open doorway of the hut, where now no sentinel stood, as had been the case when I closed my eyes. What might this portend? For an instant I fancied that it was already morning, and that I was to be immediately led out to die, but the glow of ruddy light was not such as the sun yields, while it was plainly no elemental tempest that raged and roared around me. My heart bounded wildly as I recognised the crash of cannon rapidly discharged, boom after boom, shot after shot, mingled with a rattling and continual discharge of musketry, the tramp of horse and foot, and the hoarse hurrah of many voices. I raised myself on my elbow, and looked around. I was alone. The soldiers who guarded me were gone. What had happened? That a combat was going on, I felt no doubt, but it was not for several moments that a thought of rescue or escape broke in upon my wearied mind.

'*Viva Garibaldi, viva, viva!*—*buza for Italy!*' cried a score of ringing Italian voices within pistol-range, and mingled with these shouts were several musket-shots.

'Where is the English prisoner? The Austrian cut-throats have not murdered him, surely?' exclaimed one without; and by the bright light I could see a party of young men, wearing the red shirt and felt hat of the volunteers, come crowding into the hut.

'Here he is!' they shouted as I mechanically moved forward to meet them; and in a moment more I was outside the hut, the centre of a throng of the Redshirts, who jostled one another in their eagerness to shake hands, and congratulate me on my safety.

I looked around, bewildered. The Austrian camp was in flames. The ruddy light that had awakened me proceeded from the burning tents and huts that had been set on fire by the assailants, whose night-attack had been an effectual surprise. The heavy firing from the town of Treviglio, whence the artillery thundered, and where the main body, under Count Holck, obstinately held out against the Italians, proved that the battle was not over; but three regiments had given way in sudden panic at the onslaught of the Garibaldians, and the burning camp was an evidence of at least a partial victory.

'Major Carrara, whom we met on our advance, begged of us to bring you off if possible,' said a tall, young fellow, with a sergeant's chevrons on the sleeve of his mud-stained red blouse; 'and the general gave us special orders to find you out.—Ah! there goes the bugle, sounding the retreat. I thought as much. This is only a reconnaissance, you know; but we shall beat up old Holck's quarters to-morrow, per *Baccho!*'

It was true. The signal to fall back was given, and I was borne away, hardly able to realise the truth, in the retreating column of my rescuers. We recrossed the Adda and the Po unpursued, and reached Piacenza in safety, as Major Carrara and the deserters had done several hours before us.

My first act, on getting safely back to Griffith's quarters, was to write to the editor of the *Meteor*, and resign my post as Special Correspondent; my next to engage a seat in the diligence for Leghorn, whence I proceeded by sea to Marseille, and so by railway Londonwards. Lucia I never saw again; but years have not healed the smart of that old wound, which will rankle for ever in my heart.

And Mr Robinson sighed as though it was doing it. Perhaps we were all impressed with this narrative of his desolation; but at all events silence once more settled down upon us for a considerable time. How long it might have lasted I know not, had not an unlucky guide or porter, in performing some unaccountable manœuvre, pushed a knapsack off the table, which fell with a heavy bang upon the toes of the miserable Brown. A howl of anguish relieved his feelings, and pointed him out as the next entertainer of the company. He accordingly launched into his story.

OUR BRUSH WITH THE PIRATES.

'I WELL remember with what glee I accepted the offer of a berth at Hong-kong, and the chance of escape from the monotonous humdrum of Mincing Lane. However, when I arrived there, and the novelty had worn off, I found that work was pretty much the same in both places; the only difference being, that here you post books in a black broad-cloth coat, and there in a white jean suit.

'Old Gribble, the working-partner of our firm, was a good sort of fellow, and, so long as his clerks stuck to business, would try to make them comfortable. I was rather a favourite with him, and, in consequence, got introduced to some very pleasant English society in Victoria. One morning he sent for me into his private sanctum, and opened fire by complimenting me on my steadiness and attention, &c. Another fifty, thought I. "We have decided," he continued, "on chartering the *Dawn of Morning* (an American clipper-bark lying in the harbour), sending her up to Shang-hae direct, and trading her home; and having every confidence in your discretion and fidelity, we

intend you to go in her as supercargo." Of course, I accepted the offer. "Well," continued he, "I expect the skipper here every moment, and you can settle details between you." As he finished, in walked Captain Hiram Washburn, a tall, gentlemanly Virginian, without any of the conventional Yankeeisms about him. I liked his ways and manner, and freight-matters were soon arranged to the satisfaction of all parties; indeed, the skipper was so pleased, that he gave me an invitation to dine with him at his hotel, which I accepted. After dinner, we went on board the *Dauen*. I found her a fine vessel, flush fore and aft, without the deck-house that usually encumbers American ships, and carrying three small guns, one, apparently a nine-pounder, aft, and two sixes forward, manned by Bombay Clashies and Chinamen, the mate and carpenter only being Europeans.

'We were soon loaded, and ready for sea. I saw my traps safely on board, and went ashore to receive final instructions. I had bidden Gribble good-bye, and was leaving, when, calling me back, he said: "Oh, by the by, Mr Frederick, a gentleman will go as a passenger with you: I have sent him on board with a letter of introduction to Captain Washburn. He will be company for you. I forget his name; he came in a hurry, but with very good credentials, or I should not have given him a passage." I felt rather surprised at not hearing anything about this passenger till the last moment, and hastened on board to acquaint Captain Washburn with the news.

'The *Dauen* was fast tripping her anchor as I got on board, and the skipper was as amiable as skippers generally are going out of harbour. "Passenger?" said he, when I mentioned the fact. "O yes, I've seen him; he's below; quite at home. I can see through it all: you're here to check me, and he's here to check both of us. Yes, sir;" whereupon he turned away to start the Chinamen hauling a warp.

'I went below, and found the passenger sitting in the cabin reading. He rose as I entered, and introduced himself as Mr Penfold, saying that urgent business called him to Shang-hae, and that hearing the *Dauen* was a noted clipper, he had availed himself of the opportunity of her sailing; hoped we should be good friends, &c.; to all of which, recollecting the skipper's words, I simply returned some common-place remark, and pleading business, retired to my little cabin to read over my written instructions. Mr Passenger, however, did not seem very dull, for I could hear him rattling away in Bengalee with Bandanny, the native steward, who was literally screaming with laughter at his remarks, whatever they might be.

'Well, we got to sea all right, and though, of course, we had our meals together, both the skipper and I kept Mr Penfold at arm's-length; not that he seemed to care a bit, for he would chat for hours with the Sersaing and Tindal of the Clashies, patter Canton English with the old Chinese pilot; and, in fact, was become a general favourite everywhere, except in the cabin. At last, even the skipper and I began to thaw.

'We had been out five days, when the wind fell, and we were all but becalmed. A large lorcha that came out of harbour with us was the only vessel in sight, and she had been apparently steering our course since we left Hong-kong. At sundown, a breeze sprang up, and we made some headway during the night; but with the morning down went the wind, and there was the lorcha following us still. This looked suspicious. What could she be dogging us for? I began to think of Chinese pirates, and feel very uncomfortable; and my feelings were not improved by Mr Penfold, after he had been peering through his glass at the lorcha for more than an hour, saying to the skipper: "Captain Washburn, will you favour me with five minutes' conversation below?"

"Certainly, sir," replied the captain, stiff as buckram; and down the companion they both went. 'Something was wrong, that was evident. I walked

aft to the old pilot who was steering, and said to him: "What you think that lorcha, eh, Johnny?" His reply was not calculated to reassure me, for, said he, in his pretty jargon: 'Me tinkee lorcha number one piecey pirate; come board barkee; makee muchee pigeon so;" the "so" being a semicircular movement of the left hand across his neck, unmistakably suggestive of throat-cutting. I called him an old humbug; and went to the Sersaing, who was half-a-dozen rattling up the main rigging, intently watching the lorcha's movements.

"What do you think of her, Sersaing?" said I.

"Nay hi cha, sahib" (No good, sir), said he: "think burra dacoit" (great thief). And it was evident his opinion was shared by the crew, for they were gathering in knots about the deck, scrutinising the stranger who followed us with such pertinacity.

'At daybreak, we had rounded a projecting headland, and were crossing a large bay called, I think, Hang-how. Every stitch of canvas was spread, but the calm still continued, and the current or tide was carrying us further and further into the bight of the bay. Not a sail was in sight save the lorcha, and she stuck to us like grim death. Before I go any further, I had better explain what is meant by a "lorcha." It is a country-built craft of immense beam, with overhanging stem and stern, so built as to draw most water amidships; fitted with a powerful rudder, and having from three to six masts, according to the fancy of the owner. The fore and mizzen masts are not raked aft like ours, but the fore-mast rakes forward over the bows, and the mizzen aft over the stern. To European eyes, this gives them an untidy, lubberly look, but I believe the fashion is the correct one. They carry on each mast one huge fore-and-aft sail, cut something like a big lug, without a boom, but with very many bamboos in them. These bamboos run on the mast with a hoop and lacing, and have each a small sheet. There are no reef-points, and if they want to shorten sail, it is just haul up or lower away, and the sail furls up like an umbrella. They sail like witches, and care nothing for weather.

'I was about speaking to Mr Nielsen, the mate, when the skipper and Mr Penfold made their appearance on deck, and beckoned both my companions and myself aft.

"Mr Frederick, Mr Nielsen," said the captain, "of course, you have noticed the way this infernal lorcha has been dogging us for the last four days. Now, it can't be for any good. If this calm continues, we shall be embayed, and the current will drift us into some pirate's den or another. Mr Penfold has suggested a plan to me, which affords the only chance of escape, and which I intend to follow. I must therefore rely on your assistance."

"But," said I, "how do you know the lorcha is a pirate? At present, she appears harmless enough."

"Wait a little, young gentleman," observed our passenger; "and if she does not shew her teeth, I'm a Dutchman.—In the meantime, Captain Washburn, what arms have you on board? and what food for these barkers?" patting the "nine" as he spoke.

"I anticipated your question, Mr Penfold," replied the skipper, "and here comes Chips with a report."

'Chips, our carpenter, was an old man-of-war's-man, now, it appeared, to be promoted to gunner's rank.

"Eight muskets and bayonets," said the old man; "twelve cutlasses, nine pikes, six pistols—four rounds of shot for the nine, and twelve of grape for the sixes, and little enough, too."

"I expect," said our passenger, "it will be more than enough, if we have to use them. I do not think there's much pluck in John Chinaman. The Clashies may fight if they are led; however, it has not come to that yet. But here comes a breeze, and with it a hope of escape."

'As he spoke, I felt a faint breath of air coming from the land, and saw flying cats-paws rippling the

glassy surface of the sea. Soon a steady breeze sprang up, and the lofty sky-sails and royals that had been idly flapping against the masts, began to belly out, and the bark slowly forged her way out to sea again.

"There seemed to be quite a different understanding now between Mr Penfold and the skipper; indeed, an amount of deference was perceptible in the latter that I could not quite understand. They were standing side by side, intently scanning the lorch, when, closing his glass, Mr Penfold turned to me, and said in an explanatory tone: "You see, sir, that this breeze will only last till sunset—sun down, wind down;" but the barometer has been falling all day, and if we can get clear of this bay before the gale I expect sets in, we will shew that skulking thief a clean pair of heels."

"We were now about a mile ahead of the lorch, and rapidly increasing our distance, when the captain, who was still carefully watching her, suddenly cried: "Mr Penfold, they are awfully busy on board yonder." As he spoke, up came the head of the lorch to the wind, a puff of smoke burst from her side, and we heard the shrill whistle of a shot passing over us.

"Wide," said Mr Penfold, as coolly as if he were crickets; "and I think, Mr Frederick, that settles your doubts as to the peaceable intentions of our follower. Here is further proof, if you are still incredulous;" and another puff of smoke left her side, whilst again we heard the hurdling of a shot.

"That fellow is a bad gunner," said our passenger, "or the shot is too small for the gun. With your permission, Captain Washburn, I will make a few arrangements to have some conversation, in my way, with that noisy gentleman; but do not let me prevent your returning his compliments, if you wish it. I would suggest, however, that your messages may have more effect if you delay for a short time;" and so saying, he went below.

"I shall take your advice, sir," replied the skipper; "and," continued he, "Mr Nielsen, give the hands some work; they will go mad with fright if you let them alone. Do but look, sir, at those fools of Chinamen."

"We turned at the words, and truly the scene forward was ludicrous in the extreme. The Chinese had brought out their idol, and rigged up a joss-house on the capstan-head. Gilt-paper and joss-stick were being burned in profusion; whilst at short intervals, the whole of them would reverently "Chin, Chin," and shout what I fancied to be a request for deliverance from pirates in general, and this present pirate in particular. The Clashies, all Mussulmans and devout followers of the Prophet, looked on in disgust; whilst the cook, a fine American negro, born on the Washburn plantation, and who, I believe, almost idolised "Cappen Hiram," was audibly pitying the poor benighted niggers. But a few short, sharp orders from the mate soon put an end to the foolery; and presently all hands were busily employed trimming and shortening sails.

"Mr Frederick, sir," said the captain, handing me his glass, "that piratical rascal means to board us, I guess: he has swamps out, and is getting ready. his stink-pots."

"I took the glass, and saw, sure enough, that six or seven long sweeps were out each side of the lorch, each sweep being manned by at least ten men, whose united efforts were sending her through the water at twice our rate. Another gang were busily carrying packages into the fore-top, or rather into the bamboo staging which served for a top, and there piling them in a heap.

"What is that being carried into the fore-top, Captain Washburn?" said I.

"Those, sir," he replied, "are stink-pots, or hand-shells, which the pirate intends to throw on our deck before boarding. They use two descriptions, both thick, hollow, earthenware vessels: the one filled

with powder and nameless abominations, which emits an unbearable stench and smoke, and so clears a deck by driving the people overboard or below; the other, bursting like an ordinary shell, throws out a shower of stuff similar to the old Greek-fire, burning through skin and flesh to the bone. Water does not act on it, and I believe that, once alight, it cannot be extinguished. But here comes Mr Penfold, who will, I hope, shortly teach these gentlemen the proper use of stink-pots."

"Mr Penfold now came aft, carrying the most curious weapon I had ever seen. It was a firearm with a long barrel, and of large bore, sighted like a rifle, but with a telescope fitted between the sights—apparently a breech-loader, and looking altogether more like a surveyor's theodolite than a shooting-iron.

"After a whispered conference with the captain, Mr Penfold cautiously made his way to the mizzen-top, the captain following, and carrying very carefully a small box, which I supposed to contain ammunition. There was more consultation between them in the top, and presently Mr Penfold levelled the mysterious weapon at the lorch. However, something yet was required, for he sang out for Chips to sling a couple of boats. Up they went, and the captain set to work lashing them to the mast and rigging athwart ship.

"All this while, the lorch was drawing nearer, and I began to feel seriously uneasy about our position. Not a shot had been fired, or anything done save these singular preparations. Surely Captain Washburn was not going to yield the vessel without a struggle. And then this passenger, what arguments could he have used to overcome in a few minutes the captain's dislike, and to secure such perfect co-operation in all his plans? Were they in league with these pirates? I had heard of such things, and if so, my fate was certain.

"I gave another glance at the top, and saw that Mr Penfold, having now obtained a rest nearly breast-high for the firearm, was again aiming at the lorch, to which my attention was intuitively drawn by the glass. I could perceive the sweeps at work, and her fore-top piled with the dreaded stink-pots. Suddenly, I heard a sharp rifle-like crack overhead, and almost simultaneously saw a vivid flash of light start from the forecable of the lorch. "Too low," the captain sang out from beside me, for unperceived and unheard he had come on deck.

"The shot, however, created some stir on board our pursuer, for two guns were fired in rapid succession, both as badly aimed as before, the shots going far over and wide of us. "Blaze away, you rascals," said the skipper; "and Mr Frederick, you watch Mr Penfold's aim." Another crack from our mizzen-top, followed by a similar flash of fire on the huge foresail of the lorch. "I think I have him now," exclaimed our passenger from aloft. "Watch this." As he fired, up went our glasses, and we saw the flash spring full from the dark heap in the pirate's fore-top, succeeded by a thin stream of smoke that increased in volume every minute. Again and again the missile from Penfold's weapon struck in and around the lorch's fore-top, from which dense clouds of smoke were now rising, and we could plainly see that the piled up stink-pots had taken fire, and were bursting on the pirate's fore-rigging and deck. Another moment, and the foresail was in a blaze, the flames spreading rapidly aft; on her deck, all appeared bustle and confusion: it was evident their own devilish invention had recoiled, and the fate intended for us had been meted out to them.

"Lucky I got the range so quickly," said Mr Penfold, who had descended weapon in hand, "for I have but two shells left. Perhaps, Captain Washburn, you would like to distract the attention of those rascals with a messenger from your nine." The captain hardly wanted telling, and very quickly he, the mate,

and Chips were busy casting loose and loading our gun.

"Mr Frederick," said the passenger, as coolly as if he were giving a lecture, "these telescopic long-range rifles, carrying a detonating shell, charged with an inflammable compound, are destined to play an important part in future warfare. You see, sir, in this instance, I have been enabled to 'hoist,' as Shakespeare says, 'the engineer with his own petard,' or, in other words, to let that pirate scoundrel have the benefit of his own stink-pots.—Allow me, Captain Washburn," continued he, "to lay the gun for the next shot." Turning from me, this singular individual laid his rifle carefully on the deck, and took charge of the nine-pounder, soon sending the two remaining shots plump into the mass of smoke that had taken the place of our pursuer.

"The delight of the hands forward was something wonderful, and it was shared by all aft. We were rid of our enemy, and saved from probably a fearful death, by Mr Penfold's coolness and skill. I thought the Clashies would have worshipped him. I felt ashamed of my past thoughts, and as he left the gun, commenced expressing my admiration of his conduct.

"Really, Mr Frederick," said he, "I have only done that which every one tries to do—save his own life. But we are not out of the scrape yet;" and raising his voice so that all on the quarter-deck could hear, he continued: "Captain Washburn, Mr Nielsen, favour me with your opinion."

"We were soon all attention; and he commenced by telling us that, under Providence, we had escaped from immediate danger; but that he had noticed boats putting off from the burning lorch. Night was coming on, and he thought the pirates would attempt to board us in the darkness from their boats. "And this, gentlemen," said he, "is a greater danger than the one we have just escaped. These fellows, rendered desperate by the loss of their vessel, will swarm on board like bees, and fight like demons. With a European crew, we might repel them; but with our present hands, the chance is small indeed. I certainly think the Clashies will fight, but the Chinamen will run below directly we are attacked. If the gale kindly comes before morning, it may swamp their boats, and then we shall only have to fight the elements; but we must provide for all contingencies. What say you, Captain Washburn?"

"What I say, sir," replied the captain, "is this: serve out the arms, and let those who will, fight for dear life. I don't mean to lose the number of my mess without a struggle. As you seem pretty well versed in the lingo of these Clashies, suppose you make them an oration about fighting, while I palaver the Chinese." Mr Penfold bowed assent, and they both went forward.

"Proceedings were opened by Bandanny the steward serving out a double lot of rum to all hands. After this, the captain made a speech in approved Canton English to the Chinamen, followed by Mr Penfold's oration to the Clashies, both parties returning voluble assurances of their determination to stand by the ship, and make mince-meat of any pirates bold enough to attempt boarding—all of which was taken by our skipper at its proper value.

"The arms were now brought on deck, the captain and mate taking a cutlass and brace of pistols each. I had my Volunteer rifle and bayonet, with twenty rounds of ball-cartridge. Mr Penfold produced a native sword, or tulwar, and a heavy revolver. The carpenter and the cook chose muskets and bayonets, with which the Seraing, Tindal, and as many of the Clashies as possible, were also armed; the remainder, with the Chinamen, taking the pikes, cutlasses, and pistols.

"Night had now fallen, and though we were making considerable headway, the flames from the burning lorch were still visible, the bustle, too, of our pre-

paration was over, and all hands again found time to watch our burning enemy. Suddenly a pillar of flame shot up to the clouds, a dull report was heard, and then all was darkness.

"For a few moments after the explosion, not a sound was heard on board our vessel; even the apathetic Asiatics were awed into silence; but the usual chatter soon broke out, only to be stilled by the short command of the captain for all hands to muster aft.

"We were soon assembled, and as quickly told off into three parties. Nine of the Clashies, under the command of Mr Penfold, were to go forward; the Chinamen, under the mate, to defend midship; and the whites, with the remainder of the Clashies, to guard the other part; the Seraing and cook, at the first approach of danger, were to take post in the fore and mizzen tops respectively, and prevent any pirates getting aloft. The two sixes were loaded with grape and langrage, and a couple of their charges were broken up, so as to make one round for the nine. The watches were set, a strict silence and a bright look-out enjoined; all hands to keep on deck, but those not looking out might get what sleep they could.

"The captain and I were standing aft, peering into the intense darkness, where we were joined by Mr Penfold. "I think," whispered he, "we have taken every possible precaution, with one exception, and that is, we have not distinguished our men in any way. If we are boarded (which Heaven avert) in this darkness, how are we in the melle to tell friend from foe? Had we but boarding-helmets?"

"Helmets!" cried the captain: "I bought in Calcutta some old dragon affairs for a trade on the coast. I will serve them out; they will be conspicuous enough.—Here, steward, Bandanny, cook, go below to my cabin, and bring a case you will find there on deck."

"The case was soon on deck, and being opened, was found to contain a score of brass helmets, and a quantity of artillery busbies. We whites fitted ourselves with helmets, and turned the remainder over to the Clashies, the Chinamen coming in for busbies; and proud enough they all seemed of their head-gear.

"This little episode was soon over, and again all was still. I sat down, rifle in hand, and thought of home; sleep I could not, for every sound suggested "pirates": the rattle of the reef-points as the sails lazily flapped, seemed like the beat of oars; the creak of a block aloft, was distorted into the creak of a rowlock; even the ripple of the sea under the bark's counter murmured like the whispering of hoarse voices—the night, too, was intensely dark; an inky wall, impenetrable to the vision, hedged in the ship on every side; and this darkness might at any moment give up our blood-thirsty foes. These were the pleasant thoughts I solaced myself with. At last, nature was worn out, and I slept until aroused by Mr Penfold placing his hand on my shoulder.

"Hush!" said he, as I started up. "Daylight is not far off, and the captain wants all hands to be on the alert. He is serving out grog forward, and I have some brandy-pawnee and a biscuit for you.—Take it, my young friend," said he, as I made a gesture of dissent; "it may be some time before you get other food; and, believe me, if it comes to blows, you will not fight any the worse for a good lining." Whilst he was speaking, a long tremulous pencil of light shot up from the east to the zenith, followed by another and another, and then the sun shewed his broad face once more.

"A thick, white mist hung heavily on the surface of the water, soon to be dispersed by the heat, and a fitful breeze that had sprung up. Suddenly, the fog lifted like a curtain; and there, not a cable's length from our stern, were five large boats choke-full of men. Down came Mr Penfold from the main-topgallant cross-trees, where he had been for a look-out;

and out rang the skipper's voice, loud and clear: "Every man to his post, and let him do his best for life and duty."

"The pirates had, then, escaped from the burning lorch, and doubtless intended to board us in the night; but unable to discover the bark in the darkness, had lain to until the morning. There was not any indecision; but obedient to a plainly-heard hoarse command, the boats separated, and came on in two lines. Every second brought them nearer, for the crews pulled with the energy of men filled with hate and desperation. Coming on as they were, we could not get the midship guns to bear; but led by Mr Penfold, our nine spoke out, and the foremost boat disappeared in a cloud of foam: the charge of grape had blown the stern out.

"This was no check to the remainder. On they pulled, seemingly without giving a thought, much less help, to their drowning fellows. The sitters in the boats kept up a constant small-arm fire; musket-balls singing overhead, and striking the spars and rigging.

"We returned the fire—keeping well under shelter of the bulwarks. I got two hurried shots into the leading boat on the port-side, but had not time for another before they were alongside. In a second, a swarthy Malay, kreesee in hand, and with a couple of stink-pots slung round him, began scrambling up the mizzen rigging. Before he had stepped three ratlines, I bayoneted him: throwing his arms wildly upward, the poor wretch went overboard. And now, over both quarters, swarmed the pirates, a motley lot, seemingly of all nations and colours. A tall white man, wearing an enormous red beard, was the leader of the party who had boarded aft: flourishing a sword that looked like a Brobdingnagian razor, he made a bound toward me, and delivered a downright boarder's cut at my head. I parried with the bayonet, though not sufficiently, for the dragoon helmet stopped the blow. Quick as lightning, a sweeping cross-cut followed; this I met with my rifle-barrel; and now, thought I, comes my turn. Shortening arms, I prepared for a home-thrust; but, to my horror, saw that the first blow had nearly cut through the bayonet, and rendered the blade useless. My consternation was, I suppose, apparent; for the pirate, giving a shout of derision, drew back his sword to run me through. Instinctively, I threw out the rifle to arm's-length; but suddenly recollecting there was a charge in the barrel, pulled trigger. There was a scorching flash, and my arms were numbed to the shoulder; a moment's unconsciousness, and I found myself prostrate against the companion-hatch, but unhurt, and with the rifle-stock only in my hand. The piece, no doubt indented by the pirate's blow, had burst, spreading death around, but saving my life; for the pirate leader, thinking the work was finished aft, had with his men rushed forward.

"I sprang to my feet, and looking round, saw that two of our Clashies were badly hit, and the captain disabled by sword-cuts. "Prop me against the side," said he, refusing the help I offered. "Give me my pistols, and I will take care of myself." Picking up a cutlass, and beckoning to the remaining Clashies, I prepared to attack the pirates from one end of the ship; but the sight that met my eyes was so strange, I could not resist pausing. Not one of the Chinamen was to be seen; but the Clashies had formed a line across the deck, and were steadily forcing the pirates aft. Two or three paces in advance, strode the black cook, naked to his waist, and wielding with awful effect the carpenter's axe. From his post in the fore-top, he had evidently seen his beloved captain stricken down, and was now nearly mad with rage and excitement. Each time the axe rose to fall with a sickening crash on head or limb, he shouted or rather howled: "For Massa Hiram, Ole Virginny;" following, and guarding him from the blows he did

not attempt to parry, came Mr Penfold and the Seraing. They, too, were shouting some native war-cry, to which the Clashies responded with loud shouts of "Burra Ullah! Ullah he!" fighting manfully the while.

"The pirates were giving way, but Red Beard had forced his way to the front of the *mêlée*, and for a moment both sides paused. The next minute, he had crossed swords with the Seraing; but the plucky little fellow had not sufficient strength to withstand Red Beard's ponderous blows, and was soon disabled by a gaping flesh-wound in the arm. The cook turned like a tiger for revenge, but a pistol-bullet laid him beside his friend; and now the pirate leader confronted Mr Penfold.

"You are the skipper, are you?" roared he in English, at the same time uttering a fearful string of oaths. "I'll roast you alive, you — Yankee."

"First catch your skipper," replied Mr Penfold as coolly as usual, stopping at the same time a down-right blow that seemed powerful enough to fell an ox. Again their swords met, and a thrust from Mr Penfold was guarded by a sweeping parry. Another blow, a feint, and then the keen tulwar was cutting its way through the pirate's neck, and he fell heavily on the deck.

"Now was our time. Chips, I, and our Clashies bundled in amongst the pirates, striking right and left. Disheartened by the fall of their leader, and staggered by our unexpected attack, they wavered, and, being now hard pressed in front and rear, began to jump overboard. We followed up our advantage, and at last cleared the bark's deck, driving them without remorse over the side. One of their boats was towing alongside, and into this as many as could crowded, and hastily pulled away from the ship, leaving the remainder of their fellows to drown. "Let them alone," shouted Mr Penfold, as we ran aft in a body to give them a parting shot—"let them alone: before long, they will cut each other's throats, and save all trouble. Come and lend a hand with the wounded."

"And now the wonderful sagacity and foresight of our passenger became again apparent. Under his direction, in a few minutes, mattresses were laid on the saloon-deck, and there we carried those who were most hurt, for few of us had escaped without a mark of some kind. First we brought down the captain and mate, both badly cut about; and then the Seraing, cook, and the disabled hands. Out came the medicine-chest; sheets were torn for bandages; and Mr Penfold proceeded to bind wounds and set broken limbs with the skill and tenderness of an old surgeon. Shortly, all were attended to, and Bandanny the steward was busily at work supplying lime-juice and water to the feverish thirst of the poor fellows.

"Go on deck, gentlemen," said Captain Washburn; "make all as snug as you can; and pray, Mr Penfold, take charge of the ship, and get her back to Hong-kong. We owe you a heavy debt of gratitude."

"Quite enough said, sir: please to keep quiet," replied our passenger, as he left the saloon, followed by myself and the Seraing, who, now his arm had been dressed, refused to remain below.

"The deck of the bark presented a fearful sight, strewn as it was with dead bodies, and covered with pools and long streams of blood. Three of the Clashies were killed, and had been carried by their mates to the fore-castle, washed, and laid with their faces towards the point where Mecca was supposed to be: squatted on their haunches round the bodies, the survivors were droning a funeral chant. The bodies of the pirates cumbering our decks were without a sign of life; either the wounded, dreading torture, had crawled overboard, or they had been finished by the Clashies, during the time they had the deck to themselves, in revenge for their slaughtered comrades.

'There was no time to waste in useless grief or idle lamentation; the barometer shewed a lower fall of the mercury; and by the hard coppery glare of the sun, and the restless, peculiar throb of the sea, it was evident that the long-dreaded typhoon was about to burst on us. The carpenter was sent below to rout the cowardly Chinese from their hiding-places, and set them to work clearing the decks; while the Clashies took in sail, and struck royal and top-gallant masts. All worked with a will, and in a very short time we were prepared to meet the storm.

'It did not keep us long waiting, for through the haze, away to the north-east, a dark cloud, seemingly resting on the sea, was to be seen swiftly bearing down on us. In another moment it had struck the bark, and I thought all was lost, but, met by the helm, and assisted by the fore-staysail, the only canvas set, her head came round, and we scudded before the gale.

'To make a long story short, for two days and nights we were driven by the storm. About noon of the third day, the weather moderated, and we found ourselves abreast of Hong-kong; in the afternoon, we were enabled to enter and anchor abreast the commodore's flag-ship, all but worn out with fatigue and exposure. Our ensign was hoisted jack under with the signal, "Doctor required," flying; and soon, in spite of the heavy sea, a boat put off from the man-of-war, and brought the surgeon and assistant-surgeon on board. Our poor wounded sorely needed their help, for little could be done for them during the storm save supplying them with water.

'It was a treat to hear the remarks of the men-of-war's men on the appearance of our crew, for the Clashies could not be induced to give up the dragon helmets, but continued to wear them even during the worst of the typhoon. The officer in charge of the boat kindly put me on shore. I had but just landed, and was on my way to the office, when I met Mr Gribble, all anxiety about the ship. He heard my story, was very complimentary, and would insist on boarding the *Dawn*, to see if he could be of any use. The doctor, however, would not allow the wounded to be moved; so he promised to send ice and all requisites at once. Of course, he was profuse in his acknowledgments to Mr Penfold, "to whom," said he, "I owe the safety of many valuable lives and my cargo;" gave the Seraiing and Tindal two months', and each of the surviving Clashies, a month's wages, with unlimited liberty on shore; in short, he behaved like a trump.

'The assistant-surgeon kindly volunteered to stay on board; and Mr Penfold, declining all invitations, went ashore with Gribble and me. Next morning, I went on board the flag-ship, to report the affair to the commodore. I was shewn into the cabin; and in telling my story, took occasion to speak of the bravery and skill of our passenger. Whilst so doing, an officer who had been sitting at the after-end of the cabin, laid down his book, and coming towards the table, said: "Really, commodore, our young friend gives me too much praise, and himself too little credit."

"Mr Penfold!" said I, starting up in amazement at seeing our passenger in full naval uniform.

"Yes, sir," replied the commodore, with some degree of acerbity in his tone, "that is Captain Penfold Ventnor, who might have put his leave to better use than in making Quixotic expeditions against Chinese pirates."

'Mr Penfold, or rather Captain Ventnor, smiled, but did not reply. I concluded my report, bowed, and left the cabin, followed by our late passenger. We went ashore together, for he had promised to dine with Mr Gribble; and on our way to the hotel, he explained the apparent mystery of his conduct. It appeared that he was suspicious of the lorchas, and had been watching her for some time previous to our departure; but her peaceful character was so

well sustained, that no pretext offered for stopping her. "And yet," said he, "I felt an intuitive perception that the *Dawn* was intended to be a victim. Acting on a sudden impulse, I got leave; and procured an introduction to Mr Gribble; and you know the rest. If a gunboat had followed us, the fun would have been spoiled; so I came alone, for I wanted to pit my shells against stink-pots."

'Our arrival at the office put an end to the conversation; but though the daring bravery and skill of Captain Ventnor had already passed into a proverb, I could not help wondering at the *sang froid* with which he had so voluntarily sought danger.

'For a few days, of course, we were the lions of Victoria; but time passed on, and we subsided into the old jog-trot, our wounded were fast recovering, and the Clashies nearly tired of strutting about in the brass helmets. Captain Washburn was able to attend the office, and he and I were busy one morning arranging the continuance of the voyage, when a coolie was announced as the bearer of a letter from Government House. It was addressed to myself; and on breaking the seal, I found it contained a Chinese manuscript wrapped in vermilion silk, and an enclosure from an official with an undecipherable name, stating that the enclosed "had been forwarded from the imperial authorities at Canton, and that if I required a translation, the government interpreter was authorised to grant me one."

'In the evening, I called upon an *attaché* with whom I was friendly, and produced my packet.

"Certainly," said he, "I will procure the translation, and send it to you; or, by the by, I dine with Gribble to-morrow, and will bring it with me. I suppose you will be there?"

'As I did happen to be invited, I thanked him, and took my leave.

'Upon arriving at Mr Gribble's house next day, I found Captain Ventnor, Captain Washburn, and a large party of friends. We had a very pleasant time, and after dinner I reminded my friend the *attaché* of the packet.

"As I anticipated," replied he, "it is a flattering recognition by the imperial government of your services in that pirate affair. Shall I read it?"

"By all means," cried a chorus of voices round the table; "there cannot be any objection."

"Very good, gentlemen," said he; "since you insist, and as Fred gives permission, here goes." And in a grandiloquent tone he commenced: "That the Imperial Chinese Government had been informed of my bravery; that the Emperor, Brother of the Sun, &c., delighted to honour the deserving, and had been pleased to create me a *Mandarin of the Brass Button* class, and to appoint me a leader or captain in his Marine Light Cavalry, or Horse Marines; and that, by a special edict, I was to be exempted from buying a charger, but always to wear spurs when at sea."

'You may guess the roar of laughter that followed, and how charmingly I felt; and you may be sure the title stuck to me. I was glad enough to get away again in the *Dawn* to Shang-hae. This time, I reached there safely; and there's an end to my yarn about Chinese pirates.'

At the end of this narrative, a profound silence would doubtless have ensued; unluckily, the effect which we had foreseen as possible had been produced. The Strong-minded had sunk into a profound slumber, and had given some of those audible tokens of her condition which the vulgar call snores. The unfeeling Jones maintained that this was clearly a noise, and came within the conditions of our compact. This brutal suggestion caused, I need not say, an animated argument, in which I forcibly represented the villainy of waking a lady who was so peacefully slumbering. The argu-

ment, however, grew so warm as to wake the subject of our contention; and on understanding the cause of dispute, she good-naturedly informed us that she felt bound to make such reparation as she could for her involuntary disturbance of our peace; and premising that she had nothing of her own experience to tell us, recounted the following story, which she lately met with in her reading:

THE STORM-LIGHT OF HAKLARSHOLM.

AMONG the sand-hills on the north-east coast of Jutland, there lies a long dale, called Haklarsholm, from a tradition that in remote ages, before the sand-hills were formed, or the sea had retired to its present level, the dale was an island, or holm, as they say in Denmark, ruled over by a powerful chief, called, from his exploits by land and sea, Haklar of the Heavy Hand. Landward, it expands to a pastoral valley, inhabited by herdsmen and shepherds; seaward, it slopes down to the narrow beach which lies between the sand-hills and the waters of the Baltic. At that end stands an old fishing-hamlet. The cottages are built partly of brick and partly of timber, the latter said to have belonged to ships wrecked on the reef which stretches for many a mile along the shore, scarcely visible at low-water, and renders it one of the most dangerous spots on all the Jutland coast. Midway up the dale, on a bare rising ground, stands a castle, gray and grand, though uninhabited for nearly half a century, and going quietly to ruin. The history of Jutland records that it was a stronghold of the barons of Haklarsholm, while Wodin and Thor were yet worshipped in the land; and the same family continued in possession till about fifty years ago, when their line came to an end in a dark and strange fashion.

The last Baron Von Haklarsholm was one of the proudest men in Jutland, of true Danish descent, without an alloy of German blood. His pedigree stretched up to the times of the Sagas. One of his ancestors had been the companion of Harold Blue-tooth; another had shared in Rollo's conquest of Normandy; a third had assisted Canute the Great to win the realm of England; and from his day, the family had been accustomed to bestow towns and counties in that island on their daughters, by way of dowry, though neither the damsels nor their happy husbands had the smallest chance of finding them real estates. The baron was proud of that, and a great deal more; but the baron could not be proud of his riches. The best part of Haklarsholm—the grassy lands on which herds and flocks were fed, and grazing-farmers grew substantial—had been alienated by a spendthrift father in the bad old times of Christian VII.; and the baron, besides succeeding to nothing but the ancient castle, the seaward end of the dale, the fishing-hamlet, and the adjacent beach, had lost his chance of a wealthy uncle's legacy, by marrying a lady with as good a pedigree as his own, and her face for a fortune. A nobleman descended from the companion of Harold Blue-tooth, could think of nothing to assist in the maintenance of his rank beneath a superior government office; but the baron had no friends at court, and was not qualified for making them. His lot had been cast in times when ancient blood and lineage counted for little, and peasants could reckon rights with the lord of the soil; so he and his spouse being of the same mind—a case not common with more lucky couples—lived in a state of grand poverty, occupying a few of the smallest rooms in their ancestral castle, with an establishment consisting of a deaf old man and his daughter, and brought up their only child, named Vextel, after one of his noble progenitors, and heir to the estate, such as it was.

The family was solitary as well as poor. Their

relations on either side were few and distant, and kept but a cold and scanty correspondence with the impoverished House of Haklarsholm. To exchange hospitalities with the Jutland nobility, or even to appear among them in town or country, with their means, was out of the question; and no earthly consideration would have induced either baron or baroness to associate with anybody a step below their rank. Nobody tempted them to overstep that magic bound. Clutching at fallen fragments of nobility, is not the fashion of the honest and independent Jutlanders, and the castle-people had ways of their own, which were by no means pleasing to their neighbours. The necessities of his family made the baron keep a keen eye on the remnant of lordly rights and revenues which time and fortune had left him. With the grazing-farmers up the dale, he had an internecine war regarding the sea-weed which they took, or wanted, to manure their meadows. With the inhabitants of the fishing-hamlet he had never-ending disputes concerning rents and dues; and a wreck on the reef, or a whale driven on shore, was the subject of a downright battle between him and his entire tenantry. As a rule, the baroness took no part in those general engagements, but she was heard to lament for those ancient days of order and regulation when no fisherman might touch one of the herrings he had caught, till the lord of the coast had selected the fattest for his own consumption. The hard and narrow fortunes of the pair had told on their minds and lives, as hard fortunes generally do. They had lived in that fashion for nearly twenty years. The baron had been one of the handsomest and most robust young men in that part of Jutland. He retained his strength and muscle; but strict economy and fierce contending had made him gaunt and gray before the time. The baroness had been a reigning belle at the balls of Copenhagen; but unsupported rank and household cares had reduced her to a thin and withered woman. Yet one image of their better days had grown up before them through those poverty-stricken years. One hopeful branch remained to continue, and perhaps retrieve, their ancient line. Their son, Vextel, inherited the lost beauty of his mother, with the vigour and spirit of his father's youth. The parents' hearts and minds were bound up in their boy; they pinched their narrow means still closer, to give him an education befitting his rank. They believed him to be endowed with every talent and every attraction that could fall to the lot of man. The baron expected that he would create such a sensation at the university as would make the Danish government do something for them all; the baroness had dreams of some wealthy heiress presenting him with her heart and hand. But none of these things took place. Vextel came home from the university without creating a sensation, or marrying an heiress. He had a good disposition, as well as good-looks; but, except in the eyes of his father and mother, there was nothing bright about him. Nevertheless, Vextel had seen the world—at least, the Copenhagen part of it—and was not content to live in a corner of the old castle, and contend with peasants and fishermen about drifted sea-weed, wrecked ships, and stranded whales. After a good deal of controversy, such as generally occurs between the old and the young generation concerning the outset in life, he got permission to apply to one of his mother's distant relations, who happened to be in the Danish cabinet, for some office or appointment. The great man was propitious, and did not require much courting; but the only appointment he could, or would, find for his kinswoman's son was one in the East Indian colony of Tranquebar, neither important nor overwell paid. The baron and baroness thought the world must be coming to an end, when such a place was offered to the heir of Haklarsholm; but the young man would not be kept

from pushing his fortune in the only way open to him; and the dread of his attempting something of trade or business at home, and thus disgracing his family for ever, made them at length consent to part with their only son, and let him sail for India.

Their servants' account of that parting was, that they thought the baron would go out of his mind, and the baroness would break her heart; but Vextel sailed from Copenhagen, arrived safe at Tranquebar, and sent home the best accounts of himself, his doings, and his prospects. The old pair lived on without either of the expected casualties; the baron waged the same wars with farmers and fishermen, the baroness poured forth the same lamentations for the good old times. Their housekeeping was rather more pinched than in former years, Vextel's outfit having to be paid for, with interest, to the trusting Jews of Copenhagen, and neither the sea-weed, the whales, nor the wrecks coming as readily as they could have wished at the castle. But help came at the beginning of the second winter; their good son in India must have practised some of the economy he learned at home, for out of no great salary he contrived to save and send to his parents a present of a hundred rix-dollars.

It was believed that the baron never before had so much money in his pocket as the night he brought that present home, all in solid silver, from Fredericia, the nearest bank, on which his careful son had drawn the bill, being in that town. The baron went for his cash with great privacy; it was not to be known that the lord of Haklarsholm had to journey like a common farmer, without coach or attendants; he mounted his own gray horse, the only steed he possessed, before daybreak, rode up the dale, and took the southern highway. It was a day's travel; and he couldn't afford to stay in town for the night, so, under his faded cloak—which, together with its miniver trimmings, had been bought for his wedding-day—the baron carried a lantern of Norwegian spar, of ancient make, and an heirloom in the family, to light him home over the sand-hills, which happened to be the shortest way. It was late in October, the first and most tempestuous of the winter months in Jutland; and the night proved stormy; a strong east wind driving showers of sleet before it, swept over the sand-hills straight from the Baltic, and in the baron's face all the way home; but he held on his course, thanks to the Norwegian lantern, which kept its light in spite of the storm, and saved him from taking the wrong by-paths leading away to distant valleys, or from slipping over the sandy steeps into the sea, which now foamed fathoms deep upon the narrow beach. He held on; and with his good horse and his hundred dollars reached the castle of Haklarsholm when its ancient clock was striking ten. Right glad was the baroness to see him; and well she might be, for after his arrival the storm increased every minute, till it blew a perfect hurricane; but, mingled with the rush of the blast and the roar of the sea, came the sound of signal-guns from some ship upon the reef. The boldest fisherman would not venture out for some hours, and neither did the castle-people, though none of them slept that night, so terrible was the tempest; but when it abated, and the daybreak came, his hundred silver dollars grew small in the baron's eyes; the Baltic had sent a more valuable present to him and his, in the shape of a richly-laden merchantman, which lay upon the reef within the bounds of his lordship, a total wreck, and all her crew gone down into the sea.

The lord of Haklarsholm had the usual disputes with the men of his fishing-hamlet concerning bales and barrels washed ashore, or picked up by their boats; but, as usual, he got his full share of the Baltic's gift; and from that day, the tide of good-fortune seemed to set in from the sea to the castle. A more stormy winter was not remembered by the oldest inhabitant of the Jutland coasts; wrecks

had never been more numerous or more rich; but the richest of them all, and by far the greater number, took place on the reef of Haklarsholm. The baron's good-luck became the wonder of all the fishing-villages, and the envy of all the lords of the soil and the sand-banks. They did not give thanks for such events in the Jutland churches, at the time of our story, as they had done in the previous century, but the presents of the sea were eagerly looked for, and quickly accepted. The baron's share of them that year was something remarkable. American ships, Dutch and English traders, Russian vessels, East and West Indiamen—all struck and went to pieces on his reef. Very few of their crews escaped; but the east winds, which prevailed all that winter, drove in most of the valuable cargoes, and the baron contrived to secure them. His activity in the business was a marvel to the Haklarsholm men, acquainted as they were with their lord's abilities: no ship went on the reef by night or day that he was not aware of before a signal-gun was heard or a flag of distress seen. The wrecks were making him comparatively rich; but the luck of the castle-people did not increase their liberality; the baron kept as keen an eye on the last remnant of the spoil, as he had kept through his many less fortunate years—enforced his claim to stray whales and heaps of sea-weed with accustomed rigour, and did as little as he could for the shipwrecked mariners; while her servants vouched that the baroness kept house on as close a scale as she had ever done, or woman could do.

But as the winter wore away, a strange report began to spread among the dalesmen—it was said that as sure as a stormy night set in, a brilliant but uncertain light was seen on the highest summits of the sand-hills, moving along the line nearest to the sea, and never stationary for a minute. Whence it came, nobody could say: there was not a man in all the dale that would venture to follow it over the sand-hills in the long dark nights of winter, when the blast from the Baltic swept their slippery sides; but when that light was seen from farmhouse or fisherman's cottage, the honest and pious Jutlanders said: 'God help the ships that are off our coast this night!' and long ere midnight there would be signals of sore distress from the reef, and a wreck of more or less value lying there in the morning for the lord of Haklarsholm.

That he had some mysterious connection with the storm-light, as they called it, was the general belief of his tenants and neighbours. It had oozed out, chiefly through the castle's maid-of-all-work, that in every stormy night the baron mounted his horse, rode up the dale, and seldom returned before daybreak; and that the baroness sat up all the hours of his absence, often looking out on the storm, and sighing like one who had great fear or trouble on her mind. Nobody had traced the baron's course in those nightly journeys; but the dalesmen had a clear, or rather a dark account of it.

Inland, among the grazing-farms, there lived an old and solitary widow, who had come a stranger to Haklarsholm; she said from Norway, but most people thought the dame of Lapland origin: she had the dwarfish stature, the brown complexion, and the flattened features of that northern race. She had Lapland peculiarities of manner, and character too, in the eyes of her Danish neighbours. Widow Laxon was silent, stealthy, and sly, had extraordinary skill in herbs and simples, and the consequent repute of dealing in the black art. To her lonely hut, in the midst of the wide pastures, deserted alike by sheep and shepherd, cattle and herdsmen, in the rigorous winters of Jutland, it was manifest the baron went to assist in the powerful spells by which that unearthly light was made to move along the sand-hills, and lure ships to their destruction on the reef, which thus proved the most profitable part of his domain. The

belief in witchcraft seems native to the north, and has not yet died among its peasants and fishermen. At the time of our story, Danish law-courts had got beyond taking cognizance of the crime; but it was still a subject of grave inquiry and stern rebuke with the clergy of country parishes, and the standing solution of everything strange or unaccountable, with the populace. The lord of Haklarsholm had luck not to be explained on any other accredited principle. They frightened each other with tales concerning him at fireside and fishing-ground; the stiffest stander-up for rights declined to quarrel with him now; the young kept well out of his way; and the old inhabitants of the dale sincerely regretted their fathers' days, when such a baron would have been a subject for the headsman of Copenhagen.

Widow Laxon was of course included in these regrets and fears. From her first settlement in the dale, she had been regarded as a white witch: the farmers consulted her in cases of sickly sheep, cattle, or children; the fishermen in matters touching shoals of herrings and contrary winds: they had all bought her simples, which went remarkably cheap, considering the cures believed to have been effected by them. But now the widow was discovered to be a black witch; she could destroy as well as save; and, to all appearance, succeeded best in the destructive department. Yet it was little to her own profit; the baron was evidently as parsimonious to his confederate in midnight mischief as his tenants and neighbours found him. For all the rich wrecks cast upon his reef, Widow Laxon lived no better than she had ever done in her poor and lonely hut. She went about in the same coarse blue woollen gown with many patches, an old seal-skin hood half-hiding her Lapland visage, gathering her herbs and simples; it was said chiefly at new and full moons, and was willing to dispose of them, together with suitable advice, on the same moderate terms. But the very small profits for which dames of her order did their deadly work, is a remarkable feature in the witch-tales of all countries. Widow Laxon made little by her business with the baron, but that did not shake the popular faith in her powers or performances; and that she regarded the lord of Haklarsholm as a committed man, was known to observant people, who marked the sidelong glance, half-scornful and half-cunning, which she was wont to cast after him from under her seal-skin hood.

Perhaps there was a compact between them that the widow should be paid for her signal and singular services when the baron had accomplished what at length became known to be the end of all his gathering and holding—namely, the redemption of his family estate. He would re-purchase the good and long-alienated lands of Haklarsholm with his gains from the sea, that his son Vextel might come home to inherit them, make a suitable match, and restore the ancient honours of his line. In a moment of uncommon confidence, he had said as much to the banker in Fredericia, from whom he had drawn the hundred dollars in that October day which proved the first of his good-fortune, and in whose safe and careful hands all the wealth he had since acquired by reef and wreck was lodged. If the banker made a secret of that revelation, it was a flying one, for Jans Morden, the postman who carried letters to and from that part of Jutland, and generally appeared in Haklarsholm once a fortnight, brought the news with him from the town, and it was duly discussed and circulated among the dale-people.

Jans Morden had a nearer interest in the news he brought than any of them. On the landward side of Haklarsholm, there lay a freehold farm, famous for sheep-grazing, and owned by his ancestors for nearly as many generations as the barons had owned the dale. That farm was lost to the Mordens about the same time and in the same manner that the lords of

the soil lost the best part of their estate—dissipation and extravagance having the same effects on great and small—and Jans Morden was not less determined to redeem his patrimony than the baron was to regain the lands and honours of his line. The postman had been longer about the business, and not so remarkably lucky. The sea had given him nothing in all his journeys along its sandy Jutland coasts, but it had given him two keen-witted and hardy sons highways and by-ways of travel and trade. With the capital made up by their father's savings, they had engaged in the small but profitable coasting-traffic, so favoured by the numerous towns and ports of the Baltic and its many arms. Freight was cheap, and shipping plenty in those parts; the young Mordens had a gift of guessing at the markets; they bought discreetly, and sold to advantage; their father pinched and spared to increase their business; and after years of hard work and no spending, the price of the ancestral farm was gained, and the old man intended to open negotiations for its purchase, as soon as his sons returned from their last commercial transactions in Stockholm.

Jans was of opinion, as indeed were all his friends in the dale—and the trusty postman had not few, for he managed most of their townward affairs—that it would be well to conclude the business before the lord of Haklarsholm came into possession of his family's ancient domain and rights. He had written to warn his sons, and they were coming dutifully home with their hard-earned dollars. Their ship was bound for Copenhagen, and their father was on what he hoped would be the last of his postal journeys, with the dignity of a freehold farmer full in view, when a tempestuous night came down on Haklarsholm; the storm-light was seen moving along the sand-hills; the dale-people said: 'The baron and the witch are at their work again;' and before morning, a vessel struck and went to pieces on the reef. Not a boat could venture out to the rescue, and not a soul on board escaped the waves; but among the wreck and cargo which the early tide washed in, were the bodies of the two young Mordens, and a strong sea-chest, with their names painted on it, in the fashion of small Danish traders. Their father arrived just in time to attend their funeral in the churchyard of Haklarsholm; his friends had taken charge of that matter; but the baron had taken possession of the chest, and when Jans, like a true and straightforward Dane, demanded it as his dead sons' property, the lord of Haklarsholm informed him that all the sea washed in upon that beach was his, by ancient and undoubted right, and he could not set so bad an example, in that presumptuous time, as to give up any of it.

'It's a pity our ancient laws against witchcraft are not in force too,' said Jans, 'or you and the Lapland widow would pay the penalty for all the good ships you have brought to wreck, and all the honest men you have given to death, as well as my two sons; but for all your ill-gotten wealth, baron, you will not pass unpunished.'

'Ill-taught knave!' said the baron, as he turned on his heel, and walked away.

All the dale-people took Morden's part; it helped to embitter the long-standing hostility between them and their lord; but what was their astonishment when it became public in the beginning of the Jutland summer, that the baron had set his face against Widow Laxon, and discoursed to the pastor and other influential characters on the propriety of expelling her from the dale as a reputed witch. Had the confederates quarrelled about the spoil? Did the baron wish to save his credit at the widow's expense; and would she confess all, to get revenge upon him? Such were the questions that arose and were debated by the evening fires; but to the surprise of all Haklarsholm, the Lapland woman said: 'My lord

and the pastor need not trouble themselves; I will go as soon as my herbs are dry, and Jans Morden comes back to the dale: I am keeping a simple for him.'

Jans Morden came back on his usual round; the prospect of the freehold farm had faded from the poor postman, and left him instead but the graves of his two sons, which he always went to see when duty brought him to the dale. The old church, with its God's-acre round it, stood among the pasture-lands, not far from the hut occupied by Widow Laxon. Her herbs must have been dry, and the simple ready, for as Jans stood by those green graves in the twilight of a summer evening, she stole into the churchyard equipped as usual, but with a bundle, containing all her worldly goods, on her back; spoke with him for a few minutes, stole out again, and hastened up the dale. There was no living listener to what passed between them, and Jans never mentioned it to his most intimate friends; but Widow Laxon was seen no more in Haklarsholm; her deserted hut fell to ruins, and most people concluded that the dale was well quit of her. The baron took every occasion to concur in that opinion.

'He has paid her off, and thinks himself safe now,' said the dale-people.

Their lord was indeed somewhat like a man who felt sure of making good his aims. Lawyers were said to be employed in Fredericia about the re-purchase of his ancestral lands. His son had been summoned, and was coming home without delay by the long voyage that brought people from India in those days. Workmen had been sent for, and repairs commenced in the castle. The servants reported an extraordinary liberality of housekeeping; and both baron and baroness actually got new clothes.

It was hoped that things would be in a satisfactory state by the time of Vextel's arrival, which was expected in the following spring; but the short summer passed; winter and its tempests came as usual with the lengthening nights of October; and then it was manifest that Widow Laxon was not essential to the baron's business. The storm-light was once more seen upon the sand-hills, and luckless vessels wrecked upon the reef. Belated shepherds saw the lord of Haklarsholm ride up the dale in the most threatening nights; and the baroness was known to keep that weary watch of hers till he came back. It was remarked, however, that the luck was not so good that winter; many ships got safe off the reef, and none of the wrecks were rich but one, which happened about the end of February. That month is commonly a severe one on all the northern coasts, and in the year of our story it was particularly so; the fishermen of Haklarsholm could get no weather to cast their nets; the shepherds and herdsmen had fears that the pastures would not be green till May; and the post from Fredericia, otherwise Jans Morden, was a fortnight overdue. The dale-people were satisfied that Jans would come as soon as the heavy snowfalls and frequent storms would allow him. He generally brought their entire correspondence safe in his best pocket; and none of them happened to expect a letter just then but the baron, who was waiting for one to let him know at what time and in what ship his son had embarked.

He had been anxious on that subject; but the lord of Haklarsholm found something else to concern him, when at the close of a dull and foggy day, the wind began to blow strong, and a large ship was seen beating about the coast, as if seeking for shelter or anchorage. The experienced men of the fishing-hamlet thought she looked like a well-laden merchantman from the East or West Indies, and must be bound for some port up the Baltic; but as the night darkened, and the gale increased, they shook their heads, and said: 'God help her and her people; for all along the seaward summits the storm-light began to flit and flash brighter than they had ever seen it

before; and one of their boys, who had been late up the dale, reported that he had seen the baron riding hard and fast in his usual direction. Those omens of evil helped to fulfil themselves, as accepted omens generally do. The fishermen, feeling sure that the ship was doomed, and terrified by the storm, which seemed to them supernaturally fierce, made no attempt at assisting her, though all night long, signal-guns were heard, and rockets seen to rise from the most perilous part of the reef. The crew evidently struggled hard with wind and wave to save their vessel and their lives; but the signal-guns and the rockets ceased before morning; some of the hamlet-people thought they heard drowning cries as the gray light began to dapple the summits of the sand-hills, and the dreaded storm-light disappeared before it. The day brightened; the wind went down; the waves washed in fragments of the wreck; the fishermen sallied forth to look after it; but their watchful lord was on the spot, reminding them as usual that everything the sea brought there was his. From point to point of the beach he flew, claiming and clutching at all that the waves washed in, and commanding the unwilling fishermen to get out their boats, and bring his property off the reef. The wreck was a rich one: the ship's figurehead, which first came ashore, shewed that she was the *Carlsrone*, an East-Indiaman, belonging to the port of Slitehaum in Gothland.

'So much the better,' said the baron; 'since Providence ordained she should be wrecked on my reef, I am glad the ship is a stranger.—Make haste, you idle knaves, and get the goods in; if you have not your boats out in half-an-hour, I'll get other men, and not pay a penny to one of you.'

'It is not safe for boats to venture yet, my lord,' said an old fisherman; and as the baron was in the midst of an angry reply, he was stopped by the sudden appearance of Jans Morden, presenting a letter in his usual composed and quiet manner.

'I forgot to deliver it to your Lordship on my last round,' said the postman; 'and I have been storm-staid at the first house in the dale all night.'

'Forgot to deliver it!' cried the baron; 'but something was rolling heavily in some way down the beach; the fishermen rushed to the spot, and so did he. Jans Morden did not follow, but stood there on the sand with his arms crossed, and his look cold and calm, till he heard a long, sharp cry, as if from a breaking heart, and saw the lord of Haklarsholm fall as if struck down by a sudden blow; for the something that rolled in was the corpse of his son Vextel; and the letter which Jans had forgotten to deliver a month before, apprised him that the young man would sail in the *Carlsrone*, and might be expected much earlier than the time reckoned on. When the postman had seen and heard that, he turned away, and walked slowly to the fishing-hamlet. There, when the confusion of the day had somewhat subsided, and the people came back to their cottages, he said to a group of his oldest intimates, seated round a fire made of wood from the new wreck: 'Good friends, this man has taken his own son's life, as he took the lives of my two boys, and many a life besides, not by witchcraft, but a craft of his own. By riding up the dale every stormy night, he could take a by-path to the sand-hills without anybody being the wiser. The light you saw there was not conjured up by Widow Laxon's spells, but came from his Norwegian lantern, carried on horseback with a wicked skill which many a good ship had cause to rue. The Lapland woman, by seeking for herbs and simples at all hours and in all weather, saw what none of you dreamed of, and made the matter clear to me before she left the dale.'

'Why didn't you tell it, Jans, and let the law deal with him?' cried the fishermen.

'The law seldom deals right with those that have

got rank and riches, and I have nothing more to say,' replied Jans; 'but I will never carry a letter to man or woman more.'

Old Morden kept his word, though no further explanation could be coaxed or questioned out of him. Next morning, he left the dale, and never returned; a new postman came on his accustomed round, and could give no intelligence regarding Jans, but that he had resigned his office, and gone nobody knew where. The loss of their son extinguished the hopes and blighted the life of both baron and baroness; their reason and their energy seemed to slide away from them; the man sunk into childishness, the woman into melancholy madness; their next of kin ultimately took charge of them and their wealth, and they closed their days in a private asylum in Fredericia. Then the next of kin divided among themselves the riches so darkly gathered; the old castle was allowed to fall to ruins, for nobody would inhabit it; and if the dale-people did not all believe Jans Morden's tale, they were never again frightened, nor was any ship lured to destruction on that fatal reef, by the Stormlight of Haklarsholm.

'Well,' said Jones, after this story was finished, 'as I am the only person left, I presume it is my turn now to act Scheherazade.'

'Yes; and whilst you are about it, tell us a good Alpine story about broken necks, and arêtes, and snow-slopes, and so on; if possible, some fearful accident that has happened to yourself. It would be pleasant just now.'

'Would an accident to my companions do as well?'

'No; it would not be so satisfactory; but it would be better than nothing.'

'Then I'll try how this will do. It's very simple. Let's call it

THE FRIENDLY MEETING.

'THE first walk that I ever took upon the high Alps was with two friends of mine—experienced mountaineers, who wanted to make a certain pass without guides. They persuaded me to come with them, and it was agreed that, as we knew little of the route, it would be well to spend the first night as high on the hills as possible. We therefore started one morning, and climbed the mountain-side in the direction of the pass. It lay at a great distance, and we had rather a hot walk, which was tiring to me as a beginner. My friends, according to the amiable custom of old travellers, took the opportunity to cram me with a variety of appalling stories as to mountain-dangers—to impress upon me, as they said, the necessity of caution. One I happen to remember particularly well, for reasons which you will soon perceive. I had pointed to a heavy mass of cloud in the opening of the valley.

"Ah!" said one of them, "that looks like snow. It is an awkward thing sometimes on the mountains."

'And then they proceeded to tell me of the sad accident which occurred, now many years ago, on the Col du Bonhomme. Four English travellers, I think, set out rather late to cross the pass, which in fine weather is in no way dangerous. A terrible snow-storm, however, came on. They were forced to return; but on the way back, two of them became so exhausted that they insisted upon lying down and sleeping, in spite of all the efforts of their comrades, who knew the danger. When these and the guide had got back with great difficulty to the inn, they sent help immediately; but both the poor fellows were dead. You may still see the last words they wrote in the travellers' book at the inn, when starting in high spirits for their walk.

'Soon after this anecdote, we got to a little chalet, a kind of lean-to against the side of the mountain, where

we resolved to pass the night. The back of it was formed by the rock, and the roof was supported by loose beams, resting at one end against the rock, and sloping nearly to the ground at the other. It was secured, as usual in the Alps, by heavy stones resting upon it—just like the hut in which we are now lying. It was nearly full of hay, which would make a good bed: I wish we had some here. I was tired, and glad to rest; but my friends resolved to make an exploring expedition, to see if they could lay down the proper route for the next day. We took a meal, and they started, whilst I sat comfortably down on a big stone and watched them off. They were soon a long way above me, and a wreath of mist wandering about the valley hid them from my sight. I resolved to make everything comfortable for the night. I smoked two or three pipes; made comfortable couches of the hay, spread our plaids upon them, and sat down to think. Naturally, there was not very much to think about. My seat was very comfortable, and I put up my feet, to muse. Somehow, I began to wander a good deal, and before I knew it, I was as fast asleep as a marmot.

'How long I had slept, I know not. When I opened my eyes again, I felt like a man in one of Poe's stories, who fancies himself buried alive. I was in pitch darkness. There was a melancholy wailing sound which seemed to fill the very air. For a minute or two, I could not guess where I was, and felt quite frightened and bewildered. As my recollection partly returned, I knew that I had started with my friends, and called out: "Marsden!" No answer. "Fitzyroy! where are you?" Echo did not think it worth while to answer according to precedent; but the low moan, which I now understood to be caused by the rising wind, continued drearily. I came fully back to my senses, felt about with my hands, and groped my way to the door. I threw it open, and looked out into blank and utter darkness. The wind, which seemed to be getting more furious every moment, was driving a heavy mist down before it. I stretched out my hands, and a wet cold flake or two melted upon them. It was beginning to snow. My friends were out on the hillside, without a plaid, without even a drop of brandy, and I thought of the Col du Bonhomme.

'What was I to do? My first impression was to strike a light. I groped in a knapsack for a long time after the matches; at last I found the box. One match after another missed fire; one or two made a feeble sputtering, and threw a dim blue light upon an area of about an inch in diameter. They had got wet through; and all my attempts were fruitless. I stood still for a moment, and tried to think. To go after my friends, would be madness; I should be hopelessly lost in a moment. A hundred yards from the hut, it would be as hard to recover as if it were a mile off. To go down to the valley for help, was equally absurd; it was several hours' walk by daylight, to say nothing of the probability that I should be dashed in pieces over the cliffs I had seen in the morning. There was nothing for it but to wait till dawn. If—I thought in a moment of selfishness—if I could only get to sleep again! But there was not much more chance of that than if I had been waiting for execution. My nervous irritation was getting more unbearable every moment. I walked up and down, feeling for every step; I stamped on the ground with vexation. Possibly, if I had kept awake, I might have been able to give them some signal. I at first hoped that they might have got back to the valley, missing the hut by mistake; but judging by the time at which I had seen them last, that was clearly impossible. I began to feel a sense of something like awe creeping over me at my utter helplessness and desolation. I threw myself down on the hay, groaned, and listened to the wind. It rose higher and higher, and seemed to howl in triumph as it swept past the hut, and whistled through the thin ill-fitting boards. A deep growl seemed suddenly to shake the very

rock which formed the back of the wretched hovel ; and for an instant a blue phosphoric glare lit up the darkness. The growls gradually became louder and the lightning nearer, and I seemed to have been lying for hours where I was. At last a crash seemed to shake the roof, as if some monster had fixed its claws in it ; the big stones overhead rattled and almost jumped ; and with a vague impression that the whole rickety concern was coming down on the top of me, I instinctively sprang to my feet, and made a rush at the door. It opened outwards, and I plunged into the storm. The door shut behind me, and there was I left staring vaguely into utter blackness.

'Well, I never knew how long this lasted, or how I got through it. I had been trying to fancy at intervals what could be the fate of my friends, alone in this tremendous storm, amidst treacherous cliffs, which they did not know, and where the most experienced native could hardly have found his way under such circumstances. As we afterwards had reason to think, they had got upon the snow, and must have partly lost their way amongst the mists before the storm came on. They had wandered—one no one can say where—among the cliffs. At last, they had climbed down a kind of gully, feeling their way carefully with their Alpenstocks. We could next day see the marks of the spikes where they had stuck into soft ground, and the impressions of their nailed boots. The gully brought them down to a steep, slippery slope, strewn with great boulders, just above the edge of a fall, whose depth it was, of course, utterly impossible to distinguish in the darkness. They had felt over the edge with their poles, but had only been able to make out that the slope stopped abruptly. Suddenly one of them slipped, and in falling, grasped the other. Both of them were precipitated over the edge.

'Next moment, two most unpleasant bodies were hurled violently against me, and hobnailed boots stamped on my toes ; whilst a voice exclaimed in stentorian tones : "Hollo!"

'I thought, in a bewildered way, that bandits had sprung out of the earth, or that I was being collared by a demon of the mountains. But a minute or two brought an explanation. The cliff over whose edge my friends had been precipitated was the front of the chalet ; the slippery boulder-strewn slope above was its roof ; and the final crash with which, as I thought, the storm was fairly destroying everything, was nothing but the feet of my friends trampling immediately over my head.

'They blew me up for not having kindled a fire, which might have acted as a signal ; and wanted to know, when that was explained, why I had not shouted. They declared that they had been for an hour within two hundred yards, and had never really lost their way. Some people are always right.

'Why, you would never have heard me through the thunder ; and besides, to tell you the truth, I never thought of shouting. If you doubt that, you may read De Quincey ; and you will see that when he was just running over two people with a four-horse coach, he never thought of shouting till he accidentally remembered a passage in Homer where some hero shouts. I didn't remember a passage in Homer."

'But,' said I, 'the edge over which they fell might have been a precipice.'

'That's so.—But what's the matter, Cachat ?'

'Time to be off, sir ; here are your boots.'

We rose from the floor, feeling much as if we had been passed through a mangling-machine. Every prominent part of our persons had been cruelly crushed against the unyielding boards of the hut. Bruised, battered, and stiff, we got up, stretched our limbs, consumed some comfortless coffee, without milk, and with plenty of grounds, and staggered one by one into the night-air. It

was cruelly cold, and every star in the sky seemed to be winking pleasantly at us. The great snow-slopes that rose above us looked faint and ghost-like in the starlight ; but the top of the mountain seemed so near that I could hardly fancy it to be more than two or three hours' walk. I confided this opinion to Jones, who responded by a horse-laugh. Meanwhile, the strong-minded lady had got into raptures over the beauty of the scene, and, I imagine, was under the same delusion as to the distance. At any rate, she resolutely declared her intention to accompany us to the top, and the remonstrances of her husband produced not the slightest effect.

'Don't tell me,' she exclaimed ; 'I know that the difficulties of these things are shamefully exaggerated ; are they not, Mr Jones ? I am sure I can get up easily.'

Jones was puzzled. He, like most Alpine travellers, systematically depreciated the difficulties of mountain-climbing, and especially of Mont Blanc. On the other hand, he groaned in spirit at the thoughts of being tethered to a middle-aged lady. To me, however, this was a great recommendation of the plan. I delighted at the prospect of the fiery Jones being detained by such a clog ; it would save me from some of his stupid attempts at hastening my speed ; I therefore struck in : 'My dear madam, Jones is very properly cautious about what he says to a lady ; but he told me yesterday, after seeing you walk, that he was certain you could get up easier than I.'

This fortunate quotation settled the matter ; and before long, our caravan was again in motion. We were tied together in two parties, which took alternately the labour of going first. After scrambling down the frozen slippery rocks of the Grands Mulets, we plunged into the snow-field ; and the complication of torments which there overwhelmed me, was such as I had never in my life imagined. It is not pleasant to be turned into the cold night-air at three A.M. at any time, least of all when you have had no sleep, and are just beginning to get drowsy. Nor is it ever agreeable to be up to your knees in snow—not heavy, fat, flabby snow, such as we have it in England, but light, feathery, hard, frozen snow—snow that is no more disposed to 'bind' than so much fine sand—snow that works its way through every crevice of your garments ; that gets up your trousers, and into your boots, and positively stings you with its bitter cold. Neither, again, is it pleasant to be going up a steep and mountainous hillside, with nothing to see, and a constant sense of effort, as if your heart was hammering your ribs. When these three circumstances are combined, and you are ploughing through the huge snow-waste of Mont Blanc, by the light of a tallow-candle in a lantern, the result is a peculiarly refined form of exquisite misery. Every now and then, we made short halts, to allow the other party to change places with us. At such moments, I felt myself to be a kind of animated thermometer—my toes were many degrees below freezing-point, while my head was at fever-heat with the exertion.

'Can you feel your toes ?' Jones asked me affectionately.

At first, I replied confidently that I could feel them a good deal more than I liked. After a time, however, they became absolutely numb. My boots were frozen as hard as iron. Jones said that I was in danger of frost-bites ; and by way of a short and simple remedy, made me hold out my feet while he hammered at them with hearty good-will with the

end of his Alpenstock. By this process, they were gradually restored to a state of intense agony, which, as he assured me, was a good sign; and I was able to renew my painful progress. When we halted, cold and miserable as it was, I threw myself down on the snow, to try to recover my wind. I got little sympathy, and a good many admonitions not to rest too long. My only hopes were in the strong-minded lady. Surely, I thought, if it is so bad to walk in gaiters, petticoats must make it intolerable. Whenever I looked, however, there she was tending along steadily behind or in front of me without any appearance of flagging. Johann, the great Swiss giant, had got her in tow, and was keeping her in motion by sheer brute force. He evidently felt that his professional reputation would be increased by getting such a burden up the mountain. He hauled at the rope round her waist, encouraged her in his vile German patois, and actually sang fragments of songs to prove that he was not tired. How I hated him! Well, neither Mont Blanc nor anything else can last for ever. We had zigzagged in and out; we had wound round huge crevasses—most portentous-looking chasms they were in the starlight—and, by some means or other, my weary limbs had lugged my body upwards for some three hours.

'Here we are,' exclaimed Jones, 'at the Grand Plateau!'

The Grand Plateau is one of the celebrated stages in the ascent of Mont Blanc. It is the only bit of the route above the Grands Mulets where you are not going up a steep hill. I believe, indeed, that for a few hundred yards it is actually level; so, at anyrate, it appeared to me after my cruel sufferings below.

The night had been gradually growing less intensely dark; the stars were slowly disappearing, the sky becoming appreciably blue, and the huge snowy masses above us detaching themselves more distinctly from it. Whilst we halted for a second, an exquisite tinge of rose-colour seemed to have been suddenly splashed upon the top of Mont Blanc, which gradually crept down the side, and announced that day was fairly beginning. We were still, however, bitterly cold under the shadow of the mountain, and it would be long before the sun could be expected. We all sat down in a cluster to partake of breakfast. I must again remark that it is always unpleasant to be up at six in the morning, and that, to me at least, a picnic is always a cheerless meal. When the two are combined, the result is one of the most dismal things conceivable. Tearing frozen chickens to bits with our fingers, eating frozen bread smeared with congealed honey, and washing down our victuals with a sour wine that trickled slowly along our throats like thawing ice, was a very bad substitute for a good British breakfast. How I wished that I was down-stairs at the *Royal*, eating the skinny cutlets of that establishment, which at least profess to be warm. What added to my misery was that I had no appetite. I attempted to eat, because Jones said that it was good for me, and I was already a passive piece of clay in the hands of Jones. But eating from a sense of duty is a hideous process. I began to feel sensations such as I have sometimes known in crossing the Channel; not to put too fine a point upon it, I felt exceedingly sick.

'Time to be off,' says Jones, who, to my disgust, had been taking what he called a whiff of tobacco.

'Just go on, my dear fellow, and let me rest a bit. I will catch you up when I'm better; just now, I'm not quite well.'

'Catch me up!' said Jones. 'I shall not desert you in your misery; or, in other words, you shall not desert me: it comes to the same thing.'

'You don't seriously expect me to go on?'

'I have made up my mind that you shall go on, and get to the top; you'll thank me for it afterwards. Look! there is the lady off already; you wouldn't be left behind by her.'

I had by this time no more sense of honour than a cab-horse; any one might have passed me with little effort. I felt bitterly that the lady, upon whom I had depended to slacken the pace, was cruelly leaving me in the lurch; but I could not remonstrate, I could not even struggle with Jones.

Cachat hoisted me on to my legs, and again we struggled forward. Of what followed, I shall attempt no detailed account. In the first place, such accounts have already been written by the hundred. Albert Smith was only the most popular of a long line of authors on Mont Blanc, and people who want to hear about the *Corridor*, and the *Mur de la Côte*, and the *Calotte*, about Dr Hamel's accident, and Hudson and Kennedy's ascent, and all the other topics upon which mountaineers dilate, may turn elsewhere for information. 'Is it not written in the book of the chronicles of the Alpine Club?' is my evasive reply to all questionings of this kind. I can only dimly picture what I felt, not what there was to be seen externally to myself. Two or three memories come vividly before me, of which I must request my readers to accept, instead of the regular accounts. Among them is not, I must confess, any recollection of beautiful scenery; I do not doubt its existence, but I cared for it as little as the sea-sick care for bottled stout.

That word 'sea-sick' brings back some reminiscences, over which, according to the accepted formula, I will draw a veil. What happened when, with splitting head, I turned aside from the ranks, and gazed intently at the snows of Mont Blanc, is between the mountain and myself. I can never attempt to reveal my sensations. Another recollection is that of the moment when, after long toil, the sun suddenly rose, and seemed to strike me almost a blow in the face. It was a pleasant change to feel a gentle glow of warmth start the congealed blood in my veins once more into tolerable activity. The warmth, however, was feeble indeed. The sun had not much more power in it than a good healthy moon in the valley; but it was a relief to the bitter, unappeasable cold which I had suffered before. Another pleasant sensation was to find firm crisp snow under my feet, instead of the deep powdery stuff through which we had been slowly wading for so long. It was the sense of relief which would come to a fly who had just crept across a honey-pot. Each of these relaxations came to me just as I was about to give it up, and insist upon sitting down for good. Cheered by them, I managed to toil on up the huge mass called the *Calotte*, which from below looks about as big as St Paul's dome, and above seems to swell visibly every step you take. Jones was continually fretting at the rope, and making sub-sarcastic remarks upon me for detaining him. Especially he tried to stimulate my exertions by pointing to the strong-minded lady. During my sickness below, she had got ahead of us; but now it seemed that we were overtaking her.

'For goodness' sake, let's get to the top first,' said Jones; 'that woman will triumph over me for the rest of her days, if we don't.' Suiting the action to the word, Jones, assisted by Cachat, hauled desperately at the rope round my waist, and dragged me along somewhat as you may see the stronger of two dogs in a leash overpowering, and almost choking his weaker neighbour. By some means or other, we got on a level with the other party, and certainly the Strong-minded was a sight for her friends. Johann, still cheery and noisy, was hauling at the rope round her waist. Two stalwart, grinning Chamouni guides held an Alpenstock between them, which they pressed against her back, in order to give her some support. Her hands hung down limp and motionless. Her face appeared to me to be of an olive green—perhaps it was a little discoloured by my spectacles—and she could only stammer forth despairingly: '*Ah, mon cœur, mon cœur!*'

'I think, madam,' I remarked, delighted to have a chance, 'that you and I had better sit down and wait whilst the others go up. We are quite high enough, and I shall be delighted to keep you company, if you don't like to wait alone.'

Jones, I flattered myself, would have agreed to this proposition, which would have enabled him to get on faster; but little did I know the indomitable pluck possessed by a woman of vigorous mind. 'Sir,' she said, or rather gasped, 'now I've got so far, I mean to go on to the top.'

Her husband groaned, and I know sympathised with me. But Jones and the great brute Johann were delighted. Instead of expressing disgust at her unfeminine spirit, they applauded heartily, and calling up some of the other guides, managed to arrange a kind of sedan-chair for the lady out of Alpenstocks, assisted by which, she struggled forward. I was, I felt, deserted. Had I been left to myself, I should have sat down and wept. But the pitiless Jones, even whilst attending to the lady, had an eye for me. 'Look after the gentleman, Cachat!' he said; and Cachat, taking my arm, hauled me forward like a passive lump of dead matter. Of what followed, I know little, save that I seemed doomed to incessant and hopeless climbing. My legs seemed to be made of lead, my lungs to be confined in an iron box, and my head throbbed as if it were going to burst. At last we ceased to advance; I looked round, dimly recognised the fact that there was nothing higher, and throwing myself on the snow, fell fast asleep.

I woke presently to find our little party sitting along the curved ridge which forms the top of Mont Blanc, under a perfectly cloudless sky. The Alps lay at our feet, a wild confusion of pale purple rock, mixed with white stretches of snow. Far beneath us, we could distinguish valleys, and torrents, and villages, but not a sound came to our ears. It was a glorious sight, in spite of all that can be said to the contrary. Painters generally decry such views, simply because they cannot be put into a picture; but no one with a sense of poetry could fail to be profoundly impressed by it. Neither could any human being fail to appreciate a bottle of champagne at this altitude, nor to feel a certain glow of triumph at the difficulties overcome. I shall look back upon those few minutes as a delightful, and, I sincerely hope, unique experience in my life; for never, to see fifty mountain-tops, would I subject myself to a

pipe, for all sense of sickness had left me, and lay back in the snow in luxurious ease, and in perfect indifference to all Jones's catalogue of peaks, and to the comments of the rest of the party.

The return was pleasanter, as need hardly be said. The sense of terrible strain seemed to leave me at once, as if by magic, and I positively ran down two or three slopes. Below, it was as hot in descending as it had been cold in the ascent. The sun struck down fiercely on my head; the snow-fields all round returned the glare from every quarter, till I felt as if in the central focus of innumerable burning-glasses. Parched, and tired, and miserable I was when we again reached the Grands Mulets; and I only rallied to something like my former self as we marched into Chamouni, and met the crowd of tourists before whom I had swaggered the day before. I felt somewhat foolish when the guns were fired, and still more so when the head-waiter brought me out a nosegay as big as my head, and presented it to me with a solemn flourish. Looking from my window, I saw Jones in front of the hotel, lounging up and down, and telling something very amusing to a small crowd of admirers. But Jones and I both sank into insignificance before the strong-minded lady, who appeared, limp, indeed, in her dress, burnt as to her complexion, and somewhat stiff in her walk, but with a certain proud air of self-assertion amidst the respectful glances of society. The lady who had ascended Mont Blanc was naturally the observed of all observers for the next few days. My own feat became absolutely contemptible in the eyes of the public. They compared me with the lady, instead of comparing me with themselves, who had done nothing. They seemed somehow to fancy that the lady's performance was at once a testimony to her merits and to my weakness. She was a wonderful woman; but as for me, what was there in doing what any lady could do? It was in vain to point out that this was illogical. I got no credit for my performance. Then Jones played me false. He let out that I had been unwell, and had been helped by the guides; and immediately I became contemptible in the eyes of those who had never been higher than the Montanvert. He even stated that had it not been for the lady's courageous remonstrances, I should have sat down without reaching the top. He also made something for himself out of the day's work, by treating Mont Blanc with contempt—implying that it was a joke to him, and merely a trifling addition to the innumerable trophies which he had already won.

I had some slight revenge. The lady was not visible for a day or two; and when she appeared, her face was more like a raw beef-steak than the face of a lady ought to be. Jones himself, to my unfeigned delight, had some small frost-bites—enough to prove that he was human. It is true I was laid upon my back the next day with bad feet and general fatigue; but I consoled myself by taking notes of the various incidents of our expedition, which have been expanded into the present narrative. If it deters one rash being from the ascent of Mont Blanc, and saves him from the unspeakable miseries that beset the inexperienced traveller, that narrative will not have been written in vain.

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JAN 5 1962	JUL 13 '67-12
1 JAN '64 KB	LOAN DEPT
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